Effects of Leadership Styles on Employee Performance: Integrating the Mediating Role of Culture, Gender and Moderating Role of Communication

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Abstract
Purpose:
Leadership, being the most researched topic of all social sciences concepts is equally of great importance for the organizations as well as employees. Most of the researches conducted till now have focused Western Culture and Gender, whereas the East including China, Pakistan, India, Malaysia, Japan and others are still in vague, whereas they contribute a major share in world’s economy. Therefore, thorough literature review has been conducted to come across a new model based on integrated approach, exhibiting the relationship between Leadership Styles and Employee Performance through the mediating role of Culture and Gender while Communication playing the moderating role.

Design / Methodology
The paper is based on theoretical underpinning. Viewpoint of Leadership, its styles focusing Transactional and Transformational Styles and impact on employee performance have been argued through in depth literature review and the relationships between different variables have been established accordingly.

Findings
Effects of Leadership Styles on employee performance were found to have dissimilarity due to the mediating variables of culture and gender whereas communication was found to be one of the major ingredients of effective leadership style

Practical Implications/Limitations
Rational Relationships among variables have been deliberated through research findings of various authors to craft practicality of theoretical research while making it handy for practitioners and trainers. However, the presented model is to be tested through empirical research across the continents and various cultures.

Originality / Value
Thorough and comprehensive literature review of the said relationships is the value creating and differentiating factor of this article. However, a potential contribution of this study could be the study of three variables; culture, gender and communication (mediating and moderating) instead of single variable study where most of the studies put in only one variable.

Key Words
Leadership Styles, Employee Performance, Culture, Transformational and Transactional Leadership, Communication

1- Introduction:
Although leadership has become an older concept and lot has been written on this topic since the middle of the twentieth century [1], yet the function of a leader is so much critical and a factor of major influence to the organization [2] that every dimension, relationship and aspect needs further elaboration and research. Leadership has been defined by various authors in their own style and understanding, in number of ways [3], however, Communication of the leader does play a remarkable role as everything is to be transferred into the hearts of others through communication and causes the effect of charisma [4-7] and this is how leaders win the confidence and trust of their followers, paving the way to inculcate one’s vision [8, 9]. Even few leaders are aware of their exact effect on followers due to the fact that it is deciding factor of follower’s direction whether positive or negative [10], yet followers individual characteristics and differences create differentiation in reception of leaders influence [11].

Leadership have been defined through several theories [1, 3, 12] where most authorities divide leadership into four major perspectives (1) Trait Theories (2) Behavior Theories (3) Contingency/Situational Theories (4) Neocharismatic Theories [1, 10] and three major leadership styles Transformational, Transactional, and Laissez-Faire Leadership Styles [13-15], yet the core focus of today’s studies is on transactional and transformational leadership [2].

Ardichvili and Kuchinke (2002) in their article “Leadership styles and cultural values among managers and subordinates: a comparative study of four countries of the former Soviet Union, Germany, and the US” describe Bass (1997) view point of the universality of
the paradigms of transactional and transformational leadership while considering them as key concepts of leadership theories, however adding further the research of Den Hartog et al. (1999) is discussed, presenting the study of sixty two cultures demonstrating the requirements differing with respect to different cultures and having different conceptions of what leaders should constitute of.

Similarly, those organizations survive and gain competitive advantage in today’s turbulent environment and changing technological era who have creative employees and they consider their employees as their assets [16-18] and thus there are a number of studies that have investigated that although there are a number of other factors like job challenge and interest, working conditions of organization and climate, growth and advancement opportunities, peer relations etc yet leadership is the most important factors that becomes the cause of employees performance and satisfaction [10] and it’s the leadership that nurtures and develops creativity among employees [11, 16].

Shalley, Zhou et al. (2004) explain that it’s due to the creativity that employees try to develop and improve their individual practices, policies and procedures for developing products/services through their useful ideas, resulting in overall organizational improvement; thereby adapting external environmental changes, competing and responding to the opportunities[18] Thus employee performance / organizational performance is largely dependent on leadership.

This particular article is a theoretical review of empirical literature for understanding the relationship of employee performance through leadership styles (focusing transactional and transformational styles) prevailing in different cultures and the effects of communication in transactional and transformational leadership styles. Thus a potential contribution of this study could be the study of two variables; culture and communication (mediating and moderating) together instead of single variable study where most of the studies put in only one variable.

2.1- Defining a Leadership Style

Vigoda-Gadot (2007) in his article “Leadership style, organizational politics, and employees’ performance: An empirical examination of two competing models.” mentions that leadership is all about influencing people to get the work done through inspiration rather than using coercive powers and authority. Thus today’s researches focus mainly on transformational leadership paradigm due to the fact that it is based on relationship of leader with its follower rather than the authority element. Yet the current studies consider of transactional and transformational leadership styles as center to the leadership theories whereas full range of model of Bass (1994) includes laissez-faire behavior along with these two [12, 15].

Molero, Cuadrado et al. (2007) describe leadership style as consistent set of behaviors / patterns, proposing two dimensions in leaders behaviors, Structure initiation which includes task oriented leaders and Consideration which includes relation oriented leaders. These two dimensions got most of the concentration of researchers till mid 1980s and then the concept of transformational leadership emerged and was found to be empirically independent of task and relationship orientation and could be directive or participative, depending on the situation or on their personal characteristics. Madlock (2008) suggest that followers report to be satisfied with those leaders who posses both relation and task oriented behaviors.

Oldham and Cummings (1996) describe leadership style as combination of three elements; style characteristics, an implicit leadership philosophy and a set of management skills typical of each style. The emphasis on performance and people is described through leadership style whereas leader’s role and assumptions about people is described through leadership philosophy. Management Skills, however, include management skills characteristics of a style.

Thus, a leadership style can be defined as a leader's style of providing direction, motivating people and implementing plans. It is the result of the philosophy, personality, and experience of the leader

2.2 Types of Leadership Styles

“Leadership is a process by which an individual influences the thoughts, attitudes, and behaviors of others. The Leaders set a direction for the firm; they help see what lies ahead; they visualize what they might achieve and how to achieve it; they encourage and inspire the subordinates” [19]. Thus, Leadership, being the ability to guide followers for achieving shared goals, influence others through inspiration and charisma or by using power, a name of commitment, hardworking and excellence, has a number of dimensions, paradigms, styles and ways described by earlier theories. [1, 3].
Leadership have been defined through several theories [1, 3, 12] where most authorities divide leadership into four major perspectives (1) Trait Theories (2) Behavior Theories (3) Contingency/Situational Theories (4) Neocharismatic Theories [1, 10]

Stogdill (1963) and Davis (1972) proposed the personality and traits that a successful leader should have [1]. “Trait leadership is defined as integrated patterns of personal characteristics that reflect a range of individual differences and foster consistent leader effectiveness across a variety of group and organizational situations” [20]. Focus is primarily on finding a group of heritable attributes that differentiated leaders from non-leaders

Behavioral Theories approach emerged from the Ohio State University that began in 1945. Halpin & Winer (1957) pointed out two dimensions, initiating structure and consideration. “Consideration may be defined as behaviors by means of which the leader establishes rapport with his or her employees, two-way communication, mutual respect, and understanding. Consideration includes behavior indicating trust and warmth between the supervisor and his or her group and emphasizes concern for group members’ needs. On the other hand Initiating Structure may be defined as behaviors by means of which the leader defines or facilitates group interaction toward goal attainment. The leader does this by planning, scheduling, criticizing, initiating ideas, organizing the work, defining member roles, assigning tasks, and pushing for production. [10]. Subsequently, many studies such as those of Stogdill (1963), Likert (1967), and Kotter (1988) also offered related behavioral theories of leadership [1]. Behavioral Theory assumes that the success of a leader is based solely on how they behave. Behavioral theories of leadership do not seek inborn traits or capabilities. Rather, they look at what leaders actually do.

Contingency model of leadership was first developed by Fiedler in 1967 whereas Hersey and Blanchard also developed the situational leadership theory in 1977 which used the two leadership dimensions in terms of task and relationship behaviors, where these two dimensions have received considerable attention in cross-cultural studies [21], and combined their degrees into four specific leadership behaviors: telling, selling, participating, and delegating. [10] “According to the contingency theory, leaders adopt a suitable leadership style depending on the readiness of followers. The telling style is suitable for unable and unwilling followers. The selling style is effective for unable and willing followers. The participating style is useful for able and unwilling followers. The delegating style is adequate for able and willing followers”. [1]

Neocharismatic Theories are mainly represented by transactional leadership and transformational leadership [1] and lot much work has been carried out on both types of leadership theories.

For instance, Bass (1985) presented four dimensions of transformational leadership, three dimensions of transactional leadership, and a non-leadership dimension of laissez-faire leadership. Similarly, Avery (2004) categorized leadership into four leadership paradigms classical, transactional, visionary, and organic and Goleman (1995) prefers six leadership paradigms. [22]. According to Judge and Piccolo (2004), three dimensions of transactional leadership are contingent reward, management by exception-active, and management by exception-passive.

Nevertheless, the term transformational leadership was produced by the politologist, Burns, in 1978, but was later on developed by Bernard M. Bass and colleagues, till its current status [23, 24]. According to Bass, there are two types of leadership: transformational and transactional. [14]

According to the Bass “transformational leadership is not a rare phenomenon, limited to a few extraordinary leaders, but, on the contrary, it can be found in various degrees in all kinds of groups and organizations” (Bass, 1985, p. 15). Thus, Bass and colleagues designed an instrument capable of appraising transformational leadership.

This instrument, the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ), Bass and Avolio (1997) established that transformational leadership is made up of following five factors: (a) Idealized Influence (attributed), or attributed charisma, which indicates to what extent followers trust and respect the leaders; (b) Idealized Influence (behaviors), which reflects to what extent the leaders perform behaviors that reflect their values, beliefs and their sense of a mission; (c) Inspirational Motivation, which is related to the way in which the leaders are capable of transmitting and expressing their project or vision; (d) Intellectual Stimulation, which indicates to what extent the leaders promote the growth and intellectual independence of their followers; and (e) Individualized Consideration, which has to do with the behaviors of socio-emotional support to followers, as well as their individual acknowledgement.
Similarly, a number of other authors have presented a number of other leadership styles, for instance, Rensis Likert identified four main styles of leadership, 1) Exploitive authoritative 2) Benevolent authoritative 3) Consultative 4) Participative, in particular around decision-making and the degree to which people are involved in the decision. [25]. Kurt Lewin and colleagues did leadership decision experiments in 1939 and identified three (3) different styles of leadership, 1) Autocratic 2) Democratic 3) Laissez-Faire, in particular around decision-making. [26]. Daniel Goleman, Richard Boyatzis and Annie McKee, in Primal Leadership, describe six styles of leading, the Visionary Leader, the Coaching Leader, the Affiliative Leader, the Democratic Leader, the Pace-setting Leader and the Commanding Leader that have different effects on the emotions of the target followers. [27]

[28] identified three forces that directs the leader's action: the forces in the situation, the forces in then follower and also forces in the leader.

Thus, it can be observed through literature review that there are a number of different “Styles” to leadership that are based on different assumptions and theories. The style that individuals use will be based on a combination of their beliefs, values and preferences, as well as the organizational culture and norms as well as the situation, which will encourage some styles and discourage others. However, it should be considered that different leadership styles are required as per the situation. With little time for a task, and higher experience or expertise than team members, you need to adopt autocratic leadership style being the best and effective. Whereas, with homogenous level of expertise and highly motivated and aligned team, democratic or laissez-faire style may be more effective. Thus the purpose of adopting a style is to achieve the purpose and objectives of the organization or a group while balancing the interests of its individual members as well as organizational decorum/discipline.
### Table 1: Periodic Studies on Leadership and related concepts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Studied By</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Leadership Style / Theory</th>
<th>Dimensions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hemphill, Stogdill, Coons, Fleishman, Harris, and Burtt (1945-1948) Ohio State Leadership Studies</td>
<td>Leadership does not seek inborn traits or capabilities. Rather, they look at what leaders actually do</td>
<td>Behavioral Theories</td>
<td>Initiating Structure and Consideration, planning, scheduling, criticizing, initiating ideas, organizing the work, defining member roles, assigning tasks, and pushing for production.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Developed the Leaders Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blake and Mouton [29]</td>
<td>Five basic styles of leadership: A Production Pusher, Do-Nothing Manager Organization Man, Country Club Manager, and Team Builder.</td>
<td>Managerial Grid, Behavioral Research</td>
<td>Concern for Production and concern for mature and healthy relations among those engaged in production.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burns [30]</td>
<td>Transformational leadership is more effective than Transactional leadership.</td>
<td>Transformational Leadership Style</td>
<td>Transformational leadership is an ongoing process rather than the discrete exchanges of the transactional approach.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bass [24], [31]</td>
<td>Leadership Styles and its segregation and applicability in diversity. Development of Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire</td>
<td>Transformational and Transactional Leadership Behaviors</td>
<td>Three types of transformational leadership, Attributed Charisma, Individual Consideration, Intellectual Stimulation and two types of transactional leadership, Contingent Reward, Management-by-Exception</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peter P. Mykytyn, et al. [33]</td>
<td>Various personality traits including communication, control and negotiation effective for a leader and organizational effectiveness.</td>
<td>Behavioral Skills and Traits for Knowledge Acquisition</td>
<td>Communication/ Problem Understanding, Personal Traits, Control, Organization, Negotiation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dorfman and House [34]</td>
<td>Cultural congruence in development and leadership is more effective; Cultural difference can be stimulating and bring about positive change; and Leadership is universal activity.</td>
<td>Culture and Leadership</td>
<td>Culture differences, Leadership Development in different cultures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goleman, et al. [27]</td>
<td>Described six styles of leading, the Visionary Leader, the coaching Leader, the Affiliative Leader, the Democratic Leader, the Pace-setting Leader and the Commanding Leader</td>
<td>Leadership Styles</td>
<td>Study of different leadership styles and their effects on the emotions of the target followers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conger and Kanungo [35]</td>
<td>Described five behavioral attributes of Charismatic Leaders that indicate a more transformational view-point</td>
<td>Transformational and Charismatic Leadership Styles</td>
<td>Vision and articulation, Sensitivity to the environment, Sensitivity to member needs, Personal risk taking, Performing unconventional behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yuki [36]</td>
<td>Described 14 categories of leader behavior</td>
<td>Leadership Styles</td>
<td>Planning and organizing, problem solving, clarifying, informing, monitoring, motivating, consulting, recognizing, supporting, managing conflict and team building etc</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 2.3- Transactional Leadership Style

While organizations have clear structure and its clearly known that what is required from the subordinates
where as the rewards they will get for following orders are mentioned as well except the punishment which is not always mentioned but obviously known and understood with formal systems of discipline in place, then transactional style of leadership works best. [36]

Here, the prime purpose of a follower is to do what their leader tells them to do and followers have agreed to do a job, as a part of the deal is that they surrender all authority to their leader. During the initial stages, the follower is given a contract, being negotiated at that stage and agreed on certain salary and benefits thereby surrendering himself and giving authority to his leader. Work is then assigned to the follower on complete responsibility basis. In case of any fault, the follower is completely responsible and will be punished for his or her fault (just as they are rewarded for succeeding). Thus followers are motivated by reward and punishment. [36]

Transactional leadership is based in contingency, in that reward or punishment is contingent upon performance. The main limitation is the supposition of “rational man”, a person who is in principal motivated by money and simple reward, and hence whose behavior is predictable. The underlying psychology is Behaviorism, together with the Classical Conditioning of Pavlov and Skinner's Operant Conditioning. These theories are largely based on controlled laboratory experiments (mostly with animals) and ignore multifaceted emotional factors and social values.

In practice, there is adequate truth in Behaviorism to sustain Transactional approaches. This is reinforced by the supply-and-demand situation of much employment, coupled with the effects of deeper needs, as in Maslow’s Hierarchy. When the demand for a skill goes beyond the supply, then Transactional Leadership often is insufficient, and other approaches are more effective.

Other dimension of Transactional leadership styles are Contingent Reward and Management by Exception. In the case of active management by exception, the leader looks for rules and procedures, strictly follows the mentioned process and he or she takes corrective action before or when these occur. Whereas Passive management by exception implies that the leader is reactive and takes action after the event has occurred i.e. acts in response not pro-actively.

Therefore, it is defined as a Leadership Style that “involves a social exchange process where the leader clarifies what the followers need to do as their part of a transaction (successfully complete the task) to receive a reward or avoidance of punishment (satisfaction of the followers’ needs) that is contingent on the fulfillment of the transaction (satisfying the leader's needs)” [15]

[37] also defines Transactional leadership as leader aptitude towards identification of followers needs and aspirations and clearly demonstrate the ways to fulfill these needs in exchange for performance of followers. Thus it operates on the basis of “Exchange” which is a game of balance due to the fact that Transaction literally means “exchange” therefore, it deals with the exchange between leader and his followers You help me in achieving this and I help you then you help me and this continues. Exchanges are not necessarily financial or physical in nature. Emotional exchanges, which we use a great deal of the time, can be of surprising value. However, violations against the exchange principle in a group can be a heinous crime, punishable by ostracizing or even expulsion. The fear of such penalties is more than enough to keep many people on the straight and narrow [38]. Exchange is just like a bank account. Sometimes I put things in, sometimes I take things out, where it’s based on long-term relationships and we are programmed by these rules to the point where we will obey them even in shorter-term and low-trust exchanges. If either party’s needs are not fulfilled up to the satisfaction level, he or she leaves and breaks the contract as decided earlier in a mutual contract. [36]

2.4- Transformational Leadership Style

The study of transformational leadership has become one of the main paradigms during the last two decades, when addressing leadership within organizations [14]. Bass’s Theory is the key to this distinction between transformational leadership and transactional leadership at the theoretical level. For Bass, the theories and studies based on transaction / exchange were missing something when explaining “high-level leadership”, i.e. Leadership is capable of playing a pivotal role and achieving really important changes, both in the followers and in the organization. Thus, this leadership style also called charismatic leadership, had not been addressed by social and organizational psychology because it was considered an extraordinary phenomenon, and impossible to measure by questionnaires or to manipulate in experimental studies. [24]

By definition, Transformational leaders inspire others with their vision, promote this vision, demonstrate confidence in themselves and their mission and encourage others to support their mission [39, 40].
Transformational Leadership pursues organizational goals by focusing on follower’s motivation [30]. Thus transformational leadership is performance oriented and puts emphasis on the competencies and skills that keep the organization competitive [41].

This clarity of organizational vision & mission, employees’ role, job descriptions, policies and procedures, rewards, management’s support and empowerment enhances employees’ satisfaction towards their jobs and organization ultimately improving customer satisfaction[42]. Thus, Transformational leaders pay attention towards organization, consider it as a whole while encouraging everyone and try to help out each other for transformation. [12]

According to [43] transformational leadership provides an ideal of leadership, given contemporary developments in the global business world. According to [15] Transformational leaders have shown that their interpersonal relationships were warm, accepting and supportive. Research Shows that these factors create positive organizational behavior while increasing psychological strengths of employees, their health as well as performance [44]. All these factors are considered as contextual factors or dimensions of the work environment that potentially influence an employee’s creativity but that are not part of the individual [45] and these effect employee positively by increasing their creativity, innovation capability and work performance through “intrinsic motivation” which is necessary, if organizations want to gain competitive advantage [11, 18, 46, 47]. One of the methods, the Transformational Leader applies to sustain motivation is in the use of ceremonies, rituals and other cultural metaphors. Small changes get big hurrahs, impelling up their significance as a sign of real progress. Overall, they equilibrate their attention between action that fosters progress and the mental state of their followers. Conceivably more than other approaches, they are people-oriented and consider that success comes first and last through deep and relentless commitment,[31]

The terms charisma and transformational leadership are frequently used synonymously, however, Bass (1985, 1990) separates them, with charisma while structuring as a part of transformational leadership [28]. [24] theorized that transformational leadership comprises of four dimensions: intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, charisma, and inspirational motivation. Intellectual stimulation involves valuing creative skills and putting efforts for enhancing follower’s ability, challenging the status quo, and encouraging problem solving approach, intellectual curiosity so as to get them ready for change and transformation. Individualized consideration focuses on developmental side and acts as mentor. This is achieved by giving due attention, understanding their concerns, sympathizing, providing feedback, advice and support. Charisma, or idealized influence, is acting as role model through the creation of trust, respect for each other. Leader shows full dedication and commitment and gives followers a sense of empowerment and ownership. It can be viewed in terms of both behaviors and attributions. And inspirational motivation refers to energizing followers by articulating a compelling vision, clearly communicating the goals and expectations. [11, 15]

Charisma is the most important factor in the larger concept of transformational leadership[48]. Many politicians use a charismatic style, as they need to gather a large number of followers. Religious leaders, too, may well use charisma. Conger and Kanungo (1998) posits Musser (1987) notes that charismatic leaders seek to inspire both commitment to ideological goals and also loyalty to themselves. The extent to which either of these two goals is dominant depends on the underlying motivations and needs of the leader.[35]

Followers describe their charismatic leaders as those who make everyone enthusiastic about assignments, who command respect from everyone, who have a special gift of seeing what is important and who have a sense of mission that they transmit to followers.

2.6- Employee Performance

Leadership Effectiveness, although it differs from writer to writer, can best be measured through employee performance and organizational effectiveness/growth. Generally, Leader’s group or organization is evaluated with regards to the goal attainment and task completion as desired. Objectively, employee’s performance is measured through profit margins, market share, increase in production, decrease in cost, return on investment etc. Subjectively, change in employee’s behavior, learning and development capability, employee commitment, enhancement in skills and competencies etc are measured as leadership effectiveness proofs. [49] Similarly, organizational effectiveness is another resultant of employee performance as well as leadership effectiveness.

2.5- Culture

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Despite the debates and difficulties in establishing the agreeable meaning of the concept of culture, it is used far and wide as a key variable [50]. For example, culture is suggested to both shape and reflect values [51], religion [52], philosophy [53] and history [54]. Culture is so ingrained in all facets of human activity that it’s all encompassing nature may bound its usefulness in practice to conceptualizing leadership and shaping the development of leaders. Symbolically culture is like the air we breathe; all around us, fundamental, and yet difficult to determine and to change.

According to Ayman and Korabik [50] most agree on Kluckhohn’s (1951) definition that “culture is an acquired and transmitted pattern of shared meaning, feeling, and behavior that constitutes a distinctive human group”.

Lumby & Foskett defined Culture as “is the set of beliefs, values and behaviors, both explicit and implicit, which underpin an organization and provide the basis of action and decision-making, and is neatly summarized as ‘the way we do things around here’.”

Lumby & Foskett further argued that the culture of every organization is unique, derived from the context in which the organization operates and the values of those who have led or been part of the organization over time. “This unique culture will reveal itself through a number of characteristics:

a) conceptually, through the ideas that are valued and promoted
b) verbally, through the language, terminology and discourses in use
c) behaviorally, through the activities, social interactions and rituals that occur
d) visually, through the designs and styles adopted by the organization in its physical and material components”

Thus the culture could be transmitted through conceptual, verbal, behavioral and visual means. Moreover, there are certain basis of this culture representation which includes the contextual factors, the country / nation where we do belong, our religion, our philosophy or code of life etc.

2.6- Gender

Due to greater women involvement in workplaces, the study of gender differences has become of great interest and importance to the researchers. According to [50],

“Gender, consists of much more than socio-demographic gender. It’s a multidimensional and multilevel phenomenon with many different aspects which include intra-psychic perspective such as gender schemas and stereotypes; gender-role identity and gender-role traits, attitudes, and values”

The gender stereotypes, based on past roles, often lead to a considerable bias against women and present a major problem for those trying to act as leaders in organizations [55]. As Bass (1981) states: “Stereotypes have their effects on behavior. We expect women to be more submissive, so we have trouble taking orders from women, no matter what they are like individually. Women leaders themselves are in conflict when facing divergence in what is expected from them in their roles as managers and in their roles as females, but do these stereotypes reflect reality? (p. 496)

2.6- Leader’s Communication Skills

Leadership is a behavior enacted through communication. Specifically, [4] suggested that communication shapes the perceptions of a leader’s charisma, where communication can be divided into the content of the leader’s messages and the presentation of those messages. Similarly, messages sent by leaders are considered to contain both affective and cognitive strategies and when leaders effectively communicate their vision, they win the confidence of followers, which in turn aids in communication satisfaction between the leader and follower (Pavitt, 1999) Effective leaders may tend to communicate using more metaphors, symbols, imagery and persuasive argumentation to influence others to accept their position (Bass 1985). Conger and Kanungo (1998) stated that, “to be charismatic, leaders not only need to have visions and plans for achieving them but also must be able to articulate their visions and strategies for action in effective ways as to influence their followers”. A leader can help followers understand why and how the activities they are engaging in are meaningful, and this is largely accomplished through language and interpersonal communication [56]

3.1 Theoretical Framework and Propositions

According to Muniapan and Dass [57], the study of leadership is culture specific and the practice of leadership is deeply attached to culture. For a leadership to be effective, it has to be rooted in the cultural soil of the country, where it is practiced. Owing to the crucial role played by culture, cross-cultural leadership studies have also caught the attention of many researchers in the
last fifty years. Studies of leadership styles have revealed that there are not only differences in the styles preferred by followers in different national cultures, but also the specific behaviors [58]. Recognizing this importance of culture in leadership, many communities and countries in the world are now trying to discover and explore their own system of leadership.

Earlier studies have mainly focused U.S, Australia or European Countries [59]. However, currently the interest in the studies of Asian leadership is growing due to the growth of the many Asian economies especially Japan, the four tigers (Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan and Hong Kong, which is now a part of China), China and India. Pakistan and India, in terms of geography, population size and cultural influence, are currently the most important nations in Asia due to the consistent high economic growth rates over recent decades. [57] As a result an interest in studying leadership systems, culture, Gender in Cross Cultural context is necessary not only for the foreign multi-nationals operating in Asian Countries, but also for the nations themselves who live in Asia and around the world.

**Figure 1. Proposed Model Exhibiting Relationship Between Leadership Styles and Employee Performance**

This particular study proposes a model based on Literature review that Leadership Style has a positive relationship with Employee Performance whereas Culture and Gender play a mediating role having moderating effect of Leader’s Communication Skills. Four propositions have been established and author has tried to prove those through extensive literature review where as it should be clarified that a proposition is similar to a hypothesis, but its main purpose is to suggest a link between two concepts in a situation where the link cannot be verified by experiment. As a result, it relies heavily on prior research, reasonable assumptions and existing correlative evidence. A scientist can use a proposition to spur further research on a question or pose one in hopes that further evidence or experimental methods will be discovered that will make it testable.

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put a question mark on the universality of these theories [59].

For instance, the study of Confucius is necessary to understand the background of Chinese leadership philosophy. [60] quotes Confucius regarding the concept of Leadership:

"What qualifies one to participate in government?" Confucius said, "Honor five virtues, and reject the four vices. Then you can participate in government." His pupil asked, "What are the five virtues? Confucius said, "Good people are generous without being wasteful; are hardworking without being resentful; they desire without being greedy; they are at ease without being haughty; they are dignified without being fierce." The pupil asked, "What are the four vices?" Confucius replied, "To execute without having admonished; this is called cruelty. To examine accomplishments without having instructed; this is called brutality. To be lax in direction yet make deadlines; this is labeled viciousness. To be stingy in giving what is due to others; this is called being bureaucratic" (Analects 20:2).

According to Indian Authors [57], the Indian leadership also has a strong philosophical tradition which continues to maintain the interpersonal world in Indian organizations. The Indian Culture is one of the oldest Cultures of the world with 5000 years older history and contributions in various fields. Some of the Indian classics are Valmiki Ramayana, the Mahabharata (includes the Bhagavad-Gita), the Puranas, etc offers several leadership lessons which are useful even in the modern context, although it’s more than 5000 years old literature.

The Islamic Perspective of Leadership is again very much different in their philosophy and context whereas Muslims contribute to one of the biggest population of the world; also there are more than 50 Muslim Countries, thus the culture and philosophy of such a huge segment of the world can’t be ignored. According to [61], there are a number of differences between Western and Islamic Leadership perspectives. Most of the things are Goals, traits, styles, methodology, nature, decision-making process, and participants are not similar between these two types of leadership philosophies. For instance, Goals of western leadership is to focus on Solution of a problem by groups / organization, no reference to Divine efforts whereas Islamic Perspective is Seeking Allah’s pleasure in solving a problem by group. In Western Perspective the Participants are Formal and informal leaders and rarely ordinary member whereas according to Islamic Perspective the participants are Allah (The God), Rasul (The Prophet P.B.U.H), the Leader and the followers. Moreover, the major characteristics of Islamic Leadership as defined by [61] are:

a. Allegiance:
“The Islamic managerial leader is bound in allegiance to Allah.

b. Global Islamic Goals:
The leader perceives the goals of an organization not only in term of the interests of the group, but also in terms of wider Islamic objectives.

c. Adherence to Shariah and Islamic Manners:
The leader must adhere to Islamic injunctions. He can only continue his office as long as he observes the principles of Shariah. His behavior must conform to Islamic manners.

d. Delegated Trust:
Islamic leadership is a position with divine trust. He must enjoy this trust with highest degree of responsibility”.
The review of the literature presents a wide variety of cultural differences and the basis (background and reasoning etc) of adopting once leadership style as well as performance between western and eastern cultures even the eastern cultures differ from each other too. However, keeping the contextual factors (the basis and religion etc) aside, the phenomenon of Leadership is universal in nature and thus the applicability of leadership styles in different cultures and organizations, whether transactional or transformational have universality evidences [62] where evidences have been gathered from all continents except Antarctica. In fact, the paradigms are too broad to provide a basis of measurement and inculcation; however, their effectiveness may vary with respect to cultural diversification; yet, both transactional and transformational leadership styles have the capacities to develop and sustain individual identity and meet follower’s needs for self enhancement (via inspiration and empowerment) and self efficacy (via contingent rewards) [63].

Dicksona, et al. [64] defined several types of Universal relationships including simple universal, variform universal, functional universal, variform functional universal and systemic behavioral universal, where only simple universal relationship carries the meaning which is understood in general i.e. a phenomenon constant everywhere, and do not vary across the cultures. Thus, more work is required and it is being carried out by the researchers shown by several research presentations at major conferences [64].

Transformational leadership may be autocratic and directive or democratic and participative. Leaders can be intellectually motivating to their followers when they authoritatively direct the followers' attention to a hidden conjecture in their thinking. Leaders could also be intellectually motivating when they ask whether their group would be ready to look together for hidden assumptions. In the individualistic societies of North America, more participative leadership would be expected of its transformational leaders. In the collectivistic societies of Asia, more directiveness would be expected of its transformational leaders. How participative or directive the
transformational leaders will be—how much they will depend on authority—would also depend on the issue involved. One would expect to see more authoritative transformational leadership when policy decisions rather than work place decisions are being made.

In highly democratic countries such as The Netherlands and Australia, transformational leader behaviors are highly correlated with participation in decision making (Den Hartog, 1997; Feather, 1994). This implies that transformational leaders may need to be more participative to be effective in highly democratic societies. In contrast, in high power distance societies, transformational leadership may take a more command form (Den Hartog et al., 1999).

Similarly, according to an study conducted by Paracha, et al. [12] in Pakistani Private School Chain of Educators working in Rawalpindi and Islamabad revealed interesting results where transactional leadership style was more preferred over transformational leadership style. Results reveal that the level of significance of transformational was positive but weak then transactional leadership with respect to employee performance, as Pakistan is a country where power distance and uncertainty is high, and thus transactional leadership is more suited in order to achieve targets. It’s a bureaucratic nation where one man show rules and autocratic leadership follows throughout the whole history, so employees assume themselves that their leader will be strict and follow rules and regulation. Accordingly, most of the private organizations prefer to motivate their employees by using Transactional rewards such as promotion, bonuses and punishments etc. However, with the passage of time, the trend is slowly changing and moving towards the transformational leadership style but still the performance level is low as compared to transactional leadership because employees feel relaxed when they come to know that their leader is not going to punish them.

Thus, due to variability and differences in application of these leadership styles, both the optimal combination of transformational and transactional style is crucial. After all, in the present research, the latent construct of culture is a function of both the positive impact of transformational style and the negative impact of transactional style [65]. Hence the following propositions are proven accordingly:

**Proposition 1:** There is positive relationship between different leadership styles and employee performance across different cultures.

**Proposition 2:** Leadership Styles vary across different cultures and have dissimilar effects on employees’ performance.

### 3.3 Leadership Styles and Gender Differences

Hofstede [66] also describes a culture dimension labeled Masculinity versus Femininity. According to Hofstede, masculinity implies principal values in a society that stress assertiveness and being tough, the possession of money and material objects, and not caring for others, the quality of life or people. In feminine cultures, values such as affectionate social relationships, quality of life, and care of the weak are stressed.

Hofstede also explicitly links this dimension to gender differences. Research has shown that successful managers are stereotypically viewed as more similar to men than to women on characteristics considered critical to effective work performance, such as leadership ability, self-confidence, objectiveness, assertiveness, and forcefulness. Though there is a substantial amount of within-culture research on this (primarily in the United States), Schein (2001) has established this both in the United States and in several other countries (e.g., China, Japan, Great Britain, and Germany). High societal masculinity characterizes societies in which men are anticipated to be self-assured and tough and women are expected to be modest and affectionate. In contrast, low masculinity (or high femininity) distinguishes the societies where both men and women are expected to be modest and affectionate[66]. Achievement motivation and an acceptance of “machismo style” management should be greater in countries high on masculinity than in those low on masculinity. Hofstede (2001) holds that masculine and feminine cultures create different leader hero types. The heroic manager in masculine cultures is influential, self-assured, and aggressive. In feminine cultures, the “hero” is less noticeable, seeks consensus, and is spontaneous and cooperative rather than tough and influential. However, studies do not always support this. For example, Helgstrand and Stuhlmac (1999) compare leader prototypes of Danish and American participants. Danish and American cultures have been found to be at variance on masculinity and individualism. It was expected that individuals would rate a leader candidate that matched their own culture as more effective and more collegial than a leader that did not match. Unpredictably, the highest leader ratings were not in situations with a cultural match between participants and leader candidate. Rather, both cultures found feminine leaders as most collegial and feminine–individualistic leaders as most effective.

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However, the research did not evaluate whether leaders with those traits/styles were truly more effective.

According to Eagly, et al. [13] it is likely that higher standards are imposed on women to accomplish leadership roles and perhaps to maintain them as well. Because transformational styles are particularly skillful in most organizational settings, a tendency for women to have a more transformational style than men could be a sign of the selection of women who have met the higher standard that is obligatory on women. Such women may also exhibit more of the effective contingent reward transactional behaviors and fewer of the ineffective transactional behaviors (i.e., passive management by exception) and laissez-faire behaviors. In addition, consistent with the assumption of a double standard, women who manifested these ineffective styles and thus performed inadequately may be deselected from leadership more quickly than their male counterparts.

Hence, the following proposition is proven accordingly:

Proposition 3: Leadership Styles vary due to gender differences and have dissimilar effects on employees’ performance.

3.4 Leadership Styles and Communication Skills
Including Gender Differences

According to Madlock [3] communicator competence requires the ability of individuals to demonstrate competencies in areas such as listening and negotiating. It is indicated that as a consequence of changing work environments in which employees are more educated and intelligent than past generations, leaders are now required to lead by conciliation. Specifically, in order for leaders to persuade people to follow their vision, they have to communicate effectively by concentrating on the interests of the followers and creating win-win situation at both ends i.e. for the organization as well as for the individual.

Harris and Cronen’s (1979) research pointed out that competent individuals must not only achieve their goals (be effective) but also do so appropriately. In following with this notion, communication competence has been conceptualized to encompass elements of knowledge, motivation, skill, behavior, and effectiveness.

According to Vries, et al. [6] communication is central to leadership. Given the explosion of studies on charismatic-transformational leadership, it is surprising that the number of studies linking communication to charismatic-transformational leadership is relatively sparse and directed mostly at rhetorical skills and content. For instance, with respect to communication styles, charismatic leadership training studies have looked at the effects of training inspirational presentation style on the trainees and their public, showing positive effects of the training on the trainees and on the attitudes and performance of their public. The study showed that an expressive (enthusiastic) presentation style had a much stronger effect than the content of the speech. Because charismatic leadership has been found to be strongly related to human-oriented leadership and because human-oriented and charismatic leadership are much more saturated with relational content than task-oriented leadership.

On the other hand, cultural ‘styles’ may play a role, with subjects from the Netherlands valuing a less ‘expressive’ style of interaction than for instance people from Southern Europe. Secondly, task-oriented leadership is much less strongly related to communication styles than charismatic leadership and human-oriented leadership. Task-oriented leaders are characterized by conviction and, more than charismatic and human-oriented leadership, by preciseness. However, in contrast with human-oriented and charismatic leadership, task-oriented leadership is also portrayed through the presence of (some) verbal aggressiveness. An explanation of this finding may be that items pertaining to task-oriented leadership, more than items pertaining to human-oriented leadership and charismatic leadership, reflect content (e.g., rules, planning, and goal-setting) instead of style (e.g., friendliness, trust, and inspiration).

According to the Carli [67], women usually tend to exhibit a social-emotional or relational orientation in interactions with others, whereas men tend to exhibit a more independent and unemotional orientation. The results of Carli’s research suggest that the inferior status of women, compared with men, does affect women’s speech. When interacting with men, women spoke more hesitantly than when interacting with women. Moreover, the use of hesitant speech appears to be functional for women. Men were influenced to a greater degree by women who spoke hesitantly than by those who spoke assertively. It may be important for a woman not to behave too competitively or assertively when interacting with men in order for her to exert any influence, even if she may risk appearing incompetent. Moreover, those who contribute many task behaviors are likely to be considered experts or leaders. Therefore, the degree to which a person makes task contributions should also be positively associated with his or her ability to influence others [68].

Druskat [69] argues that Women’s Leadership Style and influence is consistent with Transformational Leadership.
style whereas Men’s Leadership style is consistent with Transactional Leadership Style where Men make use of Power and Authority themselves whereas Women tend to be sharing power and having supportive and encouraging.

Thus, communication is a powerful catalyst for establishing and sustaining trust, the emotional state that is shared by highly committed workers and leaders. Leader communication is the linkage that passes on the behavioral intent to employees, thus creating the groundwork for trust. Moreover, Leader communication abilities can be enhanced as a result of training, and this enhancement positively affects the performance of direct reports or followers [70]. Hence, we can conclude the following proposition.

**Proposition 4:** Communication Skills of Leaders have positive effect on employee performance across different cultures, including gender differences.

**4.1 Limitations and Future Implications**

Following are the limitation and future implications of this research:

- **Empirical Research of cross-nations as well as across continents is required to be carried out for studying the universality concept of Leadership and effects of various leadership styles in various cultures as well as gender differences.**

- **The degree of variation in leadership styles and employee performance integrating culture and gender differences may be measured across the continents.**

- **Researchers may find out that which type of style is most commonly used across the continents and proves to be effective for getting desired employee outcomes**

- **Further, each dimension of Transformational Leadership (Charisma, Inspirational Motivation, Intellectual Stimulation, Individual Consideration) as well as Transactional Leadership (Contingent Reward and Management by Exception) may be studied across nations for their usage, effectiveness and variance.**

- **Researchers may find out, whether similar or dissimilar, effects of similar/dissimilar leadership style in different cultures with same gender and communication skills, on employee performance.**

- **Moreover, the usage of styles at different levels of organization as well as, at different job departments of organization, across nations and effectiveness could be studied as well.**

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Author is Mphil in Management Sciences (HRM) and is experienced HR Professional with 10+ years Corporate Experience at different levels. Author has been interested in conducting researches in Leadership, Employee performance and appraisal, Strategic HRD, Employee Engagement etc and keen to lean and improve in the areas of interest therefore feedback for improvement is always welcome at khalidilm@hotmail.com

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