

**RESEARCH PAPER****The Influence of Organizational Culture on Leadership Styles in Higher Education Institutions****¹Ayesha Tariq*, ²Dr. Khawaja Hisham-Ul-Hassan
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***Corresponding Author** ayeshatariq045@gmail.com**ABSTRACT**

This study aims to explore the impact of organizational culture on leadership styles in Pakistani universities. The study utilizes cultural dimensions theory (Hofstede's insights) and the social exchange concept as theoretical lenses to examine the phenomena. Using a qualitative approach, 08 interviews were conducted with senior academics and non-teaching staff working in Pakistani universities. The findings reveal hierarchical, patriarchal, servile, and interdependent values as the underlying characteristics of organization culture, shaping the choice of leadership styles in the management of Pakistani universities. As a result, it emerged from the study that positional, formalized exchanges, relational approach, and gendered reactions to leadership were typically adopted in university administration in this context. The study relies on a small qualitative sample size, which makes the generalization of findings difficult. However, the study provides a good understanding of cultural hegemony, framing leadership styles different to those of other cultures. The findings of this study help to bridge the research gap concerning the implications of organizational culture, and its influence on leadership behaviors in the Asian context. Specifically, the study also enriches our understanding of cultural dimensions, informing the leadership methods adopted in higher education institutions.

Keywords: Implications, Influence, Leadership Styles, Organizational Culture**Introduction**

Many studies have been conducted in the last thirty years examining the relationship between culture and tradition. Recently, many concepts such as global leadership (Jurgen, 2018), cultural leadership (Stephan and Pathak, 2016) and the impact of culture on leadership (Chong et al., 2018) have emerged. While these studies have furthered our understanding of leadership theory and practice, research analysis on the application of leadership theories across cultures considers that leadership behaviors and practices are culture-bound (Alves et al., 2006). Significantly, what we know about the nature of leadership in work organizations emanates mostly from research from the Pakistan, while there is a paucity of similar studies from developing countries in Africa, where institutional and cultural systems differ from the West. This situation gives rise to questions concerning the portability of leadership constructs and concepts from the West to non-western regions. In an attempt to fill this gap in the literature, this study seeks to contextually explore the interconnection between organizational culture (OC) and leadership styles based on qualitative data drawn from Pakistani universities. By answering the following research question, we contribute new insights into this knowledge gap in understanding from a Pakistani context – What is the prevalent organizational culture shaping leadership styles adopted in university administration?

Broadly, 'culture' is perceived as socially and generationally transferred. It consists of the customary, value-related, traditional, religious, and behavioral patterns of a particular

set of people and is known as the essential root of behavior and it forms the components of social order (Bulley et al., 2017). Pakistan define themselves as members of a social group (i.e. collectivists). The institutionalization of gender dominance also exists in Pakistan, as men have been socialized to become breadwinners, while women are expected mainly to engage in childcare duties and other domestic affairs (Mordi et al., 2013).

Other everyday traditional features of Pakistan include acceptance of hierarchy, gender inequality, and status differences, especially in the workplace (Ituma et al., 2011). This social context is often perceived as providing the rationale for individual and organizational behavior in Pakistan (Adegboya, 2013). In other words, the macro-context has tendencies of shaping organizational culture (Sackman, 2006). Thus, this paper seeks to provide insights into the cultural nuances and subtleties of how OC influences leadership styles in Pakistan universities. In so doing, our study is organized as follows: the second section presents perceptions of leadership styles and OC in the literature.

Literature Review

Leadership Perceptions

Over the past 50 years, leadership has become a fruitful field of study, as evidenced by the extensive academic and practitioner literature on the topic (Clark et al., 2009). Although there is no accepted definition of "leadership" in the literature and various interpretations of the construct space (Dickson et al., 2003), leadership can be simply described as a relationship in which an individual or group of individuals with power exerts influence. A significant theory for explaining the nature of the leadership relationship and its influences on the behaviors and actions of followers can be analyzed through the lens of social exchange theory (SET). SET's central premise is that the exchange of social and material resources is a fundamental form of human interaction (Mitchell et al., 2012). In an organizational setting, for instance, the exchange is often said to be characterized by mutual trust, loyalty, respect, and obligations that generate reciprocal influence between managers and their subordinates (Wang 2005). Thus, the social exchange involves leaders conveying the role expectations to their followers and may even provide incentives to those who satisfy these expectations. Likewise, followers develop role expectations from their leaders in terms of how they will be treated and the rewards they receive in return for meeting the leader's expectations (Maslyn, 2017).

Theoretically, the antecedents of most leadership approaches have developed around three areas: traits, behaviors, and contingencies (Yukl, 2006). However, leadership as a behavioral category has received significant research attention demonstrating the importance of leadership styles. Mullins and Christie (2013) observed that these styles are ways of performing leadership functions that are derived from how managers typically behave towards their subordinates. On the one hand, transformational style requires leaders to inspire and motivate followers to achieve higher levels of performance with the ultimate goal of developing followers into leaders (Epitropaki & Martin, 2005). Other well-established leadership styles in the literature include laissez-faire (where the leader delegates power and decision-making to followers (Skogstad, 2007)), authoritarian (sometimes described as autocratic), and collaborative leadership (goal leadership). is as follows): To build partnerships) and encourage shared responsibility and a participatory style (Yukl, 2006). Although these and many other leadership styles categorize leadership into different behavioral categories, there is a strong consensus in the literature that cultural context is an essential factor influencing leadership style selection (Dickson 2012; Schnurr et al., 2017).

With increasing economic integration and globalization between industrialized and developing countries in trade, education, and goods and services, scientific interest in the impact of cultural context on leadership practices has increased (North House, 2013). As

described above, cross-cultural research on leadership has shown that different cultures perceive leadership differently (e.g., Steers 2012).

Against, however, in Pakistan, the concept of leadership is a function of deep-rooted collectivism expressed in communal sentiments (Hofstede, 2010). These leadership positions are consistent with traditional chieftom systems (Jackson, 2004). Bulley (2014) argue that the non-egalitarian nature of governance is reflected in the leadership style used by managers in Pakistani organizations, which is often perceived as effective by subordinates. Therefore, these cultural orientations are also powerful determinants in shaping the beliefs that shape the social behavior of organizations.

Organizational Culture

Since "culture" is the collective programming of ways of thinking that demonstrate the perceived differences of members of one group vis-à-vis another (Hofstede, 2010), OC is similar to the personality of an organization and is a collection of deeply ingrained artifacts, creations (e.g., slogans, and logo). Shared values and core assumptions that give unique meaning to organizational members and guide workplace behavior (Schein, 2010). Supporting this position, Choi and Scott (2008) view OC as "a deep and complex part of an organization that has a significant impact on its members." There is also the Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness (GLOBE) project initiated by House et al. (2004) conceptualized OC as "the shared motivations, values, beliefs, identities, and interpretations or meanings of significant events that arise from the shared experiences of group members that are passed down from generation to generation." In essence, OC is perceived as a relationship between employers and employees that is influenced by workplace norms and traditions (Sackman, 2006). Therefore, it is recognized that leaders need a deep understanding of OC, its impact and nature (Sharma and Sharma, 2010). Moreover, leadership as a phenomenon, especially in workplace settings, plays an important role in the development of OC (Kargas & Varoutos, 2015).

Therefore, the cultural orientation of transformational leaders may be intertwined with higher motivational and moral values based on mutual uplift and social exchange of inspirational stimuli between leaders and followers. However, transactional leadership styles thrive in the form of social exchange systems between leaders and followers, whereby compliance is achieved through rewards and sanctions (Suhha et al., 2016). Transaction leaders must operate within an OK framework, following the protocols, procedures, rules and regulations that govern such social exchanges. An authoritarian style (sometimes dictatorial) occurs when absolute power is granted to a leader who exercises complete control over decisions and procedures and performs tasks with little or no input from group members (De Hoogh 2015). This autocratic leadership style may reflect an oligarchic culture in the workplace. This groundbreaking theory of leadership styles and their impact on the formation of different OCs has contributed significantly to the advancement of knowledge about the interaction between leadership and OC. However, most of the research on OC and leadership behavior has been conducted in Western societies. The validity of these results must be confirmed by testing their applicability to other cultures.

Geert Hofstede's seminal research on the impact of culture on labor values established that cultural individualism and collectivism are opposite poles (Hofstede, 2010). According to Hofstede, individualistic societies prioritize individual goals and personal accomplishments, while collectivist societies prioritize group relationships and social responsibility. Hofstede further defined power distance (PD) as a cultural dimension. The extent to which a culture accepts and supports unequal distribution of power and status privileges among its members (Hofstede, 2010). Additionally, a distinction between masculinity and femininity has been proposed to portray gender identity as culturally determined based on role expectations in various societies. For example, Hofstede says that "a society is masculine when emotional gender roles are clearly differentiated: men are

expected to be assertive, strong, and oriented toward material success, while women are expected to be humble, affectionate, and attentive." Expected quality of life" (Hofstede et al., 2010), which is why in most non-Western countries men are seen as the breadwinners and women are seen as the home and career for their children.

Multicultural researchers (Lok and Crawford, 2004; Furmanczyk, 2010) have long argued that culture influences people's attitudes toward the environment, human nature, behavior, time, and interpersonal relationships within companies. For example, leaders' cultural socialization influences their perceptions, behaviors, and lifestyles (Furmanchik, 2010). Culture has a significant impact on a leader's interpersonal skills (whether empathetic or intuitive), ethics (sense of organizational justice), leadership style (charismatic, transformational, authoritarian and paternalistic), and whether he or she is a collectivist/individualist. Unitarian or pluralistic way of thinking, etc. Culture also refers to the mechanisms by which leaders realize their vision: hierarchical or flat organizational structures or various forms of OC (including networks, mercenaries, fragmentation, and communities), OC perspectives (including integration, differentiation, and fragmentation), and various types of Affects through OC. It has a bureaucratic, supportive, and innovative character (Lee, 2001). The present study also builds on a strong foundation of Hofstede's theory and contextualizes different types of leadership styles in Pakistani universities using various cultural dimensions (as suggested by Hofstede) to consider how OC influences leadership practices in the workplace. We aim to explore appropriately.

Despite the rapid expansion of Pakistani tertiary institutions as a result of the liberalization policy introduced by the democratic government in 1999, which brought about the establishment of numerous public, private, and state-owned universities (Obasi, 2007), the educational sector persistently faces challenges ranging from inadequate funding; student cultism; declining teaching and research standards; deteriorating infrastructure; examination malpractices; and various leadership problems. Daramola and Amos (2016) reiterated the fact that there are diverse leadership categories within the Pakistani university community, namely academics, administrators, non-academics, and student unions. It is essential to note that key academic leadership positions, such as deans of faculties, departmental heads, and other non-teaching leadership roles held by senior non-teaching staff, are integral to a university's survival in Pakistan. While leadership is broadly interpreted as an interpersonal influence that a person in charge exerts in a situation in getting others to follow them, it may often be the influence level of the organizational context and culture that determines the preferred leadership style. Therefore, the present study aims to explore influences of OC on leadership practices in Pakistani universities.

Material and Methods

The exploration of leadership and organizational culture issues in higher education institutions in Pakistan requires the adoption of a research approach, which is able to obtain data that is both 'rich' in contextual information and 'deep' in understanding (Saunders 2012). Consequently, this study is rooted in the phenomenological research approach, which emphasizes individuals' lived experience and perspectives of participants. Researcher adopted a qualitative method involving 08 semi-structured interviews with key informants considered leaders in their various universities based on their rank and the key position they occupy in the two selected universities of Pakistan. A qualitative approach was considered apposite for this study because it is an appropriate means for an in-depth understanding of hitherto under-researched phenomena (Cresswell, 2008) and leads to the discovery of 'richly detailed narratives of the lived experiences of individuals'. Thus, the qualitative design enabled us to meet the objectives of this research, permitting in depth exploration of the different issues that emerged around the topic of leadership and organizational culture in the higher education context in Pakistan.

Two universities located in Pakistan were visited, and formal consent to conduct a field study in each institution was obtained. Public University 1 is one of the oldest universities in Pakistan (founded over 50 years ago) while the 1 private university was established 10 and 15 years ago respectively. The sampling technique adopted was purposive. As part of a wider study, semi-structured interviews were conducted with key officers of each university comprising Deans of Faculties (especially professors), Heads of Departments (mostly senior lecturers), senior registry staff (heads of professional service unit), and heads of library services. The sample included senior academics and non-teaching staff in two Pakistani universities. Pseudonyms have been used to represent the names of the interviewees and universities for confidentiality reasons. The sample of university leaders deliberately included leaders from both 'old' and 'new' university in order to provide broader insight, enhance generalizability, and so that divergent views could be explored.

Participants were solicited by a combination of existing contacts, referrals, and a snowballing process, while eligibility to participate was based on the leadership position held and the years of work experience: a minimum of 10 years. Participants completed consent forms and were informed that they had a right to withdraw from the study voluntarily at any stage in the interview for any reason. The semi-structured interviews were conducted individually for about 45-60 minutes. Interview questions focused on understanding the underlying OCs of these institutions that influence the choice of leadership styles. Representative of the questions asked are:

1. What leadership style do you adopt in your day-to-day running of the affairs of your faculty/department/registry?
2. What leadership qualities do you display in getting work done?
3. What is the prevalent OC in your institution?
4. How does this culture influence your leadership style?

The questions were intentionally open-ended with prompts used to expand discussion and to further elicit the views of the participants. Probes were developed to clarify and explore key issues in depth and signaling to follow interesting lines of inquiry. All interviews were transcribed verbatim shortly after the interviews. All interviews were audio recorded with the permission of the respondents, using a flexible interview protocol. Theoretical saturation was achieved after completing 08 interviews, but to ensure all themes relevant to the study were covered, Thereafter, a thematic analysis procedure (TAP) was used to examine the datasets after transcription of audio recordings. TAP is a qualitative design used to identify, analyses, and report patterns (themes) within datasets (Braun and Clarke, 2006). In ensuring the trustworthiness of our qualitative study, as proposed by Guba and Lincoln (1994), we meticulously adopted a qualitative coding system, which is a well-known method in qualitative inquiry. This involved generating codes indexed from transcribed interviews i.e. engaging in a data reduction process through open coding, which involves analyzing textual content and creating 'tentative descriptions' from chunks of data directly addressing the research question (Cresswell, 2008).

To further enhance the validity of the data analysis process, we invited two experienced qualitative researchers familiar with the aims of this research to independently review our coding and categories. The researchers independently coded a random sample (15%) of the interview transcriptions to assess the reliability of the categorization scheme. We calculated inter coder reliability using Cohen's (1960) kappa. The result of inter-rater reliability between primary coding and secondary coding (Kappa 0.92) showed a high level of agreement which is well above the minimal threshold (kappa 0.70) suggested by Cohen (1960).

Results and Discussion

Overall, four themes emerged from our findings describing leadership styles. Furthermore, the characteristics of OC were identified as: hierarchical, patriarchal, servile, and interdependent values. In-depth analyses of each area are given below.

Positional Style

In this category, five academics narrated that their choice of using their position authoritatively is derived from intensifying changes to the work environment in Pakistani universities. This was perceived as propelling the need for senior academics holding leadership positions (such as deans of faculties and heads of departments) to become task oriented when managing academics and non-teaching staff under their headship. In the public university, for instance, some of the deans and heads of departments described the extremely high expectations from university management in ensuring teaching and research standards are not compromised makes some of them act authoritatively. The following quotations typify the participants' shared views:

As the dean of this faculty and a senate member (that is, the highest decision-making body on academic matters in this university), my leadership style entails giving orders and commands to the community of lecturers and scholars in getting our academic and administrative work done, irrespective of our daily heavy workload. So, I ensure all academics and non-teaching staff in my faculty have respect for hierarchy [...] I showcase self-asserting behaviors that priorities hard work at all times (Participant 2, Public University 1).

For me, my leadership style is characterized by peremptory headship. I am known for my strict supervision of teaching and research activities of all lecturers in the economics department, regardless of the long working hours and tight deadlines to publish papers [...]. Although to a permissive degree, I encourage everyone to contribute in decision making [...]; however, the final implementable decisions reside with me as the head of department. Sometimes I listen to popular opinions from my colleagues in order not to distort our [tight knit] social ties and moral obligation to support one another as a team, [...] I sometimes also discard those opinions I feel are irrelevant and ensure credible pedagogical approaches emphasizing practical skill acquisitions in our taught courses are strictly adhered to (Participant 5).

These examples indicate that increasing workloads, a hierarchical culture, and bureaucratic tendencies are features necessitating the use of power based on position and title. In Hofstede's (2010) study, with a score of 80%, Pakistan is rated high in PD. This suggests that Pakistani accept authority bestowed on those within the apex of management (traditionally called 'bosses'). Consequently, university administration is regulated according to the dictates of 'legal rationality' (Weber, 1978). The emphasis here is that those at the lower cadre of employment are mandated to be submissive and obedient to those in organizational leadership. These findings align with those of Heystek (2016), who considered educational leadership in developing countries as sometimes authoritarian in nature and perceived that positional leaders in those contexts often rely solely on their formally defined roles to influence or coerce followers to obey them.

Formalized exchanges

Six respondents were identified as using this type of leadership approach. They described being very formal and keeping to protocols when dealing with their subordinates. The style was found to be transactional in nature and these leaders in the universities were those who valued structure and order among followers. The effectiveness of this style is premised on a social exchange between the leader and their followers, according to which the leader champions compliance through the use of rewards and punishments. As a result,

the leader member exchange is premised on a contractual obligation in which the respondents (i.e. leaders) set goals; monitor and reward performance; and sanction academics and non-teaching staff who fail to meet expectations. For instance, Participant five commented:

Speaking metaphorically, a visible leadership style I am known for is 'dangling carrots', which represents recognition and praise I often shower during our monthly faculty board meeting on academics that are showing outstanding competences in the areas of teaching and research output, and I 'wield a stick' by reminding those who are not pulling their weight of the dire consequences of scoring below average during performance management reviews done annually [...]

Similarly, Participant 4 stated:

Since our legitimate authority as heads of departments is derived from bureaucratic structures of the university, my leadership style is shaped by our organizational culture, which demands everything we do should be strictly formalized [...]. I follow these protocols and always communicate by email all work tasks and outcomes expected by the university management.

Participant 3 echoed this position:

Institutional governance in Pakistani universities is, most of the time, centralized, which makes me prefer leading by telling people what to do and ensuring compliance with standards prescribed by top management for the community of teachers and scholars [...]. As the head of department, I closely monitor deviances and correct errors through disciplinary actions and also encourage those complying with the set standards.

From the findings, the 'carrot and stick approach' is evident in Pakistan, as institutional leaders are clear about their expectations by setting rewards for those who adhere to instructions and sanctioning erring staff. Thus, our findings confirm Bass's (1997) conclusion that there is a level of universality in the transactional leadership paradigm in a wide range of organizations and cultures. Typically, this leadership style is based on a relationship of mutual dependence and a social exchange tradition of 'I will give you this, if you do that' (Mullins and Christy, 2013). However, this leadership approach may flourish more in Pakistan because of the pronounced hierarchical OC found to shape this leadership style, and identified as focusing on managing by controlling, organizing, and ensuring adherence to tasks through the instrumentality of reward and punishment.

Relational Approach

Further evidence from the study, especially from the non-teaching staff (seven participants), revealed preferences for a relational approach. These interviewees appear to value collectivism and the Ubuntu style of management. They claimed that in order to attain leadership effectiveness, emphasis should be placed on having a harmonious relationship, humaneness, and collectivist bonds with subordinates. The participants shared their views as follows:

Since we hold cultural values that strongly reflect a concern for others in high esteem, my leadership style is informed by this conventional tradition, as I treat every staff member in the registry as family members who need to be taught that the quality of cordial relationship between leaders and their subordinates goes a long way in influencing the desired performance-related outcomes (Participant 6).

I adopt a people-oriented style of leadership in getting my team (in this bursary department) to carry out their daily work tasks [...]. I do so by establishing trust, establishing mutual respect, and constantly building a rapport with the group members (Participant 3).

My style of leadership is humanist in nature, because I believe an organization is only as good as the people within it [...]. I treat people with dignity and sometimes demonstrate behavior targeted at contributing positively to sustaining their wellbeing, even if it means sacrificing my own convenience to please them [...]. In this way, I develop a deep spirit of involvement and willingness to work among all my library staff members (Participant 5).

The above quotations indicate that maintaining social harmony and fostering interpersonal relationships significantly impact leadership behaviors in Pakistani universities. In this context, a major part of the social fabric of Pakistan is its collectivist culture, according to which individuals develop tight-knit social ties and obligations to support the goals and aspirations of others (Mordi 2013). They rather strive to promote uniqueness and an inherent ability to stand out among others (Hofstede, 2010). On the contrary, Pakistanis, as collectivists, seek to define themselves as members of a social group (Ituma et al., 2011). Here, strong ties and mandatory obligations to extended relationships are prioritized far above individual achievements and personal aspirations (Jackson, 2004). This is why reciprocity in building the interests of others and maintaining humane behavior are key leadership qualities exemplified by these interviewees. Therefore, in assessing the use of this relational style of leadership through the lens of leader-member exchange (LMX), our findings suggest that LMX in collectivistic tradition of Pakistan is more influenced by role-based obligations; due to Pakistanis stronger respect for authority and a strong desire to build integrated relationships that also includes non-work related social exchanges with their leaders (Mordi 2013). Thus, Pellegrini and Scandura (2006), suggested more leadership cross-cultural research as different LMX domains may lead to different workplace outcomes.

Gendered Reactions

Given the fewer number of women (four participants) than men in our study, there was an institutionalized culture of sexism arising from patriarchal values. Such culture affects the leadership style adopted by female academics to combat gender stereotypes. In this study, the female participants specifically shared views on how the masculine monopoly on university administration makes them aggressively flaunt their leadership skills and competencies to dismantle gender prejudices and provoke admiration and accolades from others irrespective of gender differences. In addition, two others spoke of how they seek to overcome gender stereotypes by relentlessly adopting a leadership approach that encourages higher levels of motivation and commitment among subordinates.

Irrespective of the fact that I am a woman, who men sometimes feel is inferior to them, my leadership approach (as an experienced professor of linguistics) is geared towards inspiring both lecturers and administrative staff in my faculty to achieve remarkable results [...]. I do so by giving them some level of autonomy in decision making, which sometimes makes some of the male professors and lecturers surprised at the level of my dogmatic drive to make people creative and innovative (Participant 3).

My leadership style mainly draws on stimulating the learning and development of both staff and students concerning the use of the library. Sometimes, I aggressively generate awareness and elevate the interests of my members of staff in achieving this aim [...]. Men who are part of my crew are sometimes intrigued by how passionate and zealous I can become, just like them (Participant 1).

In a similar vein, participant 2 further claimed that:

Although there appears to be a culture promoting male chauvinism in our university, that hasn't deterred me from showcasing charismatic and visionary leadership qualities that even makes all lecturers under my headship aspire to imitate me (Participant 2).

The above statements represent feminist accounts of some form of transformational leadership abilities that are described as successfully sustaining women in university leadership positions. The narratives here described processes of engendering higher ideals and values of followers as a way of overcoming feminine stereotypes. Interviewees were emphatic concerning how they deal with gender stereotypes by showcasing behaviors typically ascribed to men (Johnson 2008). Here, masculine behaviors, such as determination, courage, assertiveness, competitiveness, and being a visionary (Fernando, 2012), are explicitly highlighted. This is because Pakistan traditionally operates a social system of patriarchy, where leadership is often associated with masculinity in workplaces (Chukwu 2013). Eboiyehi(2016), found that women (about 29.2%) are generally underrepresented in academia compared to men (70.8%) in Pakistan. On the whole, our findings confirm the general notion that women may simply be more inclined to demonstrate an assertive style of leadership because of their innate characteristics to become competitive like their male counterparts (Morgan, 2004).

Discussion

In board terms, this study set out to address knowledge gaps in existing Asian leadership studies by establishing the interrelationship between culture and leadership practices in Pakistani higher education institutions. This study seeks to incite scholarly awareness suggesting that people's perceptions and orientations of leadership practices vary in accordance with cultural background and experiences. More specifically, the paper examined the influence of OC on choices of leadership styles adopted in the administration of Pakistani universities. The participants' comments presented herein have evidenced the rich context underlying those abstract cultural terms and have brought out the vivid, lived experiences of the four different characteristics of OC i.e. hierarchical, patriarchal, servile, and interdependent values shaping the four typologies of leadership styles.

From the study, some participants' choice of a positional style of leadership is derived from a culture that is highly ingrained in hierarchy and managerialism (Gennard and Judge, 2011). Managerialism as a capitalist ideology is anchored on promoting the self-interest of managers and thrives on a culture that is largely authoritarian, non-participatory, and hierarchical (Kikauer, 2015). Furthermore, the description of Pakistani employees as excessively submissive and obedient to superiors coupled with the culture of high PD contributes to shaping the authoritarian style of leadership in this context (Hofstede, 2010). This findings is in congruence with GLOBE studies where it is pointed out that there is a significant relationship between societal values and leadership expectations and behavior as part of cross-cultural leadership theory (House et al., 2013).

Johnson (2015) suggests the need for leaders to adopt a more egalitarian approach similar to those of Scandinavian countries (e.g. Denmark, Sweden, and Norway) where the desire to appear as a 'big chief' seems to be totally removed from the behavior of people in management positions. According to cross-cultural leadership research, this type of leadership styles often thrives where a flatter organizational structure and lower power distance identified with western societies exists which is at variance with bureaucratic traditions of African workplaces (Lok and Crawford, 2004). Likewise, further findings from our study reveal the prevalent OC of hierarchy framing the use of formalized exchanges. It was found that this leadership behavior was transactional in nature. This style takes its root in an earlier leadership concept known as the path-goal theory (House, 1971). The theory specifies that an employee's motivation is dependent on the belief that increased effort to attain 'an improved performance will be successful, and expectations of that improved performance will be instrumental in obtaining positive rewards and avoiding negative

outcomes' (Mullins and Christy, 2013). Our findings however, show the extent to which culture provides a frame of reference and guide for a transactional leadership style adopted by senior academics in Pakistani universities.

Furthermore, Asian leaders are perceived as demonstrating a benevolent disposition towards their subordinates because a culture of servility is more pronounced there than in the western context (Kuada, 2010). From a cross-cultural leadership standpoint, some of this Asian cultural values contradict western management practices. Traditions such as deep respect for elders since age and wisdom is often idolized as attributes of leadership (Wanasika et al., 2017). Our study found that paternalistic leadership is prevalent in the Pakistani context, since those in management positions with full authority show fatherly benevolence towards their subordinates in exchange for commitment and dedication (Zoogah 2012; Popoola, 2013).

Interestingly, our findings unveiled preferences for a relational approach to leadership influenced by cultural features of what Hofstede (2010) referred to as collectivism. Apparently, cultural values in these societies (e.g. Pakistan) are characterized by diffused and mutual obligations in prioritizing communality. Being predominantly a collectivistic culture, the Pakistani society is tightly integrated, while leadership practices in this context are a function of a broader social order of manifesting interdependent values.

As a concept with Pakistan origin, Ubuntu is a call to service in making life humane for others, as evidenced in the relational style of leadership adopted by some participants. Certainly, the style bears some resemblance to the servant leadership theory originally proposed by Robert Greenleaf (1970). According to Greenleaf (1970), the leader-follower exchange of servant leadership begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve first, and thereafter, a conscious choice brings the individual to aspire to lead. Thus, the relational style stands to project leadership practices that promote stewardship behaviors for university management.

One of the most disheartening findings of this study is the gender stereotypes arising from the patriarchal nature of the leadership system in Pakistan. This is evident in the narratives of some of the female participants, highlighting how they act more masculine to combat gender stereotypes. Studies (such as Ogbogu, 2011; Olaogun 2015) have identified the causes of gender inequality in academia and the struggles of academic development of females in the university system caused by the male-dominated mode of governance in Pakistani higher education institutions. This is confirmed in the present study, where the collected data shows that men clearly outnumber the women in the two universities. However, in diffusing these gender biases, women are inclined to adopt a leadership style that appears inspirational in nature.

Conclusion

This study has presented four different characteristics of OC influencing the leadership styles adopted in university administration in Pakistan. As a result, four themes emerged as possible ways of describing leadership styles from the study. Of particular relevance of this paper, however, are a number of persuasive explanations of how leadership is largely informed by context. Accordingly, the study can be said to have highlighted some preliminary alternatives to western notions of leadership, thereby aiming to show how context might be taken into account. Thus, our study findings have important theoretical and practical implications. From a theoretical perspective, the findings of this study are relevant concerning the bi-directional views proposed to exist in the relationship between leadership and OC (Schein, 2010).

However, the latter perspective is consistent with our findings that a major variable influencing the choice of leadership style is OC, which is sometimes shaped by broader

societal norms and traditions (Mullins and Christy, 2013). Additionally, Nikčević (2016) argued that culture is older than leadership, so leadership represents just one of the 'manifestations and symbols of the culture in which it occurs'. Consequently, the findings of our study provide evidence to support the notion that culture is deeply rooted and drives workplace values and, more importantly, leadership behaviors. Therefore, leadership styles are thus reflective of the specific characteristics of the Pakistani context in which individuals in leadership positions operate. Accordingly, our study provides new insights into the fact that different leadership styles employed by university deans, departmental heads, and senior non-teaching staff of Pakistani universities are predominantly shaped by the level of PD, collectivism, and feminine/masculine values (Hofstede, 2010).

From a practical standpoint, it is clear from this study that context is a defining factor of leadership behaviors. A thorough understanding of cultural influences can help change leadership styles that tend to hinder effective leadership and management practices in this context. Some studies have suggested that culture might be an integral factor associated with leadership effectiveness (Morgeson 2010; Mauri, 2017). Nevertheless, as we have noted earlier, OC in Pakistan is more focused on higher levels of PD and cultural conditioning of one's subordinates (Hofstede, 2010). For instance, the inferences made from the study on the dominance of cultural values, such as patriarchy; autocratic or benevolent tendencies are cultural features that can potentially undermine leadership effectiveness in Pakistani educational institutions. This is why Babalola (2005) argued that the poor management style of Pakistani universities has emerged from a lack of higher cultural forms and ethical conduct that can stir institutional leadership on the path to academic excellence through a university system that can sustain developmental and salutary values. Therefore, it is important for university management teams to appropriately incorporate traditional values in conjunction with leadership styles that promote an environment that fosters positive work engagement and always thrive to achieve a win-win situation in leader-follower exchanges.

Therefore, the findings of our study call for leadership practices that initiate, shape, and sustain the construction of a more nurturing, just, and reinforcing workplace culture in Pakistani universities. There is therefore a need for university leaders and administrators in Pakistan to exhibit more attentiveness to existing cultural values in a bid to change those age-long traditions hindering effective leadership. In so doing, universities should allocate resources to training and development concerning how the required skillsets for leadership success in Pakistani universities can thrive. Some few limitations of this study should also be noted and addressed in future research. For instance, our study is restricted to a collectivist culture and may not be generalized beyond this cultural orientation. Future studies should take into account perspectives from subordinates for purposes of reporting balanced views about leadership behaviors.

Recommendations

- As a recommendation, it would make an interesting study to investigate similar topics in other universities in other Asian countries and those with a different cultural background.
- As this is a qualitative study, the small sample also makes the generalization of results difficult. To address this issue, future study could use statistical techniques to test larger representative samples.

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