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DRIVERS OF EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AND ROLE OF TRANSACTIONAL LEADERSHIP-CASE OF PAKISTANI BANKING SECTOR

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Abstract

The purpose of the article: This research explored and contributes to the leadership literature by investigating the influence of transactional leadership over employee engagement at certain banks located in KPK and Punjab province of Pakistan. It observes the influence of main aspects i-e contingent reward, active management by exception (MBE active) on worker's regular job commitment

Materials and methods: This distinctive combination of leadership behaviors are compared with attention given specifically to everyday work settings. Twenty banks are selected involving 180 employees. Questionnaires and interviews are conducted to collect data.

Results of the research: The relationships among variables are examined through the Spearman Rank-order correlation coefficient. The moderating effects associated with corporate culture are observed by employing multiple regression analyses. A positive and significant relationship is revealed between transactional management and chosen variables except "passive management by exemption". It is safely predicted that employee job satisfaction can be greatly elevated through transactional leadership. It is established that "contingent reward" and "active management by exemption" improve worker's engagement in contrast to passive management by exemption.

Applications: This research can be used for universities, teachers, and students.

Novelty/Originality: In this research, the model of Drivers of Employee Engagement and Role of Transactional Leadership-Case of Pakistani Banking Sector is presented in a comprehensive and complete manner.

Keywords: Transactional Leadership, Employee Engagement, Contingent Reward, Active Management, Passive Management, Management by Exception.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, transformational-transactional leadership is extensively investigated and explored (Figure 1)

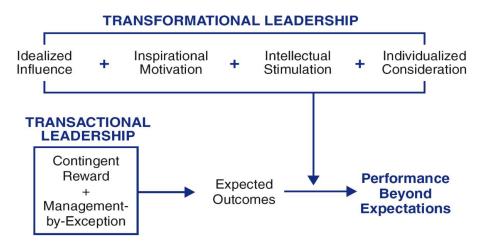


Figure 1: Narratives of Transformational and Transactional Leadership

Initially, this concept was presented by "<u>Burns (1978)</u>" in his article as treatment of "political leadership". In this period of modernization when rivalry and cutthroat competition exists among organizations, the significance of workers and employee satisfaction cannot be overlooked. The existence of mutual cooperation and interaction between managers (leader) and subordinates (followers) is an important ingredient for an organization to accomplish its objectives. To achieve employees' effectiveness and productivity, this interaction plays a decisive role in the management style that features the managers (leaders) and their subordinates (followers). According to <u>Eskildsen and Nussler (2000)</u>, worker's satisfaction is reflected in the worker's view of the occupation and the organization where they are employed therefore



worker's view of behaviour of leadership is an essential forecasting agent of commitment and job satisfaction (<u>Jaskyte</u>, <u>2004</u>). Based on the studies, it is evident that a leader is effective only if he or she knew the right time to use various strategies to influence the workforce and achieve the objectives efficiently as suggested by "<u>Bolino & Turnley, 2003</u>".

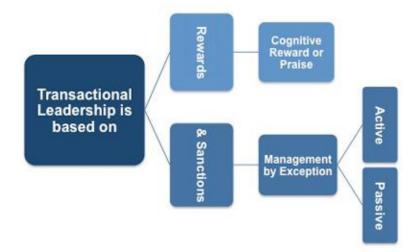


Figure 2: Philosophy related to transactional leadership

As studies suggest, Transactional leaders, gives emphasis on the appropriate exchange of resources (Figure 2). Such leaders provide subordinates with clear idea of what they want and what their leader wants. With a point of view of <u>Burns</u> (1980), transactional leadership is less dramatic in its consequences.

An employee's input and efforts in the achieving of the organization's goal of creating value and maximizing shareholder's wealth plays critical role thus enhancing the need to realize the significance of their contentment. Crucial factors of the workplace, like occupation contentment, devotion, professional performance, and worker behavior, and obligation, have been related through management styles (Kirkpatrick and Locke, 1996). Research proves and validates these results by various scholars and researchers across different philosophies and in diverse workplace settings "Javidan & Waldman, 2003".

The leadership styles should be capable of influencing employee performance to some level in any organization (Figure 3). The leader's style act in both ways i.e. it can either encourage employee to enhance his/her performance level or to demotivate and discourage a worker's level of performance thus decreasing the turnover rate.

In order to achieve efficiency and effectiveness, leadership style requires result-oriented tasks that help to elevate positively employees' satisfaction level and contributes to better employee performances, productivity, and effectiveness (<u>Abishov et al. 2018</u>). <u>Bass (1990</u>) is of the view that leadership style requires additional consideration on the basic concerns, such as encourages methods that feature leader-subordinate interaction.



Figure 3: Leadership Styles

Although substantial research is accumulated on this topic, worker's approach towards their job specifically in the Pakistani employment settings still depicts a lack of job satisfaction



BACKGROUND

A 20th-century German sociologist, Max Weber, explored extensively management styles and proposed three-fold categories: traditional, charismatic and rational-legal, or bureaucratic (Figure 4). In 1947, this German scholar, Weber, was the first-ever sociologist suggested and described rational-legal leadership as the transactional leadership — as "the exercise of control on the basis of knowledge."

	Traditional	Charismatic	Legal-Rational	
Source of Power	Legitimized by long- standing custom	Based on a leader's personal qualities	Authority resides in the office, not the person	
Leadership Style Historic personality		Dynamic personality	Bureaucratic officials	
Example	Patriarchy (traditional positions of authority)	Napoleon, Jesus Christ, Mother Teresa, Martin Luther King, Jr.	U.S. presidency and Congress Modern British Parliament	

Figure 4: Weber's types of leadership's authorities

Theory related to "Transactional leadership" is founded on the basis of the notion that leaders provide workers with something they required in return for accomplishing something the workers need. It suggests that employees in order to get self-motivated and need monitoring, instruction and direction, and structure to finish tasks effectively and efficiently. The noticeable writers to improve "Weber's theories" were political scientist James McGregor Burns. He emphasized in his book "Leadership," that both transactional and transformational leaders must possess moral values and have a higher sense of purpose. According to his model, transactional leaders promote fairness, responsibility, honesty and honoring commitments.

In 1980 - 90s, scholars like "Bernard M. Bass, Jane Howell" and "Bruce Avolio" suggested the following "three dimensions" of "transactional leadership": The primary one is "Contingent reward" which is defined as the process of identifying goals and rewarding employees for accomplishing them. Then the second dimension is "Passive management by exception", which states that an employee should not intervene in work in progress until and unless a dispute arises. The third dimension id identified as Active management by exception, where managers are supposed to anticipate problems, monitor progress and issue corrective measures

DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

Contingent Rewards is defined as the extent an entrepreneur should place constructive transactions among subordinates: The entrepreneur should state clearly his expected goals and rewards for accomplishing these goals should be established. It should be clearly defined by the leaders what followers are expected to perform and what they will receive

"Active Management by Exception" is the extent for entrepreneurs to decide when to take corrective action on the originating leader-subordinate relations. Distinguishing factor concerning "management by exception—active" and "management by exception—passive" is effectiveness of top management's interference. Before the behavior results severe problems, Active leaders inspect subordinate's behavior, anticipate complications, and undertake precautionary measures.

Passive leaders: The leaders concentrate on task completion with a focus on complications that may come up and rectify the said difficulties so that current performance is kept at required levels. Bass states that "Passive management-by-exceptions" – leaders respond only if complications are grave enough to pursue remedial steps. They try to evade taking any decisions at al.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Some banks along with their leaders consider their job is to deliver the directions and commands plus directions to their fellow workers who work under them and it's their duty and responsibility to follow and obey the commands. Many banks just are responsible for financial objectives and challenges towards the employees devoid of engaging them in decisions making process.

OBJECTIVES

- To determine that contingent reward has a "positive relationship" with "employee satisfaction".
- To explore that active management by exemption has a "positive relationship" with "employee satisfaction".
- To investigate "passive management by exemption" and "employee satisfaction" relationships.
- To study "transactional leadership" plus "employee satisfaction" and the role of corporate culture as a mediator between them.



RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- What is the nature of the association amid "contingent reward" and "employee satisfaction"?
- The kind of connection exists between "active management by exemption" and "employee satisfaction"?
- How MBE-passive i-e "passive management by exemption" affect "employee satisfaction"?
- Will transactional management and "employee satisfaction" be mediated by corporate culture?

STUDY RATIONALE

Transactional leadership is considered significantly important in the world today. In a financial institution like banks where all of the workers are of specialized nature and not every one of them is at same level. This study explores and discusses the benefits of transactional leadership since still most banks in Pakistan is still involved in traditional transactional leadership practices that offer rewards and do not attempt to encourage subordinates. The research explores the extent to which transactional leadership affects employee satisfaction, commitment and work engagement which then affects performance of employee, absenteeism, and turnover.

SCOPE OF THE STYDY

Achieving employee engagement through leadership styles is the most debatable topic in current times. It is used and investigated extensively now that the commercial domain than the financial area, it is considered rare. This study is intended to contribute literature on leader's style, worker's engagement, and performance. The purposes of the current study can assist leaders first to understand their obligations and afterward recognize if it has a consequence on Employee Engagement and Performance. This investigation empirically explores transactional leadership and its influence on "Employee Engagement" in addition to enactment by means of their influences on a collection of variables.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature on leadership focuses initially on the characteristics and attributes of a leader (Figure 5).

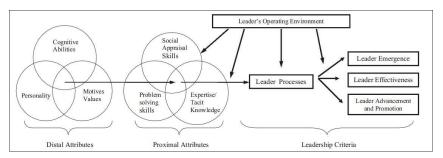


Figure 5: Characteristics and attributes of a leader

After that, it concentrates on conduct and behavior and later put emphasis on it's contextualized nature. The concept of leadership uniquely emphasis the concept of "Great Man" which assumes frontrunners cannot be made but they are born with this quality, moreover they possess distinctive qualities. Initially researchers assume that bests were those people who are having success stories mainly related to military (<u>Peres et al. 2018</u>). Even today scholars and management psychologists are till great proponent of "great man idea".

Management is a combination of mutual qualities that differentiate bests. It means that any individual has characteristics like responsive, adaptive, "achievement-orientated", ambitious, "assertive & decisive", "self-confident & energetic", persistent" etc, fulfill the condition as an entrepreneur or be a potential entrepreneur. Management styles comprise of behaviors, techniques, and methods as advised by leaders to construct roadmap and vision for formulating, conveying and executing the organization's strategic and tactical future plans (Figure 5).

Earlier numerous theories about leadership were introduced. Behavioral paradigms believe that if behavioral aspects of leaders could be revealed then individuals might be turned in entrepreneur. Leaders' behavior as assumed by situational theories should vary situation to situation. The appropriate pattern of conduct is expected according the situation-specific variable. Contingency theory is proposed subsequently which is almost similar to earlier theories that were proposed. It was primarily concerned with variables that are environmental through which best management style suited to the situation is determined. It is assumed by the scholars that not an exact or specific "uniform leadership style" is perfect but several other variables contribute substantial contribution incomplete accomplishment like the leadership style, aspects of the situation and qualities of the followers.

Present-day studies focus on management styles specifically on the two main facets i.e. "transactional leadership" and "transformational leadership". "Transactional leadership" focuses on top managers and subordinate interactions.



Subordinate acts in accordance with the direction and will of the leaders and he in return reward the hard work positively and consequently a reward could be adverse like disciplinary action if subordinate is unwilling to obey or it might be encouraging like "recognition" if workers fulfill the desired demand and accomplish the required objectives. Studies proved that transactional leadership style delivers high level of satisfaction as suggested by famous scholars.

"Transactional leadership" also called "managerial leadership". It focuses specifically on the interactions between top management and subordinates. It pays attention to supervisory part and collective performance. These leaders conduct their affairs by ascertaining the requirements of their subordinates and presenting motivational compensation thus fulfilling these needs. There are four basic facets of transactional leadership as explained by Schermerhorn are contingent rewards, active management by exception, passive management by exception and laissez-faire.

Transactional leadership describes multiple components that lead to more satisfied, and loyal and subordinates as compared to others (<u>Bass & Riggio, 2006</u>). The most effective and primary component is contingent reward. It means that workers will obtain incentives once they achieve their goals to elevate commitment thus accepting the fact that Contingent reward is basically transactional in nature when such incentives are material e.g., bonus.

The second component is management-by-exception (MBE). MB- active describes the way to avoid faults from happening by avoiding expected mistakes and the implementation of procedures and regulations. MBE passive is the component that refers to confronting subordinates with their mistakes and conveying disapproval when mistakes have been made. MBE passive occurs most likely when the leaders have a large span of control and when it is necessary passive-avoidant leadership behavior then we focused on MBE active.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

Following hypotheses were formulated for the study:

Ho1: contingent reward has no significant relationship with employee satisfaction.

Ho2: active management by exemption does not have a significant relationship with employee satisfaction.

Ho3: the significant relationship is absent concerning "passive management by exception" in addition to "employee satisfaction".

Ho 4: no role play by "corporate culture" as a mediator concerning "transactional leadership" plus "employee satisfaction".

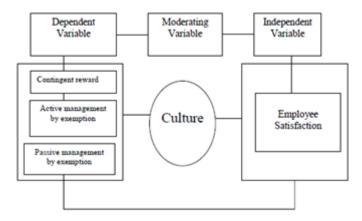


Figure 6: Research Framework

RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

The given conceptual framework (Figure 6) is a theoretical relationship between the transactional leadership style and employee satisfaction. Transactional leadership is taken as an Independent variable while employee satisfaction is assumed as dependent variable. While corporate culture plays the role of moderator between the variables.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The nature of a given investigation falls under "descriptive research". Hence it needs "quasi-experimental design" which proves the best suitable design to explore the administrative sciences (<u>Baridam, 2001</u>), it is appropriate when the scholars cannot regulate over variables in order to explore them. This design was selected after a detailed investigation of the nature of the study. Moreover cross-sectional survey was used to grasp the whole situation for analyses. The survey instrument was designed so that expressive results were attained.

For this study, the independent variable is "transactional leadership style" which comprises "Contingent reward, Active management by exception and Passive management by exception". "Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ)" suggested and developed by <u>Bass (1985)</u> is used to quantity these components of transactional leadership. Employee



satisfaction is the dependent variable and it was quantified in "Minnesota satisfaction questionnaire" suggested by the scholar Weiss.

Corporate culture constitutes the controlling variable. It plays the moderating role associated with "transactional leadership" and "employee satisfaction". Twenty banks are selected involving 160 employees. Questionnaires and interviews are conducted to collect data. The relationships among variables are examined through Spearman Rank-order correlation coefficient. The moderating effects associated with corporate culture are observed by employing multiple regression analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Following table comprises the data regarding top and middle-level managers of the selected banks

Table 1: Age distribution

Age	Frequency	Percentage(%)	
30-45	38	36	
46-40	42	40	
61-above	26	24	
Total	100	100	

The above table reveals 38% of employees are between 30 and 45 years, 40% respondents are between 46 and 60 years while 24% are 61 years and above.

Table 2: Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage(%)
Male	71	67
Female	35	33
Total	106	100

Here it is shown that 67% are male employees and 33% are female. Hence males are dominating.

Table 3: Qualification Demographics

Educational Qualification	Frequency	Percentage(%)	
B.Sc/HND	57	54	
MBA/MSC	43	41	
PHD/ABOVE	6	5	
TOTAL	106	100	

Educational qualification shows only 5% of employees are Ph.D. while majority of employees are B.Sc. i-e 54% and 41% are masters.

Table 4: Employees Job Status Demographics

Job status	Frequency	Percentage(%)	
Senior	61	57	
Junior	45	43	
Total	106	100	

Senior managers comprise the majority i-e 57% while 43% constitute junior managers.

Table 5: Experience Demographics

Years	Frequency	Percentage(%)	
0-10	61	58	
11-20	32	30	
21 years and above	13	12	
Total	106	100	

58% of employees worked for the firm for a minimum of 10 years. While 32 (30%) worked for more than 11 years. And 12% are employed for 21 years or above.

Spearman Rank Order Correlation is used to test our hypothesis while SPSS statistical package is used to analyze the hypothesis.



Table 6:	H1	Testing	Correlation	Spearman's rho
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		Contingent reward	Percentage(%)
Contigent reward	Correlation coefficient	1.000	.976***
	Sig.(2-tailed)		.000
Employee satisfaction			
	Correlation coefficient	.976**	1.000
	Sig.(2-tailed)	.000	

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

A significant relationship is revealed in the table as spearman rho is 0.976** and probability is .000 i-e we reject the null hypothesis because it is less than 0.05 and that is there is a significant relationship between "contingent reward" and "employee satisfaction" thus accept the alternate hypothesis.

		Contingent reward	Percentage(%)
MBE-active	Correlation coefficient	1.000	.953***
	Sig.(2-tailed)		.000
Employee satisfaction			
	Correlation coefficient	.985**	1.000
	Sig.(2-tailed)	.000	

A significant relationship is revealed in the table as spearman rho is 0.985^{**} and probability is .000 i-e it is less than 0.05 hence we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis that is there is a significant relationship between MBE-active and employee satisfaction.

 Table 8: H3 Testing Correlation Spearman's rho

		Contingent reward	Percentage(%)
MBE-active	Correlation coefficient	1.000	.212
	Sig.(2-tailed)		.000
Employee satisfaction			
	Correlation coefficient	.212	1.000
	Sig.(2-tailed)	.000	

It is obvious from the above table that "spearman rho" is .212 and "probability" is .000 which reveals that there is no significant relationship between MBE-passive and "employee satisfaction" thus rejecting the null hypothesis and accepting the alternate hypothesis.

Table 9: H4 Testing Correlation

Control variables		Contingent reward	Percentage(%)
Corporate culture	Transactional leadership	Correlation coefficient	.212
		Sig.(2-tailed)	.000
		Df	
		Correlation coefficient	
	Employee satisfacation	Sig.(2-tailed)	1.000
	Sig.(2-tailed)	DF	

The spearman's rho partial correlation comes out to be 0.921 while probability is .000 i-e less than .05 therefore significant relationship is revealed. Therefore it is safely assumed about the existence of affirmative substantial affiliation between employee satisfaction, transactional leadership, and corporate culture.

CONCLUSION

Spearman's rank-order correlation coefficient is highly recommended by researchers when two ranked variables are measured in terms of strength and direction, therefore, it is applied here to analyze our variables. SPSS is used to test our hypothesis.

For H1, it is found that relationship is significant exists between contingent reward and employee satisfaction which further confirms our outcome when compared to the results of <u>Bass (1990)</u>, revealed a positive affiliation between these two factors i-e transactional leadership and employee satisfaction.

The result of H2 also revealed significant affiliation between "active management by exemption" and "employee satisfaction", which again proves the authenticity of our results and judgments of researcher Ryan, who discovers a constructive association amid the dimensions of "active management by exemption" and "employee satisfaction".



H3 discovered significant association does not exist between "passive management by exemption" and "employee satisfaction". It confirms the findings of Organ and Ryan. Who suggests the absence of relationship between the two variables i-e passive management by exemption and employee satisfaction.

The result of H4 revealed the existence of a positive and significant relationship between the mediator and variables. Bateman et al (1991) found the culture driven by corporate environment regulates the relation of concerning "transactional leadership" plus worker contentment.

It is concluded that transactional leadership style seems to be more reliable choice to create the culture of engagement effectively., it is time for organizations operating in current competitive corporate environment to think beyond then to just motivating their employees and should strive towards creating and encouraging an environment of engagement. It is proved that various types of daily leadership behaviors and styles have a significant and vital direct and indirect influence on subordinates (Lee et al., 2018; Bahremand, 2015).

IMPLICATIONS

Findings of this research highlight that corporate culture mediates between transactional leadership and employee engagement. This research supplements our perceptive towards transactional leadership techniques and job engagement in improving and enhancing employee performance. This effort supports in revealing the ways how transactional leadership qualities and techniques can help the worker's performance by demonstrating significance of corporate culture as mediators thus increasing worker's performance.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR RESEARCH

Quite a few limitations were observed in this research such as Time constraint because comparatively small sample was taken from banks from one state therefore in future, data should be collected from all over the country, with a bigger sample size to overcome this limitation. Furthermore, it will also provide inclusive and comprehensive depiction.

The second limitation is the data compilation method. As questionnaire method was the only technique which is used in collection of data therefore, it is suggested that in future, multiple techniques should be used to assemble data. The cross-sectional data method was used to gather data by using convenience sampling technique. Therefore, for future research work, time lag method can also be used for gathering data.

In future more relevant variables can be introduced associated with employee engagement and assessment on overall worker's performance and performance of the organization can further clarify and explains the association.

RECOMMENDATION

The following recommendations are made on the basis of discussions and conclusions.

- 1. Managers should ensure employees present contingent rewards, encouragements and motivation in return for assistance at a job which in return will enhance their job satisfaction.
- 2. Managers should use appropriate combinations of leadership styles.
- 3. Precautions should be taken to reduce too much use of punishment and gain the confidence of employees instead.
- 4. Exploiting appropriate leadership styles eventually improve organizational effectiveness and efficiency.
- 5. Suitable training programs should be devised and developed for leaders.
- 6. An increase in sample size should be increased to get better insights for future researches.

SUGGESTIONS

The influence of transactional leadership on a wide variety of work-groups and variables associated with managerial level should also be scrutinized. Since the leader's role is vital in developing and shaping up the performance of the workers and employees; for that reason, leaders should possess qualities of transactional roles as discussed in the study.

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