

## **Leadership Styles of the Campus Principals and Divisional Directors in a Public University of Pakistan**

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### **Abstract**

The purpose of the study is to identify the leadership styles (transformational, transactional and laissez-faire) of the campus principals/divisional directors of a public university in Pakistan. This research adopted quantitative approach to conduct the study and accordingly it falls in post positivism paradigm philosophically. The study is descriptive in its specific nature. The study adopted a survey approach, and all the 287 faculty members of the university were included in the sample to collate quantitative data through Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ). Data analysis has been done by using mean, standard deviation and *t*-test (1-tailed). The findings suggest that the transformational leadership style is comparatively being more often exercised by the leaders, followed by the transactional leadership style, while the laissez-faire leadership style is the least practiced. In comparison to all nine dimensions of the three leadership styles, inspirational motivation with the highest mean is the key leadership dimension practiced by the leaders. Idealized influence (behavior) and management-by-exception (active) dimensions also play a pivotal role in shaping the leadership style of the leaders.

**Keywords:** Transformational, Transactional and laissez-faire, Campus principals/divisional directors, Public university

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## **Introduction**

Powerful political, social and economic shifts in the environment in which universities are located, as well as significant changes in the education industry itself, such as the way institutions are managed, demand that university leaders need to be well developed to meet the challenges of the twenty-first century (Coleman & Earley, 2005; Northouse, 2010). Moreover, increased competition, technological advancements, the global demands of a professional workforce and the diverse needs of students are just a few indicators of why university leaders need to be efficient and to continually foster development to enable their universities to be sustained within a challenging environment in an era of globalization (Bono & Judge, 2003; House & Javidan, 2004).

Furthermore, there are several central forces within the continually changing educational contexts in which university leaders operate, such as university demographics, multifarious governance structures, accountability frameworks and the professionalization of teaching, that demand the use of informed leaders to cope with the challenges of the changing environment (Dimmock, 1996; Murphy, 2002). These educational contexts are now more complex, dynamic and fluid than ever before, suggesting various scenarios that could affect the ways in which leaders perform their roles and deal with problems challenging them. Hanna and Latchem (2001) conclude that an increasingly uncertain, fast-paced and competitive environment is forcing change upon universities, and that leaders need to focus on their leadership practices to excel.

Research has consistently acknowledged and emphasized the critical role played by educational leaders in improvements to the performance and quality of institutions and individuals (Al-Omari, 2008; Simkins, Sisum, & Memon, 2003). Regarding the significance of leadership in educational institutions, Simkins (2005, p. 9) argues that “leadership is one of the major factors-sometimes it seems the only factor-that will determine whether an educational organization, be it a school, a college or a university, will succeed or fail”. This generally accepted notion is supported by significant initiatives undertaken for the development of educational leadership in England (Bush & Jackson, 2002; Bush & Middlewood, 2005). These initiatives, for example, include the development of the “National College for School Leadership (in 2002) and the ...Centre for Excellence in Leadership for the learning and skills sector” (Simkins, 2005, p. 9), and establishment of the “Leadership College for Further Education in 2003 and Leadership Foundation for Higher Education in 2004” (Currie & Lockett, 2007, p. 344).

As leadership is considered very significant for the improvement of individual and institutional performance, it has attracted the attention of researchers, theorists and educational institutions, where programs in leadership studies have been started, throughout the world (Northouse, 2010). Some theorists conceptualize leadership as an attribute or behavior, whilst other researchers consider it from the relational point of view (Northouse, 2010). Bush (2003) argues that leadership has no agreed definition and every author defines leadership in their own way. Leadership researchers, exploring this concept from different perspectives, highlight that it is a multifaceted and complicated 'process' (Northouse, 2010). Similarly, many of the definitions perceive leadership as a process by means of which a leader influences a team of colleagues/subordinates in order to attain a collective objective (Davies, Hides, & Casey, 2001; Northouse, 2010).

In the case of the present study, leadership is considered to be a process through which a principal/director (leader) influences faculty members in order to accomplish the common objectives of the campus/division. The reasoning behind taking leadership as a process is that, in the context of the present study, leadership is considered to be a phenomenon which is shaped by the relationships and contacts between the principal/director and the faculty members. This implies that both the principals/directors and faculty members are involved in the leadership process, and leadership does not reside only within the leader as is the case in the trait perspective. Transformational leadership, discussed in the next section, which underpins the current study is considered to be a process (Northouse, 2010), which coincides with the chosen process view in the above mentioned working definition of leadership. However, exercise of leadership is shaped and defined by the societal and organizational context.

The quality of higher education in Pakistan falls short of international standards (Shah, 2010b, p. 90), which is evident from the fact that until 2006 "no Pakistani university met international standards and none ranked among the top 1,000 universities of the world" (Rehman, 2006, p. 1). Although, currently four Pakistani universities are listed in the top 700 universities of the world (Symonds, 2011), "this does not diminish perceptions and concerns about the quality of education in Pakistani universities in general" (Shah, 2010b, p. 90), as one of these four universities occupies the position between 401 and 450 whereas the other three universities lie between 600 and 700. Researchers highlight ineffective leadership along with many others as reasons for this situation (Iqbal, 2004; Isani, 2001), yet there is a general scarcity of research on leadership or leadership styles at the university level in Pakistan. Whatever limited research has been carried out in Pakistan in this field is focused on the school context. Even a substantial corpus of international literature in the area of educational leadership also focuses on the school context, while relevant literature on leadership in the university

context is much more limited (Ribbins, 1997). Inman claims that “little has been written about... heads of faculties and departments” (2011, p. 228); these positions are comparable to the divisional director and campus principal positions investigated in this study. In view of the importance of leadership and to attend to the scarcity of research in this area in a higher education context, this study focuses on university leadership and exploring the current practices/leadership styles of campus principals and divisional directors in a Pakistani public university context.

Moreover, empirical research on leadership or leadership styles is confined to the Western world rather than the developing world (Shaw, 2005; Simkins, Sisum, & Memon, 2003), which includes Pakistan. More specifically, leadership research based on the transformational and transactional approach in educational settings comes “only... from the Western world” (Nguni, Slegers, & Denessen, 2006, p. 149). In particular, the research conducted using the transformational and transactional leadership approach in the higher educational context is limited, and most of it is focused on the American context; thus, the findings are rooted in the American societal culture and belief system (Dimmock, 2000a). Pakistan is an Islamic country, situated in Southeast Asia and has its own norms, values and traditions, which make its cultural context significantly different from those of Western cultures. Hofstede (2001) establishes that cultural differences exist between Pakistan and the Western world, and demonstrates these cultural differences by highlighting that in the case of Pakistan ‘power distance’ has a high score and ‘individualism’ has a low score compared to the results for the Western world. Many researchers, such as Shah (2006b) and Shaw (2005), suggest the practice of culturally and contextually informed leadership behavior. Therefore, to understand and improve educational leadership practices in Pakistan, there is a need for leadership studies within the Pakistani culture and context.

This study responds to a serious gap in relevant literature from Pakistan, as well as to the international demand for leadership studies from non-Western cultures and contexts (Northouse, 2010; Walker & Dimmock, 2002), as “the needs are great and the research opportunities are manifold” (Van Wart, 2003, p. 225, quoted in Currie & Lockett, 2007, p. 342). The intended study falls within the area of ‘leading’, one of the two under-represented areas, leading and leaders, of leadership (Ribbins & Gunter, 2002), and because of its specific focus on transformational and transactional leadership, it also responds to Bass’s (1999, pp. 23-24) call for research that “much more still needs to be learned about how they are affected by the context in which the leadership occurs”.

Leadership is a widely theorized and debated subject. Different leadership styles have strengths and weaknesses, and function in specific contexts (Dinham & Scott, 2000; Shaw, 2005). Models of leadership, for example charismatic, situational, distributed, authoritarian, democratic and servant leadership, have been debated widely in the literature along with different leadership theories (Bush, 2003; Coleman & Earley, 2005; Northouse, 2010). All these debates highlight the range of views and concepts in the field, emphasizing the need to locate and discuss these theories with reference to specific contexts, which this study aims to do. From the array of leadership styles, three leadership styles, transformational, transactional and laissez-faire, have been selected for investigation in the present study. The term leadership style in this study is taken as the pattern of the principal/director's interaction or behavior that he/she exerts to guide, structure and facilitate activities and relationships in a campus/division. The three selected leadership styles further have nine dimensions which map these three leadership styles (see Figure 1).

The reason behind choosing these leadership styles is threefold: first to employ the best option available to achieve the objective of the study, detailed later in this section; secondly to bridge the research gap, as there is no study which investigates leadership using this approach at the university level in Pakistan; and finally the comprehensiveness of this approach (Northouse, 2010). These leadership styles are based on the transformational and transactional leadership approach which is one of the contemporary and widely accepted approaches to leadership (Northouse, 2010; Nguni, Slegers, & Denessen, 2006). The transformational and transactional leadership theoretical paradigm offers a wider view of leadership that augments other leadership models (Northouse, 2010). It brings together the relationships between different aspects of leadership, such as influence, consideration, high Least Preferred Co-worker (LPC), transformational leadership, and participative leadership, in addition to power, initiation structure, low Least Preferred Co-worker (LPC), directive leadership, and transactional leadership (Grosso, 2008).

Furthermore, Bass (1985 & 1999) empirically demonstrates that efficient leaders possess and use different dimensions of both transformational and transactional leadership at different levels and with different intensities (see also Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999). Grosso (2008) argues that this supports the notions highlighted in earlier studies by Hersey and Blanchard (1982) and Stogdill (1974) through meeting the need for leaders to tailor their styles and behaviors to a specific situation. The focus is specifically on the three leadership styles proposed and debates how these are understood in the context of this study. The objective of this paper is to identify the leadership styles of the principals/directors as perceived by the faculty. Conversant with this objective the following research question is advanced:

What are the leadership styles (transformational, transactional and laissez-faire), as measured by the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) Form 5X-Short, of the campus principals and divisional directors of a public university in Pakistan as perceived by the faculty?

## **Literature Review**

### **Transformational and Transactional Leadership**

Dynamic changes in the field of education and educational leadership have highlighted the need to study the full range of leadership behavior. This full range model involves the passive/avoidant (management-by-exception (passive) and laissez-faire leadership behavior at one end and leadership behavior such as inspirational and charismatic on the other end (Bass & Avolio, 1990); and facilitates understanding of higher and lower order outcomes of leadership behavior. This model is based on the previous leadership models, for example the autocratic and democratic model, participative and directive model, initiation and consideration model, and concern for task and concern for relationship model (Bass & Avolio, 2004). The shift of institutions away from more rigid power hierarchies, which demand more transactional leadership behavior, towards more flexible structures of authority, emphasizes the investigation of the full range of leadership styles (Bass & Avolio, 2004). Cascio (1995) asserts the demand to develop and exercise transformational leadership characteristics because of the changes, such as the increase in the diversity of employees and more networking and interdependence of institutions due to globalization. As there is a shift in the focus of research and practice towards the transformation and development of individual employees, teams and institutions, this represents a change in the leadership paradigm from the mere exchange of effort with reward to adopting a more participative, democratic, relationship-oriented and considerate leadership along with exchange relationship (Bass & Avolio, 2004).

Researchers in the beginning of the 1970s emphasized transactional leadership (Levine, 2000), extending the theoretical development to include transformational leadership in the 1980s (House, Woychke, & Fodo, 1988). Downton (1973) first differentiated transactional and transformational leadership (Nguni, Slegers, & Denessen, 2006). Burns (1978), building upon House's charismatic leadership theory (1976) and Downton's work (1973), characterizes two leadership types that are transactional and transformational in his research on political leadership. Burns (1978) broadened the research in order to understand leadership with the notions of collective and interconnected values, moralities and ethics. A major characteristic of Burns' theoretical framework (Nguni, Slegers, & Denessen, 2006) is that differentiation

between transformational and transactional leaders is dependent primarily upon the procedure/s through which leaders inspire subordinates or the method/s leaders use to appeal to subordinates' ethical values and feelings, which makes it very relevant for investigating the educational context of this study.

Transactional leadership refers to a number of leadership frameworks, which concentrate upon the exchange that takes place between the leader and subordinates and which brings a shared advantage to them (Northouse, 2010). This theory is based upon the path-goal theoretical framework of incentive for required acts (Grosso, 2008). The transactional leader inspires subordinates by identifying and satisfying their motives and needs, and it revolves around an exchange relationship, in which subordinates' obedience is exchanged with likely compensation (Nguni, Slegers, & Denessen, 2006). This kind of leadership involves the exchange value of things, and is only effective in certain situations and cultural contexts. In contrast, according to Burns (1978), the transformational leader inspires subordinates further than just exchanging values, and consequently, subordinates' self-actualization as well as excellent results might be achieved. It is perceived as a process which transforms followers, increases the moral and inspiration level among the leader and subordinates, and involves feelings, principles, moralities, norms and greater purposes (Northouse, 2010). Burns believes that transformational and transactional are at different ends of the same leadership continuum (Nguni, Slegers, & Denessen, 2006).

Bass (1985) contradicts Burns' (1978) idea that both forms of leadership, transformational and transactional, are mutually exclusive. Instead, Bass asserts that the two forms of leadership build upon each other (Bass & Avolio, 1993). Bass sees transformational and transactional leadership as consisting of two theoretically separate but interconnected leadership aspects, and he theorizes a continuum of the 'full range of leadership styles' in which a leader utilizes these two kinds of leadership in combination to be successful (Bass & Avolio, 2004). Moreover, Burns (1978) argues that transformation is always for good; whereas, Bass contends that it could be a good as well as a destructive transformation (Grosso, 2008). The transformational leader encourages subordinates to perform better in comparison to their expectations or what they even thought possible, and inspires them to sacrifice their benefits for the good of the group or institution (Kuhnert, 1994). Furthermore, transformational leadership enhances transactional leadership to develop subordinates for the intention of change, improved performance and to attend to the aims of the leader, team and its members, and the institution, in addition to improving satisfaction with and the perceived efficiency of the leader (Bass & Avolio, 1990). Whereas, the transactional leader alone sustains the status quo (Hater & Bass, 1988), in transformational leadership, the leader engages with followers to develop them into leaders (Bass & Avolio, 2004).

On the basis of a number of research articles (Avolio, Bass, & Jung, 1999; Bass & Avolio, 1990; Hater & Bass, 1988) and books by Bass (1985 & 1998), Bass and Avolio (1994), Bass and Riggio (2006) and Gill (2006) on transformational leadership, the following four dimensions of transformational leadership have been identified.

*Charismatic Leadership or Idealized Influence:* Transformational leaders display such behavior which makes them role models for their subordinates (Nguni, Slegers, & Denessen, 2006). These leaders, due to their exceptional competence, persistence and willpower, are appreciated, recognized and believed to be trustworthy (Avolio, Bass, & Jung, 1995). They give importance to subordinates' needs rather than their own, develop and practice higher ethical and moral principles, are risk-takers and do not use authority for their benefit (Bass & Avolio, 1994). Moreover, these leaders are believed to be correct decision-takers, and those who communicate the vision and mission properly (Northouse, 2010). Owing to these leadership behavioral characteristics, subordinates copy such leaders and want to be identified with them. This dimension has two conceptually distinct aspects: first 'idealized influence behavior' - linked with the behavioral characteristics of the leader, and second 'idealized influence attributed' - associated to the facets which are attributed to the leader by their subordinates (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Charismatic leaders have confidence in their subordinates to achieve the communicated goals, which increases the possibility of subordinates internalizing and realizing these goals (Levine, 2000).

*Inspirational Motivation:* This is considered an aspect of charismatic leadership (Nguni, Slegers, & Denessen, 2006) in which leaders inspire the subordinates by means of emotional appeals and charming visions of upcoming circumstances, raising subordinates' aims, and showing passion and hopefulness (Northouse, 2010). These leaders evoke the spirit of the group, communicate clear expectations which subordinates are ready to fulfil and exhibit dedication to aims and collective vision (Bass & Riggio, 2006). The leader who is inspirational is perceived as being well-informed, enlightened and responsive to arising issues, with no demand of trusting compliance from subordinates, and makes subordinates more commanding by supporting them to meet the agreed goals (Levine, 2000). Bass (1990) maintains that a charismatic leader is likely to be very much inspirational, but an inspirational leader might not always be charismatic; however, both these types of leaders give required importance to the personal development of followers, which classifies them as transformational leaders (Levine, 2000).

*Intellectual Stimulation:* A transformational leader stimulates their subordinates' endeavors in order to enhance innovation and creativity in them through encouraging questioning and critical reflection (Bass & Avolio, 1994). This sort of leadership also encourages subordinates to challenge their own viewpoint and morals along with the leader's and the organization's philosophy (Northouse, 2010). Moreover, a participative approach to finding the solution is adopted. Creative ideas from the followers are welcomed, even if these ideas oppose the leader's views (Bass & Avolio, 1994). It is appreciated if subordinates adopt different approaches and resolve problems in their own way (Northouse, 2010).

*Individualized Consideration:* A transformational leader focuses upon subordinates' success and development to their highest level by means of performing the role of a mentor (Avolio, 1999). Bass and Avolio (2004) argue that if the leader wants to successfully develop their followers, the leader must develop himself/herself as well. Here the leader acknowledges the personal differences of followers in terms of requirements and aspirations through demonstrating different types of behavior for different people (Bass & Avolio, 1994). The leader creates an encouraging environment for learning and the growth of followers through maintaining two-way communication, tailoring their contact with subordinates, listening to them carefully, and delegating tasks with continuous evaluation and support if needed (Bass & Avolio, 1994). Consideration behavior is regarded as a significant element of transformational leadership (Bass, 1985), as well as transactional leadership (Seltzer & Bass, 1987). There is substantial evidence from a variety of organizations and cultures that because of these characteristics transformational leaders are considered more effective compared to transactional leaders (Bass & Avolio, 2004).

Literature also debates the three dimensions of transactional leadership and laissez-faire behavior of the leader (non-leadership behavior) (Avolio, Bass, & Jung, 1999; Bass, 1998; Bass & Avolio, 1994; Gill, 2006). These four dimensions are inclined, with different levels, towards an exchange relationship between the leader and the followers (Bass, 1985). Here, unlike the transformational leader, the focus is neither upon subordinates' individual needs nor growth. However, transactional leadership, like transformational leadership, has an ethical aspect. Bass and Steidlmeier (1999, p. 185) argue that "the moral legitimacy of transactional leadership is demanding in many ways. It depends on granting the same liberty and opportunity to others that one claims for oneself, on telling the truth, keeping promises, distributing to each what is due, and employing valid incentives or sanctions".

*Contingent Reward:* In this model there is an exchange relationship between the leader and their subordinates where particular compensation is provided to the subordinates for their obedience and labour (Northouse, 2010). The transactional leader decides a contract with their subordinates in which he/she specifies the targets to be achieved and the incentives for these targets, and then the leader gives agreed incentives on the achievement of the decided objectives (Nguni, Slegers, & Denessen, 2006). Contingent reward has been perceived as useful in offering reinforcement and satisfaction to subordinates (Peters & Waterman, 1982); however, many studies highlight that contingent reward is not as useful as different transformational leadership aspects for achieving subordinates' satisfaction, excellent performance and growth (Bass & Avolio, 1994). Nevertheless, leadership practices take their meaning from specific cultural and organizational contexts. For example, in some countries, such as England, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, South Africa (white sample) and United States, employees would prefer to receive agreed rewards for their all efforts/time invested to the institution because these countries are high in 'performance orientation' and low in 'in-group collectivism', which means these societies are more competitive, result oriented, and have less cohesiveness in their families and institutions (House, 2004). Performance orientation refers to the degree to which a society has a culture of compensation for team members for defining and accomplishing challenging targets; whereas, in-group collectivism is concerned about the extent to which individuals are attached, devoted and loyal to their organizations and families and can make sacrifices for them (House, 2004). In some other countries, for example Iran, Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand and India, people would prefer appreciation and obligation from their leader and colleagues rather than compensation for the extra help/time they have given to the institution because these countries are high in 'humane orientation' and 'in-group collectivism', which means that the people of these countries have strong bonds, loyalty and concern for their families, institution and community (House, 2004). Humane orientation refers to the degree to which a society or culture encourages the individuals to be fair, selfless, generous, helpful, considerate and sensitive to others (House, 2004).

*Management-by-Exception (active):* A leader using this form of leadership behavior keenly observes subordinates' performance, maintains records of mistakes and deviations from criteria, and takes measures to correct these as required (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999; Northouse, 2010).

*Management-by-Exception (passive)*: A leader who adopts this form of management-by-exception remains inactive until inaccuracies and deviations from benchmarks occur, might not know about issues before being notified about them by their followers, and usually remains unsuccessful in taking corrective measures until issues deteriorate (Bass & Avolio, 1994; Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999). Both of the management-by-exception forms are less productive compared to the previous leadership dimensions but are needed in particular circumstances (Bass, 1999).

*Laissez-Faire Leadership*: This is characterized as non-leadership or absence of leadership, “as the French phrase [laissez-faire] implies, the laissez-faire leader takes a ‘hands-off, let-things-ride’ approach” (Northouse, 2010, p. 182). The leader with laissez-faire behavior refrains from their duty, is reluctant to take decisions, is not present when his/her help is required, is unable to follow up when requested and is less interested in supporting subordinates to fulfil their needs (Bass & Avolio, 1994). With this sort of behavior the leader, unlike the transformational and transactional leader, neither facilitates subordinates to develop nor makes any transaction with them. Bass (1985) argues that laissez-faire is not the opposite of management-by-exception (active) or transformational leadership, but rather that it shows a negative relationship with the dimensions of transformational leadership. The strengths of and criticism on the transformational and transactional leadership approach have been discussed by several researchers in detail (Northouse, 2010; Shah, 2009; Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999; Bass & Riggio, 2006; Bass & Avolio, 2004).

Nevertheless, following these leadership styles or certain dimensions of these leadership styles would again be dependent on societal values, culture and patterns of behavior. For example, Dastoor, Suwannachin, and Golding (2003) in the context of Thailand at university level investigated the relationship between leadership styles and faculty job satisfaction through utilizing the transformational and transactional leadership theoretical paradigm. The findings highlight that transformational leadership style has a stronger relationship with the faculty’s self-perceived job satisfaction, and the transactional leadership style comparatively has a less strong relationship with faculty job satisfaction. However, Grosso (2008), who explored a similar relationship in a university from the Mid-Atlantic region of the United States by using the same leadership approach, maintains that “the transformational leadership behaviors ...had strong relationships with faculty satisfaction ...but the transactional leadership behaviors ... did not” (p.104).

The practice of these leadership styles and their dimensions might vary in different contexts even in one society. For example, in comparison to Grosso (2008), Stumpf (2003) examined a similar relationship in North Carolina (United States) at university level, in an informal educational setting, through utilizing the same leadership theoretical paradigm. Stumpf found that the transformational leadership style had a significantly positive relationship with faculty members' job satisfaction. Further, the first dimension, contingent reward, of the transactional leadership style had a stronger positive relationship with faculty job satisfaction as compared to management-by-exception (active), the second dimension of the same style; whereas, the last dimension, management-by-exception (passive), of this style had a significantly negative relationship with faculty job satisfaction. The above discussion underlines that leadership styles are embedded in contexts. This paper debates the findings of a study of leadership styles carried out in a public university in Pakistan to highlight the practice in that context.

### **Methodology**

This research adopted quantitative approach to conduct the study and accordingly it falls in post positivism paradigm philosophically. The study is descriptive in its specific nature. The study focused on seeking perceptions of the faculty members of a particular public university in Pakistan by using MLQ. The whole faculty, 287 faculty members - as identified by the central administration office of that university, of the selected university was defined as the sample, excluding the five faculty members who participated in piloting. The university under study had 10 different sites with 13 units (10 campuses and three divisions – division of education, division of science and technology, and division of arts and social sciences); so, in total there were 13 leaders (campus principals and divisional directors). Bass and Avolio, the authors of the MLQ, suggest that “ideally the MLQ should be administered to all of a focal leader’s associates [followers]” (2004, p. 14), which this study did. All the leaders and participants had a working relationship of more than one year in their current campus/division. The researcher visited all the research sites to hand over and collect the completed questionnaires from the participants on mutually agreed dates. From a total of 287 faculty members, 268 received the questionnaires, excluding the 19 (five who participated in piloting and 14 who were on leave); 228 usable responses were received, which is 85% response rate.

The aim of the study was to explain the campus principals/divisional directors' leadership styles; therefore, in order to collect extensive quantitative data a structured questionnaire was adopted. The MLQ Form 5X-Short allowed the quantifying of the extent and pattern of these leadership styles (Bass & Avolio, 1993), and was based on the transformational and transactional leadership approach, which underpins the present

study. The MLQ Form 5X-Short contained 45 items which measured nine leadership scales, which included five transformational leadership scales, three transactional leadership scales and one laissez-faire leadership scale, along with three leadership outcome variables including effectiveness, extra effort and satisfaction. The 36 items of MLQ, which were availed for research, were in the form of short descriptive statements to describe the specific behavior of a leader. Reliability of the MLQ has been calculated and the Cronbach's Alpha value was 0.93. The participants responded on a 5-point Likert scale against each statement. Mean, standard deviation and *t*-test (1-tailed) have been used to analyze the data.

### Data Presentation and Findings

This section presents the data and the research findings followed by discussion, comparing and contrasting the present study's findings with previous research findings. Table 1 shows that the mean score of the transformational leadership style is 2.49 (0.68 standard deviation) which is numerically higher than that of the transactional and laissez-faire leadership styles. On the other hand, laissez-faire style has relatively the lowest mean score of 2.00 (0.98). The mean score of transactional leadership style is 2.37 (0.57) which lies between the mean scores of the transformational and laissez-faire leadership styles. Based on the descriptive statistics, it can be argued that according to the perceptions of the participants a transformational leadership style is comparatively more likely to be practiced by the leaders of a public university in Pakistan than is a transactional leadership style. The laissez-faire leadership style, on the other hand, is the least exercised by the leaders of a public university in Pakistan.

**Table 1**

*Faculty Members' Perception of their Leader's Leadership Styles: Means, Standard Deviations (SD), and Dimensions' Reliabilities ( $\alpha$ ).*

Leadership Styles, Leadership Dimensions and their Component Items	Mean	SD	A
Transformational Leadership Style	2.49	.68	
1. Idealized Influence (Attributed)	2.48	.80	.75
Instils pride in me for being associated with him/her	2.36	1.09	
Goes beyond self-interest for the good of the group	2.34	1.12	
Acts in ways that builds my respect	2.35	1.05	
Displays a sense of power and confidence	2.79	.98	
2. Idealized Influence (Behavior)	2.56	.70	.67
Talks about their most important values and beliefs	2.50	1.01	
Specifies the importance of having a strong sense of purpose	2.62	.97	
Considers the moral and ethical consequences of decisions	2.48	1.01	
Emphasizes the importance of having a collective sense of mission	2.51	.99	

3. Inspirational Motivation	2.63	.74	.75
Talks optimistically about the future	2.61	1.03	
Talks enthusiastically about what needs to be accomplished	2.65	.96	
Articulates a compelling vision of the future	2.50	.94	
Expresses confidence that goals will be achieved	2.66	1.02	
4. Intellectual Stimulation	2.41	.83	.76
Re-examines critical assumptions to question whether they are appropriate	2.36	1.00	
Seeks differing perspectives when solving problems	2.44	1.04	
Gets me to look at problems from many different angles	2.31	1.10	
Suggests new ways of looking at how to complete assignments	2.44	1.16	
5. Individual Consideration	2.34	.85	.71
Spends time teaching and coaching	2.32	1.20	
Treats me as an individual rather than just as a member of a group	2.37	1.17	
Considers me as having different needs, abilities, and aspirations from others	2.19	1.10	
Helps me to develop my strengths	2.39	1.18	
Transactional Leadership Style	2.37	.57	
1. Contingent Reward	2.42	.75	.76
Provide me with assistance in exchange of my efforts	2.25	.96	
Discusses in specific terms who is responsible for achieving performance targets	2.43	.94	
Makes clear what one can expect to receive when performance goals are achieved	2.33	.99	
Expresses satisfaction when I meet expectations	2.56	1.09	
2. Management-by-Exception (Active)	2.56	.67	.64
Focuses attention on irregularities, mistakes, exceptions, and deviations from standards	2.64	1.01	
Concentrates his/her full attention on dealing with mistakes, complaints, and failures	2.64	.94	
Keeps track of all mistakes	2.46	.94	
Directs my attention toward failures to meet standards	2.39	.98	
3. Management-by-Exception (Passive)	2.18	.81	.65
Fails to interfere until problems become serious	2.10	1.22	
Waits for things to go wrong before taking action	2.05	1.24	
Shows that he/she is a firm believer in "if it ain't broke, don't fix it"	2.28	1.01	
Demonstrate that problem must become chronic before taking action	2.18	1.16	
Laissez-Faire Leadership Style	2.00	.98	.75
Avoids getting involved when important issues arise	1.99	1.27	
Is absent when needed	1.78	1.30	
Avoids making decisions	1.97	1.34	
Delays responding to urgent questions	2.14	1.25	

On examining the difference between the practices of the three leadership styles (transformational, transactional and laissez-faire), see table 2, no statistically significant difference between the degrees of practice of transformational and transactional leadership styles was found. However, the difference between the degrees of transformational and laissez-faire leadership practice and transactional and laissez-faire leadership practice is statistically significant.

**Table 2**

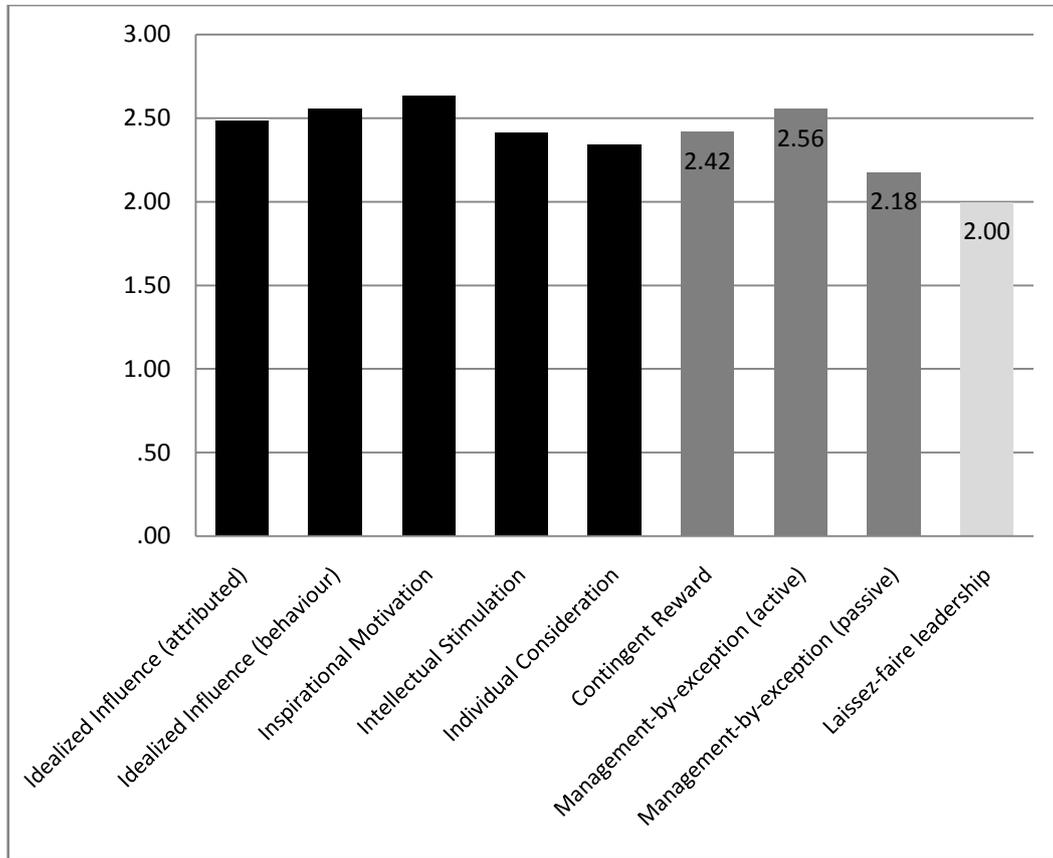
*Difference between the Practices of Three Chosen Leadership Styles*

Difference Between...	Mean (SD)	Mean Difference	<i>t</i> test statistics	
			T	Sig. (1-tailed)
Transformational Leadership Style & Transactional Leadership Style	2.49 (.68) 2.37 (.57)	.12	2.58	.005*
Transformational Leadership Style & Laissez-Faire Leadership Style	2.49 (.68) 2.00 (.98)	.49	10.82	.000*
Transactional Leadership Style & Laissez-Faire Leadership Style	2.37 (.57) 2.00 (.98)	.37	9.74	.000*

\*Alpha level: 0.001

In order to attain a deeper insight into the practice of three leadership styles, a mean comparison of leadership dimensions within each leadership style and between the three leadership styles is presented in figure 2. The data revealed that within the transformational leadership style 'inspirational motivation' (mean: 2.63), 'idealized influence' both behavior (mean: 2.56) and attributed (mean: 2.48) dimensions are relatively more practiced by the leaders of a public university in Pakistan as compared to 'intellectual stimulation' (mean: 2.41) and 'individual consideration' (mean: 2.34). In the case of transactional leadership style, the data showed that 'management-by-exception' (active) was a more exercised dimension with a mean of 2.56, followed by 'contingent reward' (mean 2.42), whereas 'management-by-exception' (passive) was the least contributing dimension with mean 2.18 in this leadership style.

-----Transformational-----, -----Transactional-----, Laissez-Faire



**Figure 1** Faculty Members' Perception of Leadership Dimensions: Mean Values

The 'laissez-faire' leadership style had only one dimension having a mean score of 2.00. From another perspective, in comparison to all nine dimensions of the three leadership styles, inspirational motivation with the highest mean was the key leadership dimension practiced by the leaders in that public university in Pakistan. Idealized influence (behavior) and management-by-exception (active) dimensions also played a pivotal role in shaping the leadership style of Pakistani public university leaders. On the other hand, the laissez-faire leadership aspect, with the lowest mean score, was the least exercised. The next section provides discussion regarding these findings.

Table 3 shows that the findings from this study in Pakistan for transformational, transactional and laissez-faire leadership dimensions, in terms of their practice by the leaders, *in general* follow a similar trend to those established norms for the MLQ within the United States, Europe, Oceania (Australia, New Zealand and Pacific Islands) and South Africa provided by Bass and Avolio (2004). The data highlight the trend that transformational leadership dimensions are practiced relatively more, followed by the transactional and laissez-faire leadership dimensions in all these Western countries, similar to the present study. However, on comparing the results of the present study with the established norms for the MLQ in other countries, the perceived mean values for transformational leadership dimensions for Pakistan were less than the MLQ established norms for all the above mentioned Western cases because of the difference in culture and belief system, norms and values, and organizational structures and traditions.

**Table 3**

*MLQ (5X-Short Rater Form – Lower Level) Mean Comparison: Present Study and US, Europe, Oceania (Australia, New Zealand and Pacific Islands) and South Africa Norms*

	II(A)	II(B)	IM	IS	IC	TfLS	CR	MBEA	MBEP	TsLS	LF
Present Study (N: 228)	2.48	2.56	2.63	2.41	2.34	2.49	2.42	2.56	2.18	2.37	2.00
US Norms (N: 4,376)	2.93	2.73	2.97	2.76	2.78	2.83	2.84	1.67	1.02	1.84	0.66
Europe Norms (N: 3,061)	2.72	2.69	2.83	2.82	2.66	2.74	2.77	2.33	1.10	2.06	0.79
Oceania Norms (N: 4,376)	2.94	2.86	3.05	2.88	2.85	2.92	2.88	1.78	1.07	1.91	0.70
South Africa Norms (N: 2,245)	2.88	2.76	2.88	2.71	2.58	2.76	2.80	2.37	1.14	2.10	0.83
II(A)	Idealized Influence (Attributed)		II(B)	Idealized Influence (Behavior)							
IM	Inspirational Motivation		IS	Intellectual Stimulation							
IC	Individual Consideration		TfLS	Transformational Leadership Style							
CR	Contingent Reward		MBEA	Management-By-Exception (Active)							
MBEP	Management-By-Exception (Passive)		TsLS	Transactional Leadership Style							
LF	Laissez-Faire										

The mean scores of the transactional and laissez-faire leadership dimensions for all these Western countries were comparatively less than those for Pakistan, with the exception of the contingent reward dimension which had a higher mean score than Pakistan. This can lead to the conclusions that overall the transformational leadership style is practiced relatively more in the United States, Europe, Oceania (Australia, New Zealand and Pacific Islands) and South Africa, whilst the transactional and laissez-faire leadership styles are practiced more in a public university in Pakistan.

The findings of the present study are also consistent with many other studies from educational settings. These studies come from several different countries, such as Bragg (2008) from the United States, Dastoor, Suwannachin, and Golding (2003) from Thailand, Nguni, Slegers, and Denessen (2006) from Tanzania, and Bogler (2001) from Israel. These studies *broadly* agree with the findings from the present study, as they highlight the *trend* that in general the transformational leadership dimensions are practiced more in comparison to the transactional leadership dimensions; the laissez-faire aspect is the least practiced by the leaders. This might lead to the inference that the transformational leadership style, overall across the countries, is the most practiced style among leaders, followed by the transactional leadership style; whereas, the laissez-faire leadership style is the least practiced by leaders. These findings are also consistent with the findings of a cross-cultural study by Ardichvili and Kuchinke (2002) from Russia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Germany and the US in business settings. However, it is important to note that when the results of the present study were compared with these studies, the difference between the practices of leadership styles exists because of the cultural and organizational contexts. For example, in the case of Russia, Georgia, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan contingent reward produced the highest score and laissez-faire received significantly higher score, whereas in the present case contingent reward received an average score and laissez-faire was the least practiced.

## **Discussion**

This section analyses the current practice of leadership behaviors/styles highlighted in the present study context. A number of studies, from a variety of cultural contexts across the world explore transformational and transactional leadership (Burns, 2007; Bass & Avolio, 2004). The findings from these studies point out some differences in leadership behaviors/styles, which is consistent with Shah's (2010a, p. 29) argument that "the concepts of educational leadership and its practices vary across societies and cultures". In different cultural contexts perceptions of educational leadership vary because of differences in cultural and belief systems (Shah, 2010a), and differences in leaders' power sources linked with positions in formal organizational systems, such as legitimate, reward and coercive power, and associated with leaders' own personalities, such as referent and expert power (Northouse, 2010). Many other researchers (House & Javidan, 2004; House, et al., 2004) highlight that the values and norms of the people in a particular society or culture, and patterns of societal behavior influence leadership practices and choices in different societies.

The exercise of leadership style in the case of this study was embedded in context, based on the local interpretations of the concept of leadership and its translation into practice. Regarding the interpretation of leadership and other such practices, Shah (2009, p. 5) emphasizes the importance of local context by arguing that “in spite of emerging similarities of policies, structures, and legal provisions across the world [or regions], local societal structures, patterns of behavior, cultural traditions, belief systems, and organizational conventions influence how concepts are translated into practices”. Pakistani society is predominantly Muslim “and this religious ideology guides the discourses and practices in all fields including education” (Shah, 2009, p. 9). Pakistani society has a high power distance culture and is highly collective; thus, subordinates generally show willingness to accept the autocratic decisions taken by their leader (Hofstede, 1991). This is similar to countries such as Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, India, Iran, Thailand and others of that region, as compared to Anglophone Western countries (Hofstede, 2001). Simkins, Sisum, and Memon (2003) in their study on school leadership in Pakistan affirm that “there is clear evidence ...that support[s] Hofstede’s finding that Pakistan’s is a relatively high power distance culture. In such cultures there is a belief in the “naturalness” of hierarchy, [and] subordinates exhibit a strong sense of dependence on their superiors” (p.288). Simkins, Sisum, and Memon (2003, p. 288) further argue that in Pakistani society “teachers and members of the community seem to expect ...heads to act decisively and relatively autocratically”, which has implications on the perception and interpretation of the concept of leadership and its practice.

In the case of Pakistan, religion emerges as an additional factor shaping roles and practices. Shah (2010a, p. 30) argues that “in Muslim societies, education and educational leadership are influenced by the religious teachings derived from the sacred texts, as is the case with many other belief systems”. Influenced by the regional culture of extended families and baradarries (clans) and the Islamic concept of Muslim Ummah or community, Pakistan emerges as a collective society, where people are attached to their families, groups and organizations and, therefore, show concern for them and are inclined towards societal help and community values (Hofstede, 2001; House, et al., 2004). Overall, “the dominant societal culture in Pakistan is a mix of Islamic and Asian traditions, and apparently this determined professional practice and interpersonal relations in educational institutions” (Shah, 2009, p. 9). This implies that, as in other societies, some culturally-endorsed leadership behaviors/styles are being exercised more frequently than others in the context of the present study.

House, et al. (2004) argue that Western countries are more competitive and performance oriented, and individuals in these societies are encouraged toward enhanced results and excellence, but that people in these countries do not have strong bonds with their families or institutions and therefore are less devoted towards them. These societies perceive that being charismatic and value-based are the most important characteristics of their ideal leader; whereas, orientation towards status and face saving characterize the ineffective leader (House & Javidan, 2004; House et al., 2004). House et al.'s (2004) findings are consistent with Elenkov's (1998) findings regarding the leadership choices in the American and Russian contexts. In other words, based on their cultural values these Western societies idealize their leader as one who has the capability to inspire and motivate others to perform highly through his/her vision, altruism, dependability and decisiveness, and who is not self-centered nor status conscious. This indicates that because of the societal culture of the United States, Europe, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, the transformational leadership style is comparatively more exercised in those countries.

On the other hand, House et al. (2004) maintain that societies from Southern Asia, including Pakistan, are more humane oriented and the societal culture of this region encourages people towards self-sacrifice and generosity, while emphasizing kindness to and consideration of others. These societies, based on their cultural values and behavioral patterns, perceive that an effective and ideal leader is one who is more self-oriented, procedural, face saving, status conscious and autocratic along with charismatic, value-based, collaborative, inspirational and sensitive to people's needs; while the leader who involves colleagues in the decision-making process is believed to be ineffective (House & Javidan, 2004). This implies that owing to the societal culture and norms of Pakistani society, the transactional and laissez-faire leadership behaviors are also practiced in the context of the present study along with transformational leadership, which is consistent with Ardichvili and Kuchinke's (2002) findings from Russia, Georgia, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. Yet, more studies are needed from the present research context to verify these findings. However, despite the major influence of societal culture upon leadership practices, these practices are also influenced by the particular organizational setting, such as school or university context, power and responsibilities associated with the leader's formal position, organizational structure and culture, and leaders' "personal orientations which emerge from their histories and personalities" (Simkins, 2003, p. 288).

## Conclusions

The results of the present study, which has been conducted in Pakistan taking the case of one public university, partially support Bass's (1985) claim, which has also been acknowledged and supported by other researchers (Currie & Lockett, 2007; Pawar & Eastman, 1997), regarding the universality of the transformational and transactional leadership theoretical paradigm across different organizations and cultures across the world. However, as the present research is focused on one Pakistani public sector university from Punjab province, more similar studies from other public and private universities are suggested to further substantiate Bass's claim. The findings of this study demonstrate that in spite of the cultural differences between Pakistan and the Western world (Hofstede, 2001), and regardless of the fact that transformational and transactional leadership theories have their origin and their later development in the Western world (Nguni, Slegers, & Denessen, 2006), this theoretical leadership paradigm is not restricted to the Western world. This supports Bass's (1999, p. 16) more specific observation that "although the original theory, model, and measurements emerged in the individualistic United States, it appears equally or even more applicable in the collectivist societies of Asia" (see also Bass & Avolio, 2004, p. 39).

However, because of the societal culture, religious values, organizational culture and structure, and institutional settings some characteristics of certain dimensions, such as the intellectual stimulation and contingent reward, are interpreted differently in the context of the current study. Furthermore, the level of applicability of this leadership paradigm varies across collectivist and individualistic societies based upon the different dimensions of a specific societal and organizational culture (Bogler, 2001; Dastoor, Suwannachin, and Golding, 2003; Nguni, Slegers, and Denessen, 2006). This confirms that societal culture and organizational context influence the conceptualizations of leadership and the choice of leadership style.

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