



The Role of Leadership in Enhancing School Culture and Teaching Performance in Gilgit-Baltistan Schools

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to investigate how teaching effectiveness and transformational leadership relationship is influenced by school environment. **Design/methodology/approach** – Analysis of 158 data points from 28 Gilgit-Baltistan educational institutions. The validity and dimensionality of the research variables were investigated by means of regression analysis. **Findings** – Results show that transformative leadership is necessary for forecasts of teaching performance. School environment mediates transformative leadership and performance of teaching. **Research limitations/implications** – The data were limited to a cross-sectional design within the Gilgit-Baltistan environment, so they might not be fit for generalization beyond Pakistan. Although the sample size is smaller overall, the results are not negatively affected. **Originality/value** – Currently lacking in Pakistan is research on the relationship between transformational leadership and school culture. This study provides a thorough investigation of the ways in which good teaching and transforming leadership interact depending on school environment.



Introduction

This study by Alzoraiki et al. (2023), leaves no room for doubt that transformational leadership is indispensable for good change management and success in diverse sectors, more notably education. The concept of transformational leadership in the field of education is advanced and

described by Davies (2009) as a leadership style that inspires achievement among faculty and students in phenomenal ways, through facilitating creativity, accountability, and a sense of responsible global citizenship. Such a type of leader inspires faculties to find the mode by which learners' minds are set to work on finding not just answers but innovative questions and ways, making them work on teamwork that is truly cooperative and beyond what is expected. In education, transformational leadership is a dynamic approach that emphasizes accountability, innovation, and global citizenship. It encourages and energizes both teachers and students to reach extraordinary results (Bakker et al., 2023). According to Ugwoji (2024), transformational leaders set well-defined objectives, cultivate a culture of accountability, and advocate for transparency, trust, and ongoing enhancement. This corresponds with the growing expectations for quantifiable results in educational institutions.

Transformational leadership in the educational sector typically stresses change and innovation that inspire teachers to explore new pedagogies and such that fosters technology integration (Andriani et al., 2018). It supports continuous professional development and innovative problem-solving processes for teachers to help increase student engagement and academic outputs. The new perspective of transformational leadership has only been introduced since the end of the twentieth century, responsible for stimulating the motivation and ethics of the followers. Changes in the environment and requirements of an evolving educational system increase its applicability in education (Godfrey, 2016). In response to increased accountability pressures and demands for continuous improvement in the environment of excellence, the transformational leaders can address these pressures. They raise awareness on, and encourage action toward global challenges such as climate change, social justice, and economic inequality, growing a concept of global citizenship among students (Aboagye & Dlamini, 2021).

Sparks (2022) identifies transformational leadership as a leadership style that inspires followers to put the interests of the organization or community ahead of their own interests. James MacGregor Burns coined the phrase in 1978. Bernard Bass has built upon this approach, highlighting its importance in promoting organizational change and innovation. Several modern challenges, such as the changing educational landscape, accountability pressures, global issues, and the need for empowerment and engagement, drive the adoption of transformational educational leadership (Onorato, 2013). According to Groves (2014), transformational leadership entails leaders motivating their followers to prioritize the organization or community over their own self-interests. Key components include articulating a compelling vision, challenging assumptions and promoting new ideas. As noted by Day et al. (2014), leaders offer personalized support and motivation, acknowledging individual needs and potential. This leadership style promotes positive change and stimulates innovation and creativity. As noted by Bae (2018), accountability in education means that educators and institutions show their effectiveness regarding teaching and learning outcomes through clear expectation setting, performance measurement, and transparency.

"School culture is a long-standing pattern of beliefs, principles, customs, and practices built over time by the school," according to Zamroni (2011). All members of the school community embrace and practice it, and it acts as a compass, encouraging particular attitudes and actions inside the organization. The attitudes, routines, and actions of every member of the school community can be characterized by the school's culture (Andika et al., 2021). In general, the connections, attitudes, rules, and laws that illustrate how the school operates are all part of the school culture. (Rizal et al., 2024) Barth.

Teachers' work experience can greatly affect performance outcomes. According to Rodríguez, Mayo, Gago, & Alvarez (2017), teachers with experience often have superior skills for handling

classroom dynamics, adjusting pedagogical approaches, designing efficacious curricula, pursuing professional growth, and mentoring colleagues. As a result, enhancing employee performance is the primary management challenge, as achieving organizational goals and ensuring survival relies on its human resources (Farida, Zulkarnaen, & Hidayat, 2022). While initial discussions centered around the different environmental factors (Chandrasekar, 2011), (Hafeez et al., 2019) affecting employee performance and noted that some demographic variables influence performance, there have been few studies examining the effect of demographic variables on employee performance.

The current study adds to the corpus of literature on the subject in a number of ways. It provides suggestions for resolving problems with instruction in emerging areas like Pakistan's Gilgit-Baltistan (G.B.). The impact of transformative leadership on teaching performance was then investigated scientifically. Next, we used social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) to frame the research model and the leader-employee relationship. By offering a contextualized organizational work environment in terms of Leadership on the Social Exchange theory, the study adds to the body of knowledge already in existence (Blau, 1964). The relationship between transformative leadership, school culture, and teaching effectiveness in Pakistan has not yet been examined.

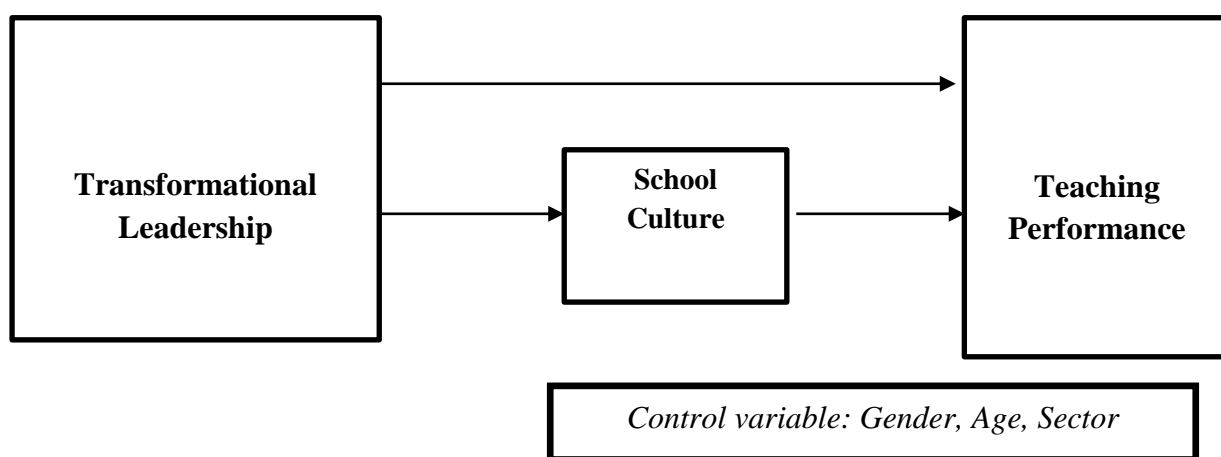


Figure 1: Research Model

Literature Review

Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership encourages followers to put the organization's interests ahead of their own by energizing their higher-level needs and motivating them to prioritize task results (Yao et al., 2024). Principals are therefore crucial to the development of their schools in the educational context by evaluating student performance, establishing standards, identifying areas for ongoing improvement, and motivating staff members to share knowledge and pursue continued professional and career development (Fraihat et al., 2024). Burns (1978) and Bass (1985) developed the transformational leadership theory, which emphasizes how crucial it is for leaders to inspire and motivate their subordinates to achieve common goals and effect organizational change. Although widely recognized and linked to positive outcomes, the theory has been questioned. Since charismatic leaders may misuse their position of authority to advance their own interests or unwanted aims, the possibility of moral and ethical flaws is a significant part of the critique. Critics contend that an overemphasis on inspiring motivation and idealized influence might lead to follower manipulation and power abuse (Chunhui et al., 2023). Additionally, the theory has been

criticized for failing to include social and cultural concerns and for potentially undervaluing the significance of critical thinking and follower autonomy (Kamilah et al., 2023).

Transformational leadership is still a potent paradigm in spite of its detractors, but more research and analysis are needed to examine its potential limitations and moral implications. Leaders of educational institutions must participate fully in the educational system in order to contribute to and gain from it. Stated differently, it is imperative that leaders at all levels contribute to the transformation of the academic environment (Zen et al., 2024). By fostering an environment that encourages moral commitment to student success, continuous performance improvement, and innovation within the educational community, transformational leadership helps schools and communities grow. According to Ansari and Asad (2024), this type of leadership supports the advancement of educational methods that prioritize the education and learning of students. In order to inspire and encourage followers, transformational leadership emphasizes vision development and community commitment through cultural changes (Pineda, 2024).

However, there aren't many research that concentrate on transformational leadership's application in public schools in the least developed countries. Because of their centralized educational systems that follow traditional academic administration procedures, least developed countries are especially lacking in this sort of leadership, which is typically missing from educational institutions in impoverished countries (Ateeq et al., 2024). Ndarwa and Mulinge (2023) developed Burn's concept of transformative leadership behaviors and separated them into four categories: "idealized influence, intellectual stimulation, individualized concern, and inspiring motivation." The details of these categories are as follows:

Ngaithe et al. (2016) define idealized influence as a transformational leader's capacity to articulate a clear vision for their followers, motivate them to work toward it, and take action to realize it. Accordingly, ideal influence improves employee performance by communicating common objectives and ideals, demonstrating resolve and self-assurance, and serving as role models for those under their supervision (Olajiga et al., 2024). In order to foster and support their followers' creativity and innovation, which is an intellectually stimulating activity, transformational leaders often encourage their followers to use problem-solving techniques (Hu et al., 2013). As part of organizational learning and change, intellectual stimulation entails motivating followers to develop and achieve in appealing ways (Jung et al., 2003). Furthermore, environmental development that facilitates the performance of job duties depends on intellectual drive. According to Afsar and Umrani (2020), a difficult circumstance might encourage an employee's creativity and generate fresh concepts for improvement and resolution.

As followers reach a desirable degree of potential, the leader observes them with individualized regard. The leader offers coaching, guidance, and work opportunities to followers, as highlighted by Wanza (2024), all of which foster their growth and development. Additionally, individual attention pertains to how managers assist their staff members and take into account their needs as they relate to completing work assignments. The leader provides direction and counsel based on these needs in order to do these responsibilities (Zhang et al., 2024). Transformational leaders that inspire and motivate others encourage active participation, set clear expectations, and encourage commitment to company objectives. Despite obstacles, leaders stay focused on the community's goal (Pineda, 2024). As previously mentioned, inspiring motivation includes leaders' responsibilities to communicate and explain visions in order to inspire and motivate their followers to reach predetermined objectives (Judson et al., 2024).

School culture (mediating variable)

Numerous writers, like Min (Min, 2023), have offered distinct definitions of school culture, asserting that there isn't a singular definition. However, the following list includes a number of widely accepted definitions:

School culture, according to Tihuriyanti et al. (2024), includes the social dynamics and ethical norms that exist inside schools as well as the organizational and administrative structures and how they interact to support teachers' professional development. However, school culture was defined by Ismail et al. (2022) as the common values and ideas that drive a community. Furthermore, Schipper et al. (2020) described school culture as the perspective that the participants have on the outside world. Although the definitions provide a well-established foundation of elements influencing school culture, their impreciseness compromises their intelligibility. Nearly all definitions of organizational culture (including school culture) in the context of least developed nations agree that it is a common set of values, beliefs, and attitudes held by members of an organization that influence their opinions and perceptions and are transmitted through tradition and communication between generations (Rashid et al., 2021).

Similar to this, Hayati and Susatya (2020) define school culture as the values, beliefs, and traditions that have developed throughout the course of the institution's existence. Lambert and associates (2024) portrayed culture as the established beliefs of a group or organization that are acquired over its lifetime through shared experiences, whereas Tan (2024) expanded on this by indicating that school culture progresses over time through the cooperative efforts of teachers, leaders, parents, and students; consequently, the professional growth and development of the staff are shaped by this culture. Therefore, it is crucial for the professional development and well-being of stakeholders to have an educational community and school culture.

School culture, according to Yli-Panula et al. (2022), is a broad term that encompasses the beliefs, customs, conduct, atmosphere, and attitudes of all parties involved in the school, including students, instructors, and principals, with relation to education. This term was broadened by Gore et al. (2022) to include connections and presumptions inside the school community. Furthermore, Schipper et al. (2020) defined school culture as a unique element influencing relationships and conduct in the classroom. Positive school cultures are characterized by a friendly classroom environment, dedicated instructors, students who are actively involved in their education, order and discipline, close relationships between students and staff, effective leadership, and teamwork among coworkers.

The culture of the school plays a crucial role in shaping the attitudes across the entire institution. It defines individuals' actions and sets one school apart from another through its distinctive framework and behavioral guidelines that govern the school's operations, as noted by Ingram (2022). Asghar et al. (2023) indicated that, according to the evidence, a leader's impact on student success depends on several factors, such as the school's objectives, organization, social connections, staff, culture, and beyond.

Teaching performance

A substantial amount of research examines the connection between school leadership and how it affects students' academic performance (Shen et al., 2020). Based on the premise that good teaching involves a wide range of obvious and subtle characteristics, several studies have proposed the need to identify the elements that lead to excellent school performance. Effective teaching performance is essentially a way to accomplish an outcome (from input to output), and it is

characterized by a supportive environment and a learning environment that includes efficient teaching strategies, well-planned educational programs, and appropriately managed supervision and support, all of which are meant to foster educational innovation and growth by encouraging parental involvement in the school's mission and vision (Joseph and Eze, 2021). The academic success of the students is seen as a function of the administration of the school and is a measure of the efficacy of the instruction. Therefore, it is the responsibility of school administrators to assess teachers' readiness for teaching by putting in place a new assessment procedure. The concepts of effectiveness and efficiency are crucial for assessing and measuring organizational performance, according to Akpa et al. (2021); effectiveness is the degree to which public policy is in line with corporate goals. As a result, school administrators must foster supportive learning environments; they must direct the educational process and ensure that it aligns with the organization's objectives and results (Jarl et al., 2021). Consequently, taking into account the framework, the following hypotheses were put out by the study:

H1: "Teaching performance is significantly improved by transformational leadership."

H2: "School culture is significantly improved by transformational leadership."

H3: "Teaching performance is significantly improved by school culture."

H4: "The relationship between transformational leadership and teaching performance is mediated by school culture."

Research Methodology

Data were gathered from various full-time and part-time workers in the educational sector of G. B. Pakistan. Participants for the data collection were chosen through convenience sampling methods. Data collection occurred through Softcopy online via WhatsApp, Facebook, and Email, in addition to hardcopy methods. A hidden letter was included with surveys that clarified to the participants the objective of the research. It also notified participants that their answers to this survey would be handled with confidentiality and anonymity. Their response is used only for academic purposes. There were 171 questionnaires given in total, 160 of which were returned with 158 of them being useful. Useable data had a response rate of 92.39%. Table 1 provides information about the distribution and characteristics of the sample. According to the results, men made up 69.62 percent and women, 30.37%. (72 percent) of the total respondents were single, and (86%) were married. The remaining respondents (43.67 %) were part-time workers, making up the bulk of respondents (56.32 %). In addition, 15.82 % of respondents were between the ages of 18 and 25. In comparison, 50.63 % of respondents were between the ages of 26 and 33.56 % of respondents were between the ages of 41 and 60. From all responders, 82.27 % fulfilled their responsibilities as a Teaching and Management, 3.16 % worked in the maintenance department, 6.32 % provided technical service, and the remaining 8.22 % were clerical staff. Of the respondents, 37.97 percent had job experience ranging from 0 to 5 years, 50.63 percent had experience between 6 and 10 years, 8.22 percent had experience between 11 and 20 years, and 3.16 percent had experience between 21 and 30 years. There were no respondents with over 30 years of job experience.

Measures

Transformational Leadership was evaluated using twelve items (Bass and Avolio, 1995). Ten items were taken from the research on School Culture, which served as the mediating variable (Gruenert, and Valentine, 1998). All variables in the research were evaluated using a 5-point Likert scale, with 1 signifying strong disagreement and 5 signifying strong agreement. The reliability of Transformational Leadership, as assessed by Cronbach's alpha, was (0. 799). The items were evaluated utilizing a 1–5 Likert scale, where 1 stood for Strongly Disagree and 5 stood for Strongly Agree. The reliability of School Culture's Cronbach alpha was (0. 811).Table 1: Characteristics of Sample Distribution

Table 1: Distribution and Characteristics of Sample

Variable	Categories	No	(%)
Gender	Male	110	69.62
	Female	48	30.37
	Total	158	100
Marital Status	Signal	72	45.56
	Married	86	54.43
	Total	158	100
Age	18-25	25	15.82
	26-40	80	50.63
	41-60	53	33.54
	Over 60	0	0
	Total	158	100
Work status	Full time	89	56.32
	Part time	69	43.67
	Total	158	100
Position	Teaching /Management	130	82.27
	Maintenance	05	3.16
	Technical Service	10	6.32
	Clerical	13	8.22
	Total	158	100
Experience	0-5	60	37.97
	6-10	80	50.63
	11-20	13	8.22
	21-30	5	3.16
	Over 30	0	0
	Total	158	100

Teaching effectiveness (dependent variable). To assess Teaching effectiveness, sixteen items were employed (Danielson, 1996). Each item was rated using a Likert scale from 1 to 5, where 1 indicated "Strongly Disagree" and 5 indicated "Strongly Agree. " The reliability of the Teaching effectiveness Cronbach alpha was (0. 808).

Controlling element / Controller Variable The control variables for the study were age, gender, and sector, according to a prior study from 2023. The study utilized the following coding for variables: Age (1 = under 25 years, 2 = 26-30 years, 3 = 31-40 years, 4 = 41-50 years, 5 = 51-60 years, and 6 = over 60), gender (1 = male, 2 = female), and section (1 = public, 2 = private).

Results

One-way ANOVA was employed to handle the variation in Teaching performance according to the demographic variable examined in this study. The One-Way ANOVA results (refer to table 2) indicated that the average value of Teaching performance did not differ significantly according to Gender, Age, and Sector.

Table 2: One-way ANOVA (TP)

Sources of variation	F statistics	p-value
Gender	.311	.746
Age	1.888	.155
Sector	.899	.444

TP= Teaching performance

Statistical Tools: Means, standard deviation, correlations, Reliabilities and multiple regression analysis also using SPSS 22 version.

Results

Table 3: Means, Standard deviation, correlation and Reliabilities

	Mean	SD	1	2	3
TL	3.77	0.77	(0.799)		
SC	3.88	0.88	0.562**	(0.811)	
TP	3.59	0.90	0.633**	0.811**	(0.808)

TL= “Transformational Leadership”, **SC**= “School Culture”, **TP**= “Teaching Performance”

Table 3 shows that there is a strong and positive correlation between teaching effectiveness and transformational leadership (0.633, p = .000), supporting hypothesis 1. Additionally, the positive correlation between school culture and transformational leadership (0.562, p =.000) supports hypothesis 2. Hypotheses 3 and 4 are supported by the positive connection between teaching performance and school culture (0.811, p = .000).

Regression Analysis

The present study employed the Baron and Kenny (1986) mediation condition. To determine the variable primary effect and mediating effect, regression analysis was utilized. Table 4 contains the outcome of the regression analysis. The outcome indicates that Transformational Leadership has a highly positive and significant impact on Teaching performance ($\beta = 0.888$, $R^2 = 0.277$, $p = .000$), leading to the acceptance of Hypothesis 1. Considering the pronounced beneficial and noteworthy influence of Transformational Leadership on School Culture ($\beta = 0.799$, $R^2 = 0.222$, with $p = .000$) Hypothesis 2 has been accepted. The outcome also shows that School Culture significantly and positively influences Teaching performance ($\beta = 0.816$, $R^2 = 0.944$, $p = .000$). Thus, hypothesis 3 is accepted.

Table 4: Regression Analysis

Predictor	School Culture			Teaching performance		
	B	R ²	▲R ²	B	R ²	▲R ²
Direct effect						

TL	0.799 ^{***}	0.222	0.220 ^{***}	0.888 ^{***}	0.277	0.278 ^{***}
SC				0.816 ^{***}	0.944	0.945 ^{***}
Indirect effect						
TL X SC				0.288 ^{***}	0.888	0.889 ^{***}

N = 158. TL = Transformational Leadership, SC = School Culture
^{*}=p < .05. ^{**} = p < .01. ^{***} = p < .001. ns = not significant

School culture appears to act as a mediator between transformational leadership and teaching effectiveness, according to the findings of the mediating regression analysis displayed in Table 3 ($\beta = 0.288$, $R^2 = 0.888$, $\Delta R^2 = 0.889$, $p = .000$). Therefore, Hypothesis 4 is validated. This study examines how teaching effectiveness and transformational leadership are related, with school culture serving as a partial mediating factor.

Discussion

The hypotheses are entirely upheld and endorsed by the study. Research shows that Transformational Leadership positively influences Teaching performance. This support helps in attaining improved job performance. A positive perception of organizational support boosts employee performance and reduces the chances of turnover. Previous studies indicate that the subsequent leadership traits lead to enhanced job performance:

- Rewards
- Appreciation
- Opportunity to learn

Managerial Implications

The study suggests that improving performance as a school leader or head involves assisting teachers in their work. When teachers encounter difficulties, the leader or head should first identify the issue and provide straightforward guidance on how to address it. Additionally, leaders and heads should allow their subordinates to participate in problem-solving situations.

Limitation and Future Direction

The results of this study, conducted within the education sector of G. B. Pakistan, might not apply to other situations. Subsequent research might encompass additional sectors nationwide to explore and uncover credible and reliable outcomes. In this study, employee demographics (e. g. , age, gender, sector) were considered; therefore, future research could incorporate diverse demographic variables. The outcomes and findings of the current study are derived from the education sector. Future studies could compare different sectors.

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