

# **An Empirical Investigation of Leadership Behavior in Private and Public Sectors of Pakistan**

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**ABSTRACT:** *The purpose of this paper is to determine the dominant leadership characteristics that reinforce learning in public and private sector organizations. It will also compare the extent to which both sectors—private as well as public—support leadership that reinforces learning. Important contributing factors were leaders' behavior with employees, leaders' characteristics, communication, employee feelings, time for problem identification, knowledge transfer, and reflective post audits. A part of David Garvin's tool of learning organizations was adopted as an instrument in this study. Through comparison of Means and sum of Means it is concluded that level and extent of leadership which reinforces learning behavior differs substantially in public and private sectors. It is derived that the extent of leadership that reinforces learning is greater in private sector than in public sector.*

**Keywords:** Leadership, Learning, Behavior, Private Sector, Public Sector, Knowledge Transfer, Communication etc.

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A person showing good leadership worth more than fifty gurus teaching it, as the saying goes. Leadership has a key role in making the employees to show positive behavior towards the change. This actually refers to the adaptive behavior of employees towards the new changes. An effective leadership plays an important role in enhancing the learning outcomes of the organization and that ultimately leads to the overall effectiveness of the all the prospects of the organization. Learning is the process of “permanent changes in behaviors” and for that purpose and supportive leadership is very much necessary rather than adopting stick approach in making the employees ready towards the changes.

The word “supportive” that we have used with the leadership, shows the leader must be positive towards the changes himself in order to lead the employees. That refers to the innovation, ability to identify the problems and learning from the mistakes and finally to support the employees towards all these behaviors.

Initially (in the past decades) there had been many other routine tools used to improve the performance and learning behavior of the employees. Over the last decade or so, directors and training managers have been constantly searching for the ultimate solution of organization redevelopment. They have done this by the systems approach, introducing competencies, quality methods, management training, better bonuses and some other methods. They do not seem to evaluate the leadership of the organization.

### Literature Review

Organizations, in which individuals increase their capacity to achieve desired output, make new, advance and worthy thinking formats, where group thinking is appreciated and people continue to learn are said to be learning organizations (Senge 1993).

It is hard to say that good qualities of a leader can be summarized and analyzed but, this relates to three deeper questions:

- Leadership for what?
- Leadership when and where?
- Leadership with whom?

Some great works that have already been done on this issue are: Observing the behavior of trust-worthy and prominent leaders is the best way to have conception about leadership, which is known as observational learning (Kempster and MyiLibrary 2009). Leaders focus is outside the organization, metaphorically leaders need to behave like drivers of vehicles whose prime focus remains outside to see forthcoming hurdles in the path and lead the vehicle towards its destination (Ali, Bajwa et al. 2012).

To become able to know the concepts of learning for leadership it is important to comprehend the two vast

aspects i.e. leadership and learning. It can't be developed instantly but it takes years and years to understand what are the needs of the management and how to improve the efficiency of leadership (Inglehart and Norris 2003). Action learning is the available method to develop and increase learning capabilities. It encourages questioning to the problematic situations, rather than following pre-set rules for addressing it (Peters and Smith 1998). Creating leadership through social and cultural tools is given special privilege. From a system unit to the individual employee level, leadership is seen as the effort—both physical and mental—of influence related not only to the performance cards but also to the mediation of social and cultural tools (Ross, Rix et al. 2005). Its practical implication can be seen in the learning programs developed for practitioners.

Many researchers challenge the development of learning of leaders through interpersonal and personal skills. Learning is not a single step process it takes time. If learning is practiced through personal and interpersonal skills, it will take indefinite time. Training programs should not only be effective but they should also include self-awareness, practical thinking, controlling stress, application of the real world and learning from their selves among the trainees (Crosbie 2005).

To be a successful leader in 21<sup>st</sup> century, leaders should develop action learning through real world problems, fellow learning in a team, commitment to action, inquiry processes and learning which will enhance the functionality of seven key roles of a leader i.e. thinking in a system, innovator seeker, mentor, visionary ability, servant, change agent and work on multiple task at the same time. These roles are very critical to the leadership ability (Marquardt 2000).

Learning tactics are also found at the educational level. It has been found that students who are engaged in any of the leadership ability which are vision, thinking, feeling, approaching and evaluating others and action based, or all of the abilities are said to engage in transformational leadership (Kouzes and Posner 2009). More abilities adopted, more the students will feel comfort in inferring leadership behavior.

When individual in a social community is engaged in leadership, he or she will naturally try hard for the growth of community. Work based learning and leadership will propagate new capabilities like judgmental or non-judgmental approach in conversation, stress on genuine doubts, acceptance towards change and challenges and deviation from common goals and objectives of organization (Raelin 2011).

Leaders are the main pillar of any work environment. Leaders in a joint situation will perform better on the basis of development of personal skills. This in turn depends on common goals, common work place,

relationship that is supportive and a sense of companionship (Wilhelmson 2006).

Centralized and decentralized systems have also some effect on learning that infers leadership. When rules and goal are common head leader should be familiar with the day to day working of the organization and encourage changes for learning. Leaders should develop a communicative form of leadership. He should give equal importance to the integrity and equality (Johansson-Stenman and Martinsson 2006).

Human resource professionals build supportive conditions for leadership. It will demonstrate some of the important factors which have huge impact on investment on leadership learning and important advices to HR professionals. The trainees should be encouraged to develop their own leadership skills that will help them to understand the complexity of issues of organizations (Waldman, Berson et al. 2009).

Many studies have been conducted on the correlation effect of leadership style on the level of learning in the organization. A positive relation was found in transformational leadership and learning. The central role of leaders is to evaluate the effectiveness of learning in the organization (Amitay, Popper et al. 2005). Individuals should be able to make two goals; one is of performance and other is of learning. The organizations, which are said to be learning organizations, require employees to acquire and nourish learning. The findings depict that learning for leadership should be transformational and behavior should also be included in the orientation of learning (Coad and Berry 1998).

Leaders who are active and enthusiastic learner are seen to be involved in different learning and leadership behaviors. Leadership capabilities with transformational quality are greatly enhanced when we use different techniques in learning (Brown and Posner 2001). Whichever style of leadership is adopted whether it is transformational, transactional or ambidextrous each of them affects strategic resources of group and organization (Bucic, Robinson et al. 2010). Although in most reviewed works above leadership is studied in the context of learning, we will give a deeper attention to leadership, method to enhance supportive leadership in the organizations and tools to evaluate leadership.

### Research Methodology

Sample of this study includes both public and private sector organizations to understand leadership that reinforces learning behavior. 40 respondents from each sector were selected on convenient basis. Individual from top level to bottom level participated in this research. Self administered questionnaire, adopted from Garvin (2008) was used as an instrument in this study (Garvin, Edmondson et al. 2008). Garvin (2008) evaluated three building blocks of learning

organizations—including supportive learning environment, leadership that reinforces learning, and concrete learning processes and practices—but we have used a part of the questionnaire relating to leadership that reinforces learning, for the purposes of our study. Variables have been measured on a Likert Scale with options varying from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Help was provided to respondents in case of ambiguities to understand the questions. The questionnaires were filled in the presence of the researchers.

### Variables and Analysis

The variables of interest in our research are:

1. Characteristics of leaders
2. Behavior of leaders with employees
3. Communication
4. Employee feel encouraged to learn
5. Time for problem identification
6. Knowledge transfer
7. Reflective post audits

Table 1 provides a brief description of accumulated Mean of all the variables studied in this survey. It is clear from the accumulated means that over and above extent of leadership reinforcing learning is considerably greater in private sector than that of public sector.

**Table 1: Accumulated Means from Private and Public Sectors**

	Private Sector	Public Sector
<b>Accumulated Means</b>	67.41	56.05

### Conclusion

It is a never-ending debate on measuring the level of building block, leadership that reinforces learning in public and private sector. The current research in this regard will prove to be a stepping-stone. It will not only theoretically prove the assumption but also numerically calculate the magnitude of leadership that reinforces learning in both sectors. The results proved that in private sector leadership that reinforces learning is more than in public sector. But, this does not strengthen the un-supportiveness of leadership with learning environment even it is lacking far behind in scores, because there are no benchmark scores to compare the data of public sector in leadership that reinforces learning. The important contributing factors are same in both sectors but they have not made public sector comparable with private sector. There is a huge scope

for further research in this area as this study deals with only one building block.

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