

## **LEADERSHIP STYLE AND ITS IMPACT ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY ON PRIVATE COMMERCIAL BANKS IN BANGLADESH**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*This research explores the impact of leadership styles on employee's performance in the private banking sector of Bangladesh. The literature highlighted considerable variables such as employee's performance as dependent variable, and Transformational Leadership, Corporate leadership, Authoritative leadership, Laissez Faire Leadership) as independent variables. The researcher applied descriptive type of research methodology and used Questionnaire instruments for the data collection for measuring the employee's performance within the banking sector. From data analysis, it was concluded that the transformational leadership is the dominant leadership in the private commercial banks of Bangladesh. Through correlation and linear regression analysis it was concluded that there is a significant positive relationship between employee's performance and transformational, corporate leadership. However, the strength of relationship between leadership and employee's performance was high in case of transformational leadership. Convenience sampling, cross sectional design and self-report questionnaire are the limitations of this study.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Leadership Styles, Transformational Leadership, Corporate Leadership, Authoritative Leadership, Laissez Faire Leadership, Employee's Performance*

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Leadership is a special type of influential activity. It may be seen in effect in all kinds of social situations, and it is especially apparent where the situation demands that people work together toward common goals. In Organizations, leadership is a managerial activity the purpose of which is to direct the employees in one immediate chain of command toward the accomplishment of work goals. Leadership is life blood of any organization and its importance cannot be underestimated. Many authors have studied this phenomenon, but there is no conscious definition of what leadership is, no dominant paradigm for studying it, and little agreement regarding the best strategies for developing and exercising it. Givens (2008) views leadership as that kind of direction, which a person can give to a group of people under him in such a way that these will influence the behavior of another individual, or group. Peris (2012) perceives leadership to be a reciprocal process of social influence, in which leaders and subordinates influence each other in order to achieve organizational goals. Leadership style is viewed as the combination of traits, characteristics, skills and behaviors that leaders use when interacting with their subordinates. BizhanSh, (2013) see leadership as a pattern of managerial behavior designed to integrate personal or organizational interest and effect, in pursuit of some objectives. Leadership style is a key

determinant of the success or failure of any organization. A leader is person who influences, directs, and motivates others to perform specific tasks and also inspire his subordinates for efficient performance towards the accomplishment of the stated corporate objectives. Leadership style is the manner and approach of providing direction, implementing plans, and motivating people. Leadership style therefore is the way a leader leads. Some leaders are more interested in the work to be done than in the people they work with while others pay more attention to their relationship with subordinates than the job. Thomas (2002) define leadership style is the ingredient of personality embodied in leaders that causes subordinates to follow them. Alexander (2002) on the other hand defines leadership styles is particular behaviors applied by a leader to motivate subordinates to achieve the objectives of the organization. According to Ngambi et al. (2010) and Ngambi (2011), cited in Jeremy et al. (2011), leadership is a process of influencing others' commitment towards realizing their full potential in achieving a value-added, shared vision, with passion and integrity. The relationships between the leader and employee, as well as the quality of employees' performance, are significantly influenced by the leadership style adopted by the leader (Jeremy et al., 2011). Leadership style in an organization is one of the factors that play significant role in enhancing or retarding the interest and commitment of the individuals in the organization (Obiwuru et al., 2011). Fiedler (1969) postulates that leadership style refers to a kind of relationship whereby someone uses his ways and methods to make many people work together for a common task. In modern leadership theories, five leadership styles have been presented, including (i) charismatic leadership, (ii) transactional leadership, (iii) transformational leadership, (iv) visionary leadership, and (v) culture-based leadership (Yukl, 1994; Bass, 1990; Sashkin, 1996; Sergiovanni, 1987). Tannenbanum and Schmidt (1958) also identify four different types of leaders which have been most widely accepted and used. These leadership styles, which centre around McGregor's Theory 'X and Y' assumptions, are democratic, autocratic, dictatorial, and laissez faire leadership styles. Peter Drucker (quoted in Ulrich, Zenger & Smallwood, 1999) captures this notion by simply stating: "Leadership is all about results". The banks supervisors are in a unique position as the manager or administrator who controls Banks' resources for the purpose of achievements banking goals and can accelerate the process of bank development or can demolish the progress of financial stability of the bank, (Abwalla, 2001). As such, a leadership style occupies an important position in bank management. Leaders express leadership in many roles.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### ***Employee Performance***

The main goal of any organization is to enhance the job performance of its employees so that it could survive in this highly competitive environment. Performance is a multidimensional construct and an extremely vital criterion that determines organizational successes or failures. Prasetya and Kato (2011) define performance as the attained outcomes of actions with skills of employees who perform in some situation. According to Pattanayak (2005), the performance of an employee is his/her resultant behavior on a task which can be observed and evaluated. To Pattanayak, employee performance is the contribution made by an individual in the accomplishment of organizational goals. Here employee performance is simply the result of patterns of action carried out to satisfy an objective according to some standards. This means employee performance is a behavior which consists of directly observable actions of an employee, and also mental actions or products such as answers or decisions, which result in organizational outcomes in the form of attainment of goals. Ibrahim (2004) defined job performance as an important activity that provides both the goals and methods to achieve the organizational goals and also provide the achievement level in term of out-put. El-Saghier (2002) considered it as an effort of an employee to achieve some specific goal; the researcher will adopt this definition.

### ***Leadership Styles***

Leader and their leadership styles is one of the mostly studied topics of recent history. The behavior and techniques used by the leaders to give vision and roadmap to reach the vision, formulations and executions of strategies and plan is called leadership style (House & Aditya, 1997). Leadership styles vary from person to person and it also depends upon the situational need (Bass & Avolio, 1990). As discussed earlier, there are several theories of leadership; all these theories explain the leadership process in some different way (Bass & Avolio, 1990). Three traditional leadership theories i.e. Trait theory, behavioral theory and contingency theory have been developed over a period of time. Each theory illustrates the some distinct dimensions of leadership and each theory explains the leader and follower relation in different ways (Organizational Change, 1997). More recently, Goleman et al. (2002) distinguished six leadership styles, based on leaders' emotional intelligence: 1) Coercive, which describes a leader able to deal with disasters, 2) Authoritative, which characterized a leader who is able to engineer a turnaround, 3) Affiliative, which describes a leader bale to build team harmony and morale, 4) Democratic, which refers to a leader who gives employees a voice in decisions, 5) Pacesetting, which describes a leader able to define and exemplify high performance standards, 6) Coaching, which refers to a leader supportive to others; development. According to Goleman et al. (2002), the more of those styles a leader masters, the more power he/ she will have to shape the organization's climate and the employees' performance.

### ***Corporate leadership and Employee Performance***

Performance effectiveness derives from human aspirations and human values that are invisible roots of organizational values, they determine the rational for which organizations exist. The task of a leader in the organization in this case will be too nurture the roots of organizational values, which consists of nothing but a basic human aspiration, that is the will to give Maurik (2001). The essence here is that corporate leadership is the methodology to be used in according responsibility however the challenge that lays in this aspect is that, only giving power to the subordinates may not be wise enough since delegation, empowerment and specialization are calculated risks. Therefore in the perspective of this study such elements as what types of situations require the use of corporate approach were not satisfactorily explored hence the necessitation of this study. As Kirega (2006) asserts, the need for some type of corporate approach is needed to have efficiency and proper employee management that will lead to improved performance. In the other perspective, Henderson (1998) identified supervision as a corporate strategy to promoting a positive organization. He contended that the opportunity of supervision provides to promote not only performance but also personhood. The roles of recognition, training, employee involvement, and communication have been demonstrated to promote both organizational and employee effectiveness as noted by Nkata (2005)..

### ***Laissez Faire Leadership and Employee Performance***

The leader's ability to lead is contingent upon various situational factors, including the leader's preferred style. Contingency theories to leadership support a great deal of empirical freedom to leadership, (laissez-faire style) North house (2001). Many researchers have tested it and have found it to be valid and reliable to explaining how effective leadership can be achieved. It stresses the importance of focusing on inter personal relationships between the leader's style and the demands of various situations and employees. Under this type of leadership according to Kumar (2015) maximum freedom is allowed to subordinates. They are given freehand in deciding their own policies and methods and to make independent decisions. Kerns (2004) discussed the relationship of values to organizational leadership and his study was hugely in support of the laissez-faire style in bridging the gap between the employer and employee where his concern was solely on

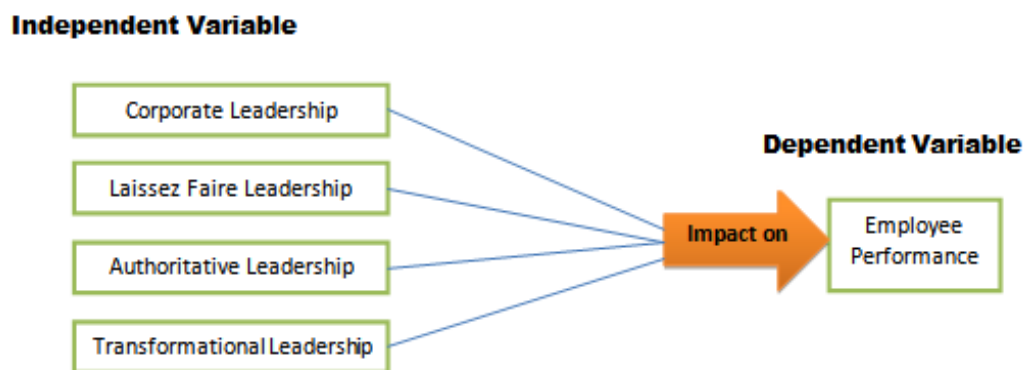
the fact that laissez-faire would create a positive environment through which employees and employers felt like a family regardless of their positions.

### **Authoritative Leadership Style and Employee Performance**

In this style, the leader has absolute power over his staff or team workers have little opportunity for making suggestions, even if these would be in the team or organization's interest, (Armstrong 2002). The leader tells the workers to come along with him and should be a change catalyst. And Cole (2000) also asserts that, it works in situations where change is needed to be fostered, sometimes in doing away with conflicts like strikes, application of self-confidence and many more. If applied in its suitable situation, it brings about effectiveness in performance. These styles will vary according to situation occurring in the organization, rather than the need to coerce employees to perform. It is not known to the researcher when exactly does the authoritative leadership style affected performance, hence the need for carrying out research in this respect.

### **Transformational Leadership and Employee Performance**

This seeks to transform of visionary. It becomes collective vision where subordinates work to realize the vision into reality. In other words, transformational process can be seen through a number of transformational leadership behaviors as: attributed charisma, idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration Bass and Avolio, (2003). Yukl (2007) states that application of transformational leadership style can improve performance because transformational leadership style wants to develop knowledge and employees potential. Leader with transformational leadership provides opportunity and confidence to his subordinates to carry out duties in accordance with his mindset to achieve organizational goals. Butler (1999) states that a transformational leader encourages subordinates to have vision, mission and organization goals, encouraging and motivating to show maximum performance, stimulates subordinates to act critically and to solve problems in new ways and treat employees individually. Suharto (2005) suggests that more frequent transformational leadership behaviors implemented will bring significant positive effect to improve psychological empowerment quality of subordinates. After analysis of the literature review, we can develop the conceptual framework of the study as follows:



**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of the Study**

### **Objectives**

The objective of the study is-

- To investigate the effect of the different leadership styles on the performance of employees of private commercial

banks in Bangladesh.

- To provide recommendations and suggestions about how employees performance can be improved through leadership styles.

### Hypotheses

Consistent with the literature review, following are hypotheses those are to be tested in this study in order to confirm the research objectives:

- Corporate leadership style has positive impact on employee performance.
- Laissez-faire leadership style has positive impact on employee performance.
- Authoritative leadership style has positive impact on employee performance.
- Transformational leadership style has positive impact on employee performance.

### Methodology

In order to gather the proper data the researcher used both Quantitative and Qualitative methods. The sample procedure was used Simple Random sampling. Primary Data collected through structured Questionnaire. On the other hand, researcher also used Secondary data including from electronic resources and research articles. Sample was gathered from both male and female employees working in private commercial banks of Bangladesh. The job positions of employees comprise Management Trainee, Managers, Assistant Managers, officers and others employees. The survey population has taken from several private commercial banks of Bangladesh. The researcher has taken Sample size around 100 male and female employees, there were some limitations whereas researcher hardly compile and collect the data due to managers were busy and some of them couldn't give the proper time for filling the questionnaire therefore the researcher has spent more time to collect the data and manage it properly. Descriptive statistics have been used to analyze data to get an overall situation. For the purpose of in-depth analysis, statistical tools, inter-correlation matrix and multiple regression techniques had been used. For data analysis, SPSS (Version: 20) has been used.

### Analysis and Interpretation of Data

#### Reliability and Validity of Data

In order to prove the internal reliability, this study has performed Cronbach's Alpha Test of Reliability. According to Nunnally (1978) Cronbach's alpha should be 0.700 or above. But, some of studies 0.600 also considered acceptable (Gerrard, et al, 2006). In this study, the value of Cronbach's alpha is 0.786 which is greater than the standard value. Thus it can be concluded that the measures used in this study are valid and highly reliable.

**Table 1: Case Processing Summary**

|  |                       | N   | %     |
|--|-----------------------|-----|-------|
| Cases  | Valid                 | 100 | 100.0 |
|  | Excluded <sup>a</sup> | 0   | .0    |
|  | Total                 | 100 | 100.0 |
| a. List wise deletion based on all variables in the procedure. |                       |     |       |

**Table 2: Reliability Statistics**

| Cronbach's Alpha | N of Items |
|------------------|------------|
| .786             | 18         |

**Pearson Correlation Analysis**

Correlation analysis provides a correlation coefficient that indicates the strength and direction of the linear relationship. Coefficient range on a point scale ranging between -1 and 1. The closer the coefficient is to -1 or 1, the stronger the relationship between the two variables. The result reveals that there are significant positive correlations between Transformational Leadership and Employee Performance ( $r=0.752$ ,  $p<0.001$ ), Laissez Faire Leadership and Employee Performance ( $r=0.423$ ,  $p<0.000$ ), Corporate leadership and Employee Performance ( $r=0.325$ ,  $p<0.000$ ) but there is a significant negative correlation between Authoritative Leadership and Employee Performance ( $r= -0.663$ ,  $p<0.000$ ).

**Table 3: Pearson Correlation Analysis (n=100)**

|                             |                     | Employee Performance |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| Corporate leadership        | Pearson Correlation | .325**               |
|                             | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .000                 |
| Laissez Faire Leadership    | Pearson Correlation | .423**               |
|                             | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .000                 |
| Authoritative Leadership    | Pearson Correlation | -.663**              |
|                             | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .000                 |
| Transformational Leadership | Pearson Correlation | .752**               |
|                             | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .001                 |
| Employee Performance        | Pearson Correlation | ----                 |
|                             | Sig. (2-tailed)     | ----                 |

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

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

**Regression Analysis**

In this part of the analysis includes a regression model to test the hypotheses. Four extracted dimensions were taken as independent variables against employee performance as dependent variable in a multiple regression model. For all the hypotheses of the study below hypothesis test was used at 95% confidence level. To know about the effect of the individual dimensions of Leadership style on Employee Performance, multiple regressions using the following model was run:

$$EP = \alpha + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \beta_4X_4 + e$$

Where,

EP= Employee Performance

X1= Corporate Leadership

X2 = Laissez Faire Leadership

X3 = Authoritative Leadership

X4 = Transformational Leadership

And  $\alpha$  is constant and  $\beta_1$ ,  $\beta_2$ ,  $\beta_3$ , and  $\beta_4$  are coefficient to estimate, and  $e$  is the error term.

**Model Summary**

The value of R Square (0.776) and R (0.881) shows that there is strong association between the of independent variables and the dependent variable with the standard error of.22111 (Table-4).In additions, the Table-4 implies that the Employee Performance of the private commercial bank’s employees is 88% dependent on Transformational Leadership, Corporate leadership, Authoritative leadership, Laissez Faire Leadership.

**Table 4: Model Summary**

| Model | R                 | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|-------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| 1     | .881 <sup>a</sup> | .776     | .767              | .22111                     |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Transformational Leadership, Corporate leadership, Authoritative leadership, Laissez Faire Leadership

**ANOVA Test**

The F value of the test for the data is 82.393. The p-value associated with this F value which is.000 which is lower than the alpha value 0.05 (Table-5). In additions, The Table-5 implies that there is significant impact of the independent variable on the dependent variable and the model applied is significantly perfect to predict the dependent variable.

**Table 5: ANOVA<sup>a</sup>**

|   | Model      | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F      | Sig.              |
|---|------------|----------------|----|-------------|--------|-------------------|
| 1 | Regression | 16.112         | 4  | 4.028       | 82.393 | .000 <sup>b</sup> |
|   | Residual   | 4.644          | 95 | .049        |        |                   |
|   | Total      | 20.757         | 99 |             |        |                   |

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Performance  
 b. Predictors: (Constant), Transformational Leadership, Corporate leadership, Authoritative leadership, Laissez Faire Leadership

**Regression Coefficients**

From the following table-6, Unstandardized coefficients indicated how much the dependent variable varies with an independent variable, when all other independent variables are held constant. The beta coefficients indicated that how and to what extent leadership style dimensions such as Transformational Leadership, Corporate leadership, Authoritative leadership, Laissez Faire Leadership influence on employee performance of a bank. It has been found that, Transformational Leadership (beta =.769. t=7.703, p<0.05), Authoritative leadership (beta=.593, t=5.300, p<0.05) have the highest impact or significant impact on employee performance, whereas, Corporate leadership (beta =.251, t=4.950, p<0.05) has a relatively lower impact on employee performance but Laissez Faire Leadership (beta = (-.398), t=6.365, p<0.05), have a negative impact on employee performance. The Regression Model is:

$$\text{Employee Performance} = (1.627) + (0.251)*X1(\text{Corporate leadership}) + (-0.398)*X2(\text{Laissez Faire Leadership}) + (0.593)*X3(\text{Authoritative leadership}) + (0.769)*X4(\text{Transformational Leadership}).$$

**Table 6: Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

| Model | Unstandardized Coefficients |            | Standardized Coefficients | t    | Sig.  |      |
|-------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|------|-------|------|
|       | B                           | Std. Error | Beta                      |      |       |      |
| 1     | (Constant)                  | 1.627      | .325                      |      | 5.013 | .000 |
|       | Corporate leadership        | .251       | .152                      | .907 | 4.950 | .000 |
|       | Laissez Faire Leadership    | -.398      | .157                      | .239 | 6.365 | .087 |
|       | Authoritative leadership    | .593       | .091                      | .230 | 5.300 | .001 |
|       | Transformational Leadership | .769       | .100                      | .226 | 7.703 | .000 |

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Performance

### Test of Hypothesis

The hypothesis of this research had been tested at  $\alpha = 0.05$  level of significance.

**Decision rule:** Hypothesis will be accepted, if P value is less than significance level i.e. 0.05; on the other hand if the P value is more than significance level then hypothesis will be rejected.

**Table 7: Summarized results of the hypothesis (1-4)**

| Dependent Variable   | Independent Variables       | P Value | Significance Level | t     | Implications |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|---------|--------------------|-------|--------------|
| Employee Performance | Corporate leadership        | .000    | .05                | 4.950 | Accepted     |
|                      | Laissez Faire Leadership    | .087    | .05                | 6.365 | Rejected     |
|                      | Authoritative leadership    | .001    | .05                | 5.300 | Accepted     |
|                      | Transformational Leadership | .000    | .05                | 7.703 | Accepted     |

### CONCLUSIONS

This study has investigated the effect of leadership style on employee performance in private commercial banks in Bangladesh. The results of this study revealed that there is strong relationship between leadership style and employee performance. On the basis of the findings of this study, it can be concluded that leadership style has both positive and negative effect on employee performance. The study found that transformational and authoritative leadership style, in which employees are allowed to have sense of belonging, carry out higher responsibility with little supervision, and followers are helped to achieve their visions and needs enhance organizational efficiency. But Laissez Faire leadership style has no positive effect on banks' employees' performance. It is concluded that transformational and Authoritative leadership styles are the best for the management of private commercial banks in Bangladesh to be adopted in order for them to polish stronger in a global financial competitive environment.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Banks expect employees to perform, supervisors expect their followers to perform too. The results of this study provided insights into what employees need from their supervisors and the kind of leadership behaviors they prefer. According to the results, some strategies for improving supervisor's leadership and employee performance could be suggested. It indicated that transformational leadership behavior would lead to higher employee performance. The leaders or supervisors should be aware of what is important for the subordinates and the organizations as a whole and encourage the employees to see the opportunities and challenges around them creatively. The supervisors should also have their own visions and development plans for followers, working in groups and champion team work spirit. The supervisors should have sense of innovation and also encourage followers to seek more opportunities and possibilities, not just achieve performance within expectations. Supervisor's Laissez Faire Leadership style will decrease employee performance. So they should try to avoid this type of leadership style. Transformational leadership had strong and positive correlations with



employee productivity, quality and overall performance. The group of specific behaviors factors of transformational leadership positively correlated with employee performance. Therefore, as mentioned before, leaders or supervisors should be aware of the importance of transformational leadership style and try to put it in practice. Organization can provide leadership training program or interventions to improve supervisor's leadership. In addition, policies and practices related to rewards or feedback system in the organizations can be adjusted to meet employees' needs in order to improve employee performance.

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