

IMPACT OF THE FUNCTIONAL LEADERSHIP DIMENSIONS ON ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE IN DIVERSE ORGANIZATION IN PAKISTAN

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Abstract. *This paper examines the connections among the dimensions of functional leadership of situation clarification, strategy clarification, coordination leadership, and organizational performance within highly gender-diverse organizations in Pakistan. A sample of 500 employees from universities in Pakistan was taken. The data collection process was conducted among the university employees. For data analysis PLS-SEM through SmartPLS3 was employed. The results of the study indicate that within the higher education sector in Pakistan, the distinct dimensions of functional leadership of situation clarification, strategy clarification and coordination leadership individually exert a positive and noteworthy influence on organizational performance. These results carry strong message for leaders to adopt and apply these functional leadership dimensions to improve the overall performance of the organization. The findings strongly support the notion that implementing effective functional leadership dimensions of situation clarification, strategy clarification and coordination leadership can significantly enhance organizational performance. The outcomes robustly affirm the idea that the efficacy that these dimensions of functional leadership are pivotal in augmenting organizational performance.*

Received 29 Nov. 2023

Revised 07 Nov. 2023

Accepted 15 Dec. 2023

Keywords: Diversity, Leadership, Functional Leadership Dimensions, Organizational Performance

Introduction

Employment scenario is changing fastly in Pakistan owing to growing tendency of female participation in services (Ahmed, 2020; Hanif et al., 2023; HANIF et al., 2023; Muhammad & Athar, 2022). In spite of the substantial progress in current decades, labor and job markets in Pakistan keep on divided with respect to the gender. Woman workforce participation has continued less than man participation and there are certain unwritten limitations which restrict females from improving their maximum economic potential (IMF, 2021). Although equal opportunities for males and females is an important developmental goal, females' economic participation shall also be a part of economic growth and stability in Pakistan ("IMF Strategy Toward Mainstreaming Gender," 2022). The higher level of female workforce participation can boost up growth by diminishing the effects of the shrinking workforce across the globe. Equal opportunities for females can also support to the broader economic development of Pakistan. Females in Pakistan do not have equal opportunities as males have to participate in economic development (IMF, 2021) despite the fact that gender gap in workforce participation has dropped significantly over the past 3 decades in Pakistan (Ahmed, 2020). The existing and potential labour force is highly diverse in Pakistan (HANIF et al., 2023; Muhammad & Athar, 2022), Hence, diversity emerges as a challenging strategic human resource management issue within organizations (Sabharwal et al., 2018). In the context of Pakistan, gender diversity is recognized as a valuable asset for organizations.

Leadership has the great importance to effectively handle growing diversity labor force in their respective firms to enhance the organizational performance (Ahmed, 2020; Hanif et al., 2023; Muhammad & Athar, 2022). This is the established fact that the leaders' knowledge, abilities, and skills showing the effective and the efficient leadership styles differs with respect to their diversity related capabilities including the behavioral adoptability, cognitive knowledge & social insightfulness. These abilities enable leaders to either predict diversity management systems proactively or to detect the existing diversity management systems reactively and adopt their leadership style accordingly to successfully manage diverse personnel in their organizations. It is observed in leadership literature that leadership styles, dimensions, behaviors have advanced in the seclusion and the research has studied their styles, abilities, behaviors and intelligences. Scholars also studied categorization tendencies of the leaders with the visionary leadership dimension in the diverse labour force (Greer et al., 2012). This argument makes it evident that the workforce diversity management and the leadership styles work synergistically to enhance the organizational performance. Consequently, the current study intends to underscore individual impact of each functional leadership dimension on the organizational performance within diverse organizations of Pakistan.

Hence, the significance of leadership in effective diversity management within organizations in Pakistan cannot be overstated. This underscores the crucial need for proper diversity management practices. Further moreover, the association between management of workforce diversity and the organizational performance is likely influenced by various factors, with the effective role of leadership being a key consideration. Therefore, examining impact of leadership dimensions on the organizational performance in Pakistan becomes necessary, especially given the increasing diversity in terms of gender and ethnicity within organizations.

Organizations are currently facing difficulties in establishing a diverse workforce, particularly in relation to gender, as emphasized in "The Biggest Challenges Companies Face in Making Diversity and Inclusion Successful" (n.d.). Acknowledging this, the impactful role of leadership in managing diversity has gained significance in the effort to improve the organizational performance in companies (Nguyen et al., 2022). The increasing presence of gender diverse employees has positioned workforce diversity as a crucial business necessity for companies (Roberson et al., 2017). As a result, organizational leadership is actively developing policies, rules, and regulations to effectively handle a diverse workforce and address potential challenges and conflicts. Scholarly interest in understanding how leadership can effectively manage diverse employees in organizations has grown significantly, particularly in leveraging the full potential of diverse employees for organizational performance (Nguyen et al., 2022). The leadership's importance in effective diversity management is well-established in the literature (Homan et al., 2020). Effectiveness of leadership in well diverse organizations is evidenced by improved organizational performance, manifested through factors such as creativity, innovation, visibility, quality of decision-making, productivity, and the employee satisfaction (Yukl, 2012). The landscape of leadership styles and dimensions is diverse, encompassing various approaches such as inclusive leadership, transformational leadership, shared leadership, task-focused leadership, person-focused leadership, ethical leadership, charismatic leadership, transactional leadership, participative leadership, leader-member exchange (LMX), and directive leadership (Homan et al., 2020). This diversity has sparked increasing interest among professionals, practitioners, and academics in understanding the effects of the leadership dimensions on the organizational performance in Pakistan.

Therefore, there is a pressing need to delve into the effects of functional leadership dimensions on organizational performance, addressing this evolving area of Human Resource Management (HRM) in Pakistan. Organizations' leadership must recognize and value employees with diverse demographics in order to foster an inclusive environment (Oberfield, 2016). Diversity management enables all personnel, irrespective of their religion, race, gender, skin color, ethnicity, etc., to actively contribute to decision-making processes, thereby contributing to

organizational success while embracing their unique and individual characteristics (Gonzalez & Denisi, 2009).

Given the diversity and the evolving complexity of organizational environments, leaders' cognitive activities, such as solving intricate problems through the creation of effective plans for organizing diverse employees and their tasks, anticipating and evaluating expected consequences, and providing innovative solutions, have proven to be critical for effective leadership (Antes & Mumford, 2012). The effective leadership performance depends on the perception of studying intellectual activities when the diverse employees face problems and the tasks are critical (Mumford et al., 2000). Indeed, the leader helps to create solutions of the problems and give directions when diverse teams face problems, therefore, the leader thoughts is the central to the efficient diverse employees functioning in the organization (Antes & Mumford, 2012).

Leadership is a very widely studied topic in the literature of organizational behavior. The impacts of leadership on the functioning of diverse labor force in organizations have been broadly proved in advanced countries. The leadership dimension is the multilevel concept associated with the formulation and implementation of organizational statutes, rules and regulations impacted by different leadership dimensions and behavior, that needs to be investigated further in the context of Pakistan and the leadership involves the behaviors of the formal supervisor that guide, enable, encourage and motivate their subordinates to achieving the organizational objectives (Yukl, 2012). The role of leadership dimensions are very crucial for organizing, fostering, encouraging, and enhancing the functioning of the divers employees (Horne et al., 2016). The role of leadership for diversity management has been recognized as leadership literature. Therefore, leaders' practical role for diversity management systems is essential (Homan et al., 2020). It has been acknowledged that diversity has both the positive and the negative impacts on organizational performance (Van Knippenberg et al., 2004). What kind of leadership dimensions and behaviors can change workforce diversity's negative effects into the positive effects still need investigations in the context of Pakistan? Therefore, researcher have been examining the connections among leadership and organizational performance on how functional leadership dimension impacts of organizational performance (Hüttermann & Boerner, 2011). As the role of the leader in implementing the rules and regulations is important, their leadership dimensions independently need to be examined to see which kind of functional leadership dimensions are more important in Pakistan.

Existing diversity research and the exploration of functional leadership have predominantly focused on countries such as the USA, Australia, UK, Netherlands, and European nations (Yadav & Lenka, 2022). However, there has been limited attention given to Asian countries like Pakistan, despite evidence indicating significant gender diversity in Pakistan (Hanif et al., 2022; Muhammad & Athar, 2022). The aim of the study is to fill the gap by examining the direct associations

between functional leadership dimensions and organizational performance in Pakistan. The objective is to identify the dimension of the functional leadership which are the most effective in the Pakistani context, especially considering the constant pressure organizational leaders face to ensure the work gender diversity in the workforce ("The Biggest Challenges Companies Face in Making Diversity and Inclusion Successful," n.d.).

Literature emphasizes the crucial role of leadership as a factor that impacts work processes and outcomes (Mathieu et al., 2008; Morgeson et al., 2010). According to Fleishman (1991), a functional leadership style involves behaviors that address organizational problems and create conditions for social problem-solving, drawing on various cognitive capabilities in the selection, creation, and the implementation of the influence attempts. However, how the leadership dimensions of functional leadership can enhance the performance and effectiveness of a diverse team remains a question that the literature has not answered precisely (Zaccaro & Klimoski, 2002). Therefore, there is a need for research to recognize the role of each dimension of functional leadership in influencing organizational performance of the diverse teams. This study operates under the assumption that each functional leadership dimension plays a crucial role in augmenting organizational performance within diverse organizations in Pakistan.

Presently, Pakistani firms face a considerable disparity in the gender ratio among employees, and there is a scarcity of research on the efficacy of diversity management systems in enhancing organizational performance (Shen et al., 2009). Most existing studies investigating the interrelation among functional leadership dimensions, diversity, and the organizational performance primarily limited to the Dutch and the US contexts (Moon & Christensen, 2020). Recognizing that dimensions of leadership may differ across cultures, there is a pressing need to explore the influence of functional leadership dimensions on organizations within the specific context of Pakistan. Leaders can foster the sense of the inclusion by way of engaging with three distinct dimensions of functional leadership: encouraging all personnel to freely express the unique perspective and the viewpoint (Leroy et al., 2021). Supervisors and leaders play a very crucial role in the implementing the statutes, regulations, rules, SoPs and policies of organizations. Because they directly interact with their subordinates in the workplace, understanding their leadership styles is vital for the successful implementation of diversity management (Wright & Nishii, 2007). Researchers recommend examining the effective role of the leaders and the supervisors in their organizations concerning implementation of the workforce diversity management, as these individuals ultimately make decisions that impact their employees (E. S. W. Ng, 2008). The leaders play a very significant role in the management, development, promotion, and support of the diverse workforce in organizations (Burke et al., 2006; Horne et al., 2016). The literature commonly cites the

transformational leadership style, which demonstrates varied impacts on workforce diversity, leading to a complex understanding of why the same leadership style produces different outcomes in diversity management (Kearney & Gebert, 2009; Kim, 2017). Research has been consistently conducted to examine the relationship between leadership styles, workforce diversity management, and organizational performance (Hüttermann & Boerner, 2011; Somech, 2006). Nevertheless, the current body of literature does not provide clear indications regarding which leadership styles effectively balance the need for a sense of belongingness and the uniqueness of personnel within organizations.

Various leadership styles, including directive leadership, participative leadership, transformational leadership and the inclusive leadership have been identified as effective in advancing diversity management by elevating employees' needs and goals (Guillaume et al., 2017). Scholars continue to investigate why certain leadership styles enhance organizational performance in specific circumstances while potentially worsening it in other situations (Homan & Greer, 2013). While leadership has been asserted to play a crucial role in cultivating a sense of inclusion in the workplace (Ohunakin et al., 2019), the specific functional leadership dimensions related to this aspect remain relatively unexplored in the literature, particularly in the context of Pakistan (Leroy et al., 2021). Functional leadership dimensions are underscored as particularly crucial for addressing deficiencies in traditional leadership theories (Collective Enactment of Leadership Roles and Team Effectiveness: A Field Study, 2006) (Morgeson et al., 2010; Zaccaro et al., 2018). However, the literature evaluating the impact of functional leadership development on organizational performance, especially within diverse teams, remains limited (Chaturvedi et al., 2012; Gaunya, 2015). Functional leadership places emphasis on the goal oriented leadership functions which foster diverse group processes, potentially resulting in enhanced effectiveness within diverse teams. In advanced countries over the last decade, substantial efforts have been made in developing the leadership focused research in organizations (Nevicka & Sedikides, 2021; Pearce & Conger, 2003). However, due to the complexity of assessing and operationalizing leadership developments, it has become challenging to determine whether such programs can yield tangible improvements in leadership and organizational performance (Collins et al., 2015; Gaunya, 2015; Mumford et al., 2000). Hence, based on the above considerations, this study is conducted in higher education sector in Pakistan.

This study aims to take a significant step in recommending that the leadership intellectual functional actions of the strategy clarification, the situation clarification, and the coordination leadership dimension independently have direct effects on organizational performance in gender-diverse organizations in Pakistan. This endeavor aligns with the call from (Avolio et al., 2009; Chaturvedi et al., 2012) to conduct the leadership focused research in the more realistic settings.

Literature Review and Theoretical Contribution

Workforce diversity encompasses the range of differences and similarities among employees based on various dimensions, including race, age, gender, religion, ethnicity, and more (Hoang et al., 2022). Diversity management refers to an organization's policies and practices aimed at fostering a diverse workforce and providing equal opportunities for all employees, regardless of characteristics such as ethnicity, race, gender, religion, education etc. (Hoang et al., 2022). According to the findings of Hanif et al. (2022) and Muhammad & Athar (2022), there is significant diversity within organizations in Pakistan. In leadership literature, nearly sixty different leadership styles have been identified. To simplify, these leadership styles are broadly categorized into two main classifications: task focused leadership and the person focused leadership. The task focused leadership styles include autocratic leadership and directive leadership, which primarily emphasize target/task achievement. On the other hand, person-focused leadership comprises transformational leadership, visionary leadership, ethical leadership, participative leadership, supportive leadership, inclusive leadership, charismatic leadership, and positive leader-member exchange (LMX). These person-focused leadership styles mainly focus on facilitating and fostering affiliation within teams (Yukl, 2012). Based on leadership literature, the personal focused leadership best match the requirements of diverse workforce to achieve organizational objectives (Homan et al., 2020). Numerous research scholars have explored leadership styles concerning workforce diversity, highlighting major leadership styles and dimensions in the context of diversity management within organizations.

Research has proved that the workforce diversity has enhanced workplace conflicts, but transformational leadership decreased negative effects of diversity (Ayoko & Konrad, 2012). Moreover, transformational leadership moderates the effect of labor force diversity. Transformational leadership style is linked with the creative behaviors, organizational commitments, and the job satisfaction among employees with higher workforce diversity. It also reduced the negative effects of different behaviors toward the workforce diversity (Kim, 2017). Transformational leadership style overcomes negative effects of age diversity in organizations (Kunze & Bruch, 2010). Transformational and transactional leadership styles of CEOs are strongly associated with diversity management in organizations as CEOs play crucial role in implementation of diversity management practices (Ng & Sears, 2012). Moreover, transformational leadership style is the one of most examined leadership styles that have demonstrated both positive and adverse effect on diversity management and organizational performance.

Nevertheless, the participative leadership style has demonstrated no impacts on personnel conflict and innovativeness group performance together with greater labor force diversity in the organizations (de Poel et al., 2014). Participative

leadership style and the directive leadership styles do not find any conflicting impacts, instead they complement each other styles in diverse labor force. Participative leadership style is the more critical for effectiveness of functionality of the heterogeneous employees to produce new ideas and the innovations in processes, products and services. Moreover, the directive leadership style is found common in public sector organizations and the participative leadership style is very common in private sector organizations (Jesper & Villadsen, 2010). Ethical leadership style proved the more creative and significantly moderates curvilinear and U-shaped association between ethical leadership style and creativity in organizations (Mo et al., 2019). Charismatic leadership style did not moderate gender and race diversity. Moreover, it reduced positive and the significant impact of race and gender. This style also lessened the negative relationships between workforce gender diversity and the organizational performance (Mayo et al., 2016). Both charismatic and the participative leadership styles balanced the relationship among labour force age diversity and organizational citizenship behaviors and performance (Seong & Hong, 2018). Previous research studies have arguments that inclusive leadership is essential to create efficient diversity management and the inclusive work atmosphere (Mitchell et al., 2015). It is also demonstrated that employees commanded by the directive supervisors become creative and productive in their organizations (Somech, 2006). Some studies have considered the leader member interchange interactions to explain leader's inclusive approach and behaviors towards the diversity management based on the social exchange mechanism (Dwertmann & Boehm, 2016). The effective role of leadership is highlighted in management literature but there are a very few research studies that study and examine the effective role of the leadership regarding diversity management (O'Toole & Meier, 2015). There is a lack of concrete evidence upon which one can definitively assert that a specific leadership dimension or style efficiently addresses diversity management procedures. According to functional leadership theory, effective leadership is contingent upon the connections between leaders and the circumstances under which leadership functions in organizations (Osborn et al., 2002). In line with this theory, leaders should allocate their time and energy strategically to enhance performance of diverse personnel by aligning their leadership styles with the current and the potential needs of diverse workforce (Osborn et al., 2002). Functional leaders tailor their leadership dimensions to fit prevailing situations, aiming to reduce unproductive systems, processes and procedures by implementing efficient and effective procedures to enhance and improve organizational performance in Pakistan. Therefore, leader should adopt leadership style that prove beneficial in specific situations and refrain from applying those dimensions that are not advantageous in particular circumstances. Given the functional leader adjust his/her leadership style based on the situations, this can reasonably be assumed that the functional leadership different dimensions are positively and significantly associated with organizational performance in the organizations in Pakistan.

In Pakistan, there are a very limited understanding of how the different functional leadership dimensions are the associated with the diversity management and the organizational performance. Presently, there are lack of definitive documentary evidence to assert that the specific leadership dimensions or styles effectively addresses the diversity management process and procedures. The theory of functional leadership suggests that the effective leadership dimensions rely on the relationship between the leader and the organizational environment and circumstances in which the leadership operates (Osborn et al., 2002). According to the theory, leader should strategically allocate his/her time and the energy to enhance and improve the potential for enhancing the performance of the personnel by aligning the leadership dimensions and the styles with the current and the anticipated needs of workforce (Osborn et al., 2002). Leader's tailor their leadership dimensions to the prevailing situations, aiming to mitigate unproductive systems and processes, thereby expanding effective procedures to enhance organizational performance. Therefore, leader should adopt leadership style that prove beneficial in specific situations and to avoid applying that dimension that is not advantageous in the certain circumstances. Given that functional leaders adapt their leadership dimensions based on specific situations, it can be assumed that functional leadership dimensions positively correlate with organizational performance in diverse organizations in Pakistan.

Hypotheses Development

This study considers chosen constructs and their associations in detail. Based on previous research, the associations of variables under the study i.e., functional leadership dimensions and organizational performance. Consequently, hypotheses have been outlined on the basis and the support of related literature accordingly.

Direct Effects of Functional Leadership Dimensions

The role of organizational leaders in diversity management is well-established in both leadership and diversity literature (Homan et al., 2020b). The effectiveness of leadership dimensions in diversity management is evident through increased organizational performance, characterized by enhancements in the visibility, the innovation, the creativity, the quality of decision making, and employees' satisfaction (Yukl, 2012). According to the findings of Guillaume et al. (2017), leadership is perceived as a crucial contextual and circumstantial variable that enhances our understanding of workforce diversity (Joshi et al., 2011; van Knippenberg et al., 2004). However, only a few research studies have specifically investigated the relationship between leadership dimensions and organizational performance in the context of diversity. Most of these studies focused on the impact of workforce diversity, with a limited number examining the interactive dynamics of workforce demography and organizational outcomes. Therefore, it is anticipated that functional leadership dimensions will have a positive impact on

organizational performance. For effective diversity management, leader's proactive leadership dimensions or/and reactive leadership dimension effects association among personnel diversity and organizational performance (Homan et al., 2020). Proactive personnel diversity leadership can determine the efficient diversity management policies and rules in diverse labor force by preventing the categories and its linked intergroup predispositions and the prejudices (Homan et al., 2020). But some time, the leaders might not be able to make proactive diversity management practices in place and thus face some situations that are beyond their control and the subcategorizes diverse personnel occur automatically for which reactive leadership dimensions are needed (McClellan et al., 2019). The reactive diversity leadership dimensions can improve dysfunctional processes and speed up functional policies to enhance the employees effective functioning.

As per findings of Fleishman and colleagues (1991), functional leadership dimensions denotes an approach of the organizational centered problem solving which necessitates several cognitive skills and capabilities. Consequently, numerous researchers including Hackman & Wageman, 2009 and Morgeson et al., 2010 consider functional leadership dimensions as important variable regarding focusing more on some of flaws showed in the traditional leadership theories. Thus, functional leadership dimensions are goal-oriented leadership accomplishments that strengthen group processes to make group success of the task performing in the organizational perspectives. Furthermore, functional leadership theory has higher level knowledge and capability to be utilized as the framework for the leadership programs (Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006). According to Zaccaro and colleagues' model (2001), leaders create situations and conditions that facilitate group processes while promoting mission setting assessment, strategy preparation, and group coordination. The primary functional leadership dimensions in this model are situation, coordination, and strategy clarification. The dimensions of strategy and situation clarification aim to stimulate group understanding processes, while coordination leadership primarily inspires behavior processes related to cooperation, coordination, and communication (Santos et al., 2015).

The Situation Clarification dimension involves aiding team members in understanding the context of the task problems they encounter by promoting a shared evaluation of situations, fostering mission evaluation, and specifying goal lines. Ensuring that all team members have a shared understanding of the problem is crucial to guarantee that each member comprehends group tasks and is working to solve the same problem (Morgeson et al., 2010). Consequently, the Situation Clarification dimension is closely linked to information search and leadership dimensions as defined by Morgeson et al. (2010). According to the information elaboration model (Van Knippenberg et al., 2004), supported by Homan & Greer (2013) positive outcomes of diversity emerge when personnel share information and ideas across all employees, irrespective of their demographic differences. This sharing of information enhances organizational performance by fostering creativity

and improving decision-making. As a result, the employee base becomes stronger, and organizations become more capable of efficiently responding to changing people needs (Pitts, 2009). In the Situation Clarification dimension of functional leadership, leaders define employees' tasks accurately, articulate the main aim of team task, and discuss means and the resources available for task execution. Given that functional leaders adapt their leadership style to prevailing circumstances, it can be assumed that the Situation Clarification dimension of functional leadership positively impacts organizational performance in diverse organizations. Therefore, the hypothesis and proposed conceptual model seek to explore the impact of the Situation Clarification dimension of functional leadership:

H1: Situation clarification dimension positively associates with the organizational performance.

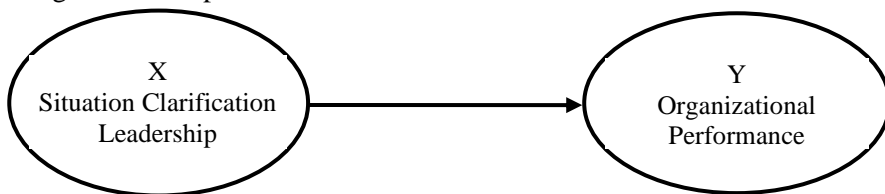


Figure 1: Conceptual Model: Direct Association of Situation Clarification and Organizational Performance

Likewise, the other dimension of functional leadership of strategy clarification refers to encouraging and nurturing the group processes of the strategy formulation and utilizing group's evaluation of prior problem conditions. These demands making effective decisions about how team members will go for realizing their objectives, hopes, task associated information, role allocation, prioritizing and transmission of strategies to all teams members (Zaccaro et al., 2001) to launch the shared perception of approaches, the team members are turning to answer and undertake their tasks related problems. Strategy clarification dimension foresees leader's intellectual actions that stimulate team members to make use of prior group situation assessment in the strategy formulation and planning to build a collective strategy for the job achievement. In strategy clarification dimension, leader presents strategy to resolve problems, encourages teams members to suggest strategies to solve the existing problems, promotes elaboration of plans and inspires clarification of the roles, responsibilities and tasks within the teams therefore, strategy clarification of leadership would positively associates with the organizational performance in diverse organizations, therefore, we hypothesized and propose following conceptual model to know the impact of Strategy clarification dimension of functional leadership:

H2: Strategy clarification dimension positively associates with the organizational performance.

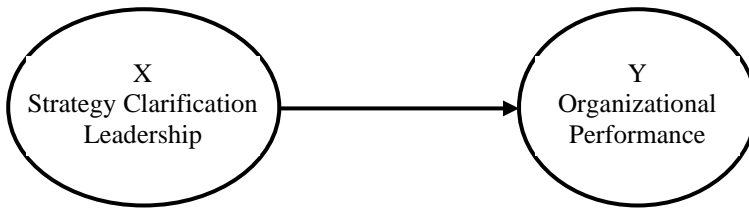


Figure 2: Conceptual Model: Direct association between strategy clarification and organizational performance

The third dimension of functional leadership is the coordination leadership dimension which is very a wide idea that integrates the mentor's support of group processes of the monitoring of team members behaviors, goals achievement and harmonization of team members interdepend responsibilities and actions. So, leadership coordination refers to the knowledge, ability, and skills of leaders to coordinate team members during the implementations of plans. The leadership coordination dimension accelerates mainly behavioral team processes of cooperation, coordination, and communication among the team members irrespective of demographic difference. Coordination leadership dimension of functional leadership represents leader's capability to compose team members during implementation of their plans and significance of coordination with respect to managing the human resources for implementation of plans (Zaccaro et al., 2001). Coordination leadership dimension promotes cooperation, coordination, and communication among the team members groups. In coordination dimension, leader coordinates teams members during task accomplishment, monitor job execution, keeps team aware about its ongoing performance, stimulates reciprocal assistance and backing within groups for its members facing hindrances and stimulates group members to achieve its objectives while preventing possible employees conflicts due to diversity. Therefore, coordination dimension positively associates with the organizational performance in diverse organizations therefore, we hypothesises and propose following conceptual model to know the impact of Coordination leadership dimension of functional leadership:

H3: Coordination leadership dimension positively associates with organizational performance.

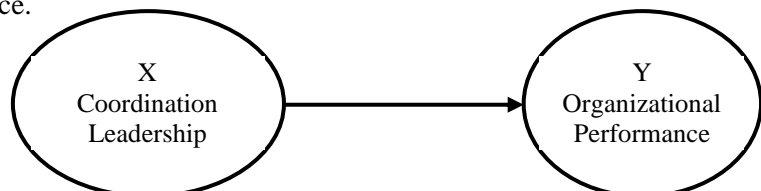


Figure 3: Conceptual Model: Direct association of Coordination dimensions and the organizational performance

Methodology

Research Design

The research philosophy adopted for this study is positivism, aligning with empirical techniques that aim to generate precise data, facts, figures, and knowledge without the influence of human biases and perceptions (Saunders et al., 2007). The research approach employed is deductive, as the study examines hypotheses. Quantitative research methods are utilized for this study. The research design is cross-sectional, employing purposive sampling. Due to legal and confidentiality issues, the complete list of employees from universities is not available, preventing the use of probability sampling techniques. Therefore, a non-probability convenience sampling technique is applied with utmost necessary protective measures. The population frame comprises individual personnel in universities across Pakistan, with a sample size of 500 employees. The data collection tool utilized for this study is structured questionnaires.

Survey Design

Survey design was employed for the data collection in this research study, utilizing the questionnaires as primary method. The Questionnaires are very widely utilized in the social sciences to comprehend the individual behaviors (Jamal et al., 2022). Further moreover, the conceptual model of this research study comprises the several societal research variables that can be the challenging to measure with the alternative methods and technique such as the case studies or the experiments. The survey design provides a structured and efficient means of gathering data on the complex societal variables that included in research model.

Sampling/Data Collection

Data collection process started the administering survey questionnaires to the employees from top ranking universities of Pakistan, targeting individual employees in both the administrative and the faculty roles, following guidelines of Kim and Qu (2020). Given utilization of the nonprobability sampling, the larger sample size was duly considered necessary, aligning with recommendations by Hair et al. (2013) for the enhanced statistical significance. Adopting procedure suggested by the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) and utilizing the 3.5% margin of the error, this research study determined the sample size of 500 to achieve the statistically significant result. To efficiently and effectively collect the data, the researcher chose to develop the online Google Form, and was disseminated to the university employees, including the Deans, the Directors, the Registrars, the Vice Chancellors, the CoE, the Chairpersons, the Treasurers, and the Faculty Members, via WhatsApps and emails. The rigorous follow up was conducted with the assistance of the friends and the colleagues. To ensure the data completeness and to minimize the missing values, the responses to Google Form questionnaire was

made mandatory, excluding the respondent names to address the confidentiality concerns. Consequently, chances of the encountering the blank or the incomplete questionnaires were maximum possible minimized. Questionnaire link was sent to 799 respondents via emails and WhatsApps numbers, resulting in the 519 filled questionnaires. The eighteen questionnaires were rejected due to the improper filling and the non-serious attitude. With the deemed sample size of 500, collected data were considered valid for the analysis. Data collection process spanned the almost a year, and response rate, exceeding the 50%, was deemed adequate for this research study (Bell & Bryman, 2019).

Table 1. Validity of the Instruments

| Construct | Items | Source | Reliability |
|--|-------|-----------------------|--|
| Situation clarification dimension of functional leadership | 5 | | |
| Strategy clarification dimension of functional leadership | 4 | (Santos et al., 2015) | Factor Loadings > 0.60 and a Cronbach's Alpha value 0.89 |
| Coordination leadership dimension of functional leadership | 3 | | |
| Organizational Performance | 9 | (Kundu et al., 2019) | Factor Loadings > 0.60 and a Cronbach's Alpha value 0.89 |

Sample Description

Sample, consisting of the 500 respondents, provides the nuanced and the representative views of Pakistani context across the various demographics dimensions. Notably, 74% of the participants hail from the public sector universities, whereas 25% represent the private sector higher education institutions. Occupationally, distribution is almost equal, to 49% in the management roles and the 50% in the faculty positions. Workforce Gender diversity reveals the predominantly male respondents base (75%), contrasting with the 24% women. Ethnically, sample captures rich workforce diversity of Pakistan, with majority identifying Punjabi (72%), followed by the Pashtun (13%), the Sindhi (6%), the Baluchi (4%), the Kashmiris (3%), and the 1% from the other ethnic backgrounds. Age ranges 19 to 60 years, with mean age of the 34 years and diversity in the years of experience from 18 to 60 years, with the average of 8 years experience. Educational background mirrors the diverse academic landscape, with the 32% holding Ph.D. degrees, 34% possessing holding MS degrees, 30% holding Bachelor of Science degrees (BS), and the 4% holding Bachelor of Arts degrees (BA). This representation ensures that this research study captures the insights from the broad spectrum of the individuals, contributing to richness and the validity of research findings.

Data Analysis

This research utilized the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with the help of Smart PLS 3.0 for analysis of both measurement model and the structural model of this study. Selection of the Smart PLS 3.0 was based on its wide recognition as one of premier statistical processes for the structural equation modeling technique. Smart PLS is a well renowned for its due capability to concurrently assess the both structural and the measurement models, highlighted by Hair et al. (2013). Its efficiency and effectiveness extends to evaluation of the various kinds of models, including the complex ones. Decision to employ the Smart PLS for the research study was motivated by acknowledged accuracy, the validity, the model reliability, and the verifiability, making it preferred tool to conducting analysis, emphasized by Jamal et al. (2022).

Common Method Bias

CMB arises when instrument used in the data collection introduce biases, and primary cause of bias is often overlap among the constructs (Jamal et al., 2022). In the present study, the author addressed the potential CBM issues by the employing collinearity variance inflation factors (VIFs) processes to examine VIF values. If VIF values are larger than the 3.3, then it may indicate presence of the CBM in data (Kock, 2015). However, results of the study demonstrated that there was no issues with the common method bias on the basis of the examination of VIFs.

Measurement Model

There are two primary methods exist for the consideration of Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). 1-stage approach and 2-stage approach. In 1-stage approach, measurement model and the structural model are formulated and developed simultaneously. Conversely, 2-stage approach involves initially establishing measurement model-assessing convergent validity and the discriminant validity and then, making specific modifications before the calculating structural model-testing hypotheses related to the direct and the indirect effects. Outcomes are described separately (Sarstedt & Cheah, 2019). For present study, two-stage methodology was employed owing to its widespread acceptance for assessing the reliability and validity of each construct. Convergent validity, and the discriminant validity of the indicators of the constructs were assessed in the Measurement Model using SmartPLS. AVE, CR, and Cronbach's alpha were employed to determine validity, with AVE establishing similarity in theoretical concept (Jamal et al., 2022).

Table 2: AV, CR, and the Cronbach's Alpha

| | Cronbach Alpha Values | rho_A | Composite reliability | Average variance extracted |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Situation clarification | 0.91 | 0.91 | 0.938 | 0.79 |
| Strategy clarification | 0.91 | 0.91 | 0.933 | 0.73 |
| Coordination leadership | 0.88 | 0.88 | 0.927 | 0.80 |
| Organizational Performance | 0.93 | 0.93 | 0.943 | 0.62 |

Table 2 indicate that the Cronbach's alpha of constructs of situation clarification, strategy clarification, coordination leadership and organizational performance was .91, .91, .88 and .93 respectively. Further, AVEs of the constructs of the situation clarification, the strategy clarification, the coordination leadership and the organizational performance were .79, .73, .80 and .62 respectively. Corresponding Composite Reliability values for the situation clarification, strategy clarification, the coordination leadership, and organizational performance were .93, .93, .92, and .94, respectively. Adhering to the established criteria, AVE should surpass .50 (Hair et al., 2019), while CR values are expected to exceed .70 (Hair et al., 2019), and the Cronbach's alpha be greater than .70, as recommended by Ramayah (2011). This affirms that instruments used in study meet prescribed benchmarks for the reliability, the Cronbach's alpha, and the convergent validity.

Table 3: *The Measurement Model*

| Constructs | Indicators | Factor Loading |
|---|------------|----------------|
| Functional Leadership Dimensions | | |
| Situation clarification | SCL1 | 0.89 |
| | SCL 2 | 0.91 |
| | SCL 3 | 0.88 |
| | SCL 4 | 0.86 |
| Strategy clarification | StCL1 | 0.85 |
| | StCL 2 | 0.83 |
| | StCL 3 | 0.88 |
| | StCL 4 | 0.85 |
| | StCL 5 | 0.85 |
| Coordination leadership | CL1 | 0.88 |
| | CL2 | .90 |
| | CL3 | .90 |
| Organizational performance in Pakistan | POP1 | .81 |
| | POP2 | .79 |
| | POP3 | .77 |
| | POP4 | .75 |
| | POP5 | .72 |
| | POP6 | .81 |

| | |
|-------|-----|
| POP7 | .82 |
| POP8 | .74 |
| POP9 | .79 |
| POP10 | .84 |

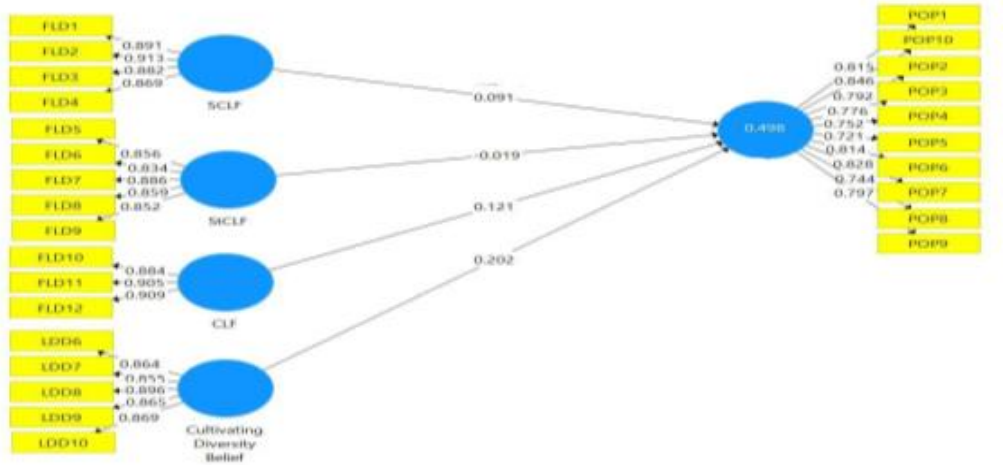


Figure 4: Measurement Model

Table 4: Fornell Larcker criteria

| | Coordination Leadership | Organizational Performance | Situation Clarification | Strategy Clarification |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| Coordination Leadership | .89 | | | |
| Organizational Performance | .60 | .78 | | |
| Situation Clarification | .59 | .54 | .88 | |
| Strategy Clarification | .72 | .58 | .80 | .85 |

Discriminant validity is commonly employed to ensure that constructs do not exhibit excessively high correlations with each other. The Fornell-Larcker criterion, widely endorsed by scholars for validating latent variables, is a commonly used method for assessing discriminant validity (Benitez et al., 2020). In this criterion, Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values are compared with the squared correlations between constructs in the structural models. It is expected that the common variance of all constructs in the model should not exceed their respective AVE values (Hair et al., 2019). The results of the Fornell-Larcker

criteria for establishing discriminant validity are presented in Table 4. Diagonal values, representing the square root of the AVEs, are compared with other values in the corresponding rows. The results indicate that the square root of the AVEs for coordination leadership (0.89), situation clarification (0.88), and strategy clarification (0.85) are greater than the correlations with other constructs. For organizational performance, the square root of the AVE is 0.78. This implies that, concerning the measurement model, there is no issue with discriminant validity in this study.

Table 5: *Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT)*

| | Coordination Leadership | Organizational Performance | Situation Clarification | Strategy Clarification |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Coordination Leadership | | | | |
| Organizational Performance | 0.66 | | | |
| Situation Clarification | 0.66 | 0.58 | | |
| Strategy Clarification | 0.804 | 0.63 | 0.89 | |

Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio is calculated as mean value of the associations among items within constructs divided by geometric mean average correlations of the items assessing same construct. If HTMT exceed the specific thresholds, concerns regarding the discriminant validity can arise. Recommended thresholds are HTMT < .90 for the conceptually similar constructs and HTMT < .85 for the conceptually different constructs (Hair et al., 2019). Bootstrapping can also be employed to assess the whether HTMT values significantly differ from 1 or are smaller (e.g., .85 / .90), and the interpretation should be contextually well explained (Henseler et al., 2015; Franke & Sarstedt, 2019). The Researcher may also examine whether upper bound 95% confidence interval HTMT is less than .90/.85. Table 5 indicates that the HTMT values are less than 0.90, suggesting in no issues with the discriminant validity in measurement model of study. Finding supports robustness and the appropriateness of constructs' differentiation in analysis.

Structural Model

Once it was established that the data exhibited no issues with convergent and discriminant validity, authors proceeded to investigate hypotheses. Results of the structural model, as shown in Table 6 from SmartPLS 3, indicate that the Situation Clarification (StCL) has the significant positive association (β 0.09, $p < 0.00$) with organizational performance. The Strategy Clarification (StCL) shows a non-significant association (β -0.018, $p > 0.000$) with organizational performance. The Coordination Leadership (CL) has a significant positive association (β 0.1209, $p < 0.000$) with organizational performance. Therefore, Hypotheses H1, H2, and H3

are supported based on the observed relationships in the structural model.

Table 6: Beta Overall

| | Original | Sample Mean | Stand. Deviation | T.Values | P.Values |
|---|----------|-------------|------------------|----------|----------|
| situation clarification -> the organizational Performance | .09 | .08 | .06 | 1.39 | 0.08 |
| strategy clarification -> organizational performance | -.01 | -.01 | .07 | .23 | 0.40 |
| coordination leadership -> organizational performance | .12 | .11 | .06 | 1.80 | 0.03 |

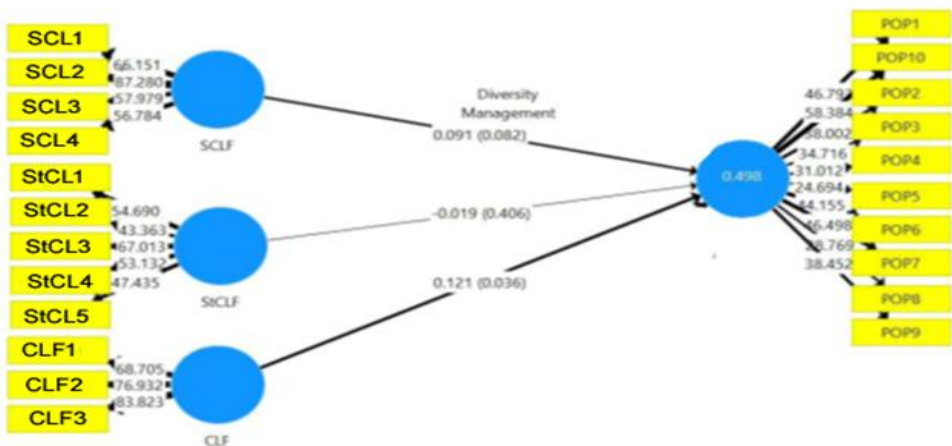


Figure 4 The Structural Model Depicted in SmartPLS3

Objective 1 of this study is to investigate correlation among the situation clarification dimension of functional leadership and organizational performance. The structural model results revealed a path coefficient of 0.2001, with a T-value of 5.1395, exceeding 1.96. The reported P-value was 0.0000, less than 0.05. The bootstrapped confidence interval ranged from -0.0095 (2.5% LLCI) to 0.4978 (97.5% ULCI), with no inclusion of 0, meeting the path analysis criteria. Thus, H1 was supported, indicating a positive association between the situation clarification dimension and organizational performance in the higher education sector in Pakistan. The finding aligns with prior research (Van Dick et al., 2008) and emphasizes importance of the situation clarification in improving organizational performance, especially in diverse university settings.

Objective 2 aimed to explore relationship between strategy clarification dimension

of the functional leadership and organizational performance. Structural model reported the path coefficient of .3435, with T-value of 2.7252, surpassing the 1.96. P-value was .0067, below .05. Bootstrapped confidence interval from .0959 (2.5% LLCI) to .5911 (97.5% ULCI), with no inclusion of 0, meeting path analysis criteria. Consequently, H2 was supported, indicating the positive and significant association between strategy clarification dimension and the organizational performance in higher education sector in Pakistan. Finding aligns with the previous research (Morgeson et al., 2010; Van Wart, 2013; Wang et al., 2013) emphasizing importance of the strategy clarification in enhancing the organizational performance, particularly in the diverse university environments.

Objective 3 to assess the impact of the coordination leadership of functional leadership on the organizational performance. Structural model reported the path coefficient of 1.1175, with T-value of 6.2070, exceeding 1.96. P-value was .0000, below .05. Bootstrapped confidence interval ranged .7638 (2.5% LLCI) to 1.4712 (97.5% ULCI), with no inclusion of the 0, meeting path analysis criteria. Consequently, H3 was supported, indicating positive and significant relationship between coordination leadership dimension and the organizational performance in higher education sector in Pakistan. This result aligns with prior studies (Greer et al., 2012; Mor Barak et al., 2022; Van Dick et al., 2008) emphasizing the importance of coordination leadership in improving organizational performance, particularly in diverse university settings.

Theoretical Contributions

Theoretical contributions of the study lie in the examination of the relationships between functional leadership dimension and the organizational performance, particularly in the context of Pakistan. The findings contribute to the existing body of knowledge by expanding the literature on functional leadership and diversity management beyond advanced countries. The study provides valuable insights for HR directors in enhancing diversity through the functional leadership to improve the organizational performance. Leaders can use the findings to determine the specific functional leadership dimensions needed for organizational success in Pakistan, emphasizing the importance of strategy clarification, coordination leadership, situation clarification dimensions.

Theoretical Implications

Theoretical implications include a deeper understanding of the multifaceted relationships examined within the functional leadership theory. This research study adds to growing body of the research on functional leadership and offers a comprehensive synthesis of the effects of the functional leadership on the organizational performance in specific context of Pakistan. Researchers can benefit from the study's insights into the complexity and variability of these relationships under different organizational circumstances. The research also validates the applicability of functional leadership theory in the Pakistani context.

Practical Implications

Practical implications highlight the need for leaders to adopt functional leadership dimensions to improve the organizational performance. This study emphasizes importance of the incorporating functional leadership approaches for effective diversity management. Organizations with strong functional leadership dimensions are positioned to thrive, irrespective of demographic factors. Therefore, leaders are encouraged to integrate functional leadership dimensions to improve overall organizational performance.

Conclusion, Future Directions and Limitations

There are many limitations that need acknowledgment to better interpret the study results. Firstly, the research was confined to universities in Pakistan, focusing specifically on understanding the independent impact of functional leadership dimensions. Secondly, the study targeted personnel within universities recognized by the Higher Education Commission (HEC). Subsequent investigations could broaden their scope to include other sectors. Additionally, the research model was limited to assessing the influence of functional leadership dimensions on organizational performance, leaving room for future studies to explore diverse variables, including moderated moderation. Another limitation pertains to the sample size, which was constrained to a specific number of respondents. While the data collection did not impose restrictions on education level, age, gender, religion, or ethnicity, certain factors were more pronounced during data collection. Notably, 75% of the respondents were male, 24% were female, 49% were in administrative roles, and 51% were in the faculty. Educational backgrounds were distributed as follows: 32% held a PhD, 34% an MPhil, 30% a BS, and only 4% a BA. The generalizability of the study warrants careful consideration, and to enhance its applicability across diverse contexts, future research should validate the findings in other sectors. Moreover, although data was collected nationwide in Pakistan, the distribution across provinces exhibited disparities, with 73% of respondents originating from Punjab. Addressing this geographical skew is crucial, as obtaining the equal number of the respondents from each province could alter the study's outcomes. Lastly, the study relied on cross-sectional data collected within a specific timeframe. To gain deeper insights and account for temporal dynamics, future studies are encouraged to adopt longitudinal designs in either the same or different contexts.

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