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**INTERNATIONAL BLACK SEA UNIVERSITY  
FACULTY of BUSINESS MANAGEMENT  
DOCTORATE PROGRAM IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION**

**EFFECT OF LEADERSHIP PRACTICES ON ORGANIZATIONAL  
LEARNING PROCESSES IN UNIVERSITIES: CASE OF NORTHERN  
IRAQ UNIVERSITIES**

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I confirm that the work corresponds to the field, is characterized by novelty, scientific and practical value and is presented by the format defined by International Black Sea University.

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## **Introduction**

Leaders and leadership is one of the most important ingredients of successful organizations. Leaders get people acting and performing. They energize and mobilize people and organizations. They take people and organizations to places they have never been before. Leaders attempt to create better organizations to adapt fast changing, globally challenged environments. At these situation organizations have to develop different kinds of mechanisms to deal with circumstances they face. Learning is one of the most important technic organizations should adapt. Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other.

According to (Northouse, 2007), Leadership became passion to public to “provide a picture of a process that is far more sophisticated and complex than the often simplistic view presented in some of the popular books on leadership”. Leaders attempt to construct better organizations to expect or adapt new environmental situations where the challenge arises due to organization’s nature of flexibility and adaptability that turns into more strenuous and distressful where employees try hard in finding better ways to lead organizations.

Leading people in organizations to learn is very difficult without good leadership (Argyris, 1991; Crossan, 2003; Senge, 1990). Organizational learning should begin at the highest level organization where required authority supports execution of the learning. (Argyris, 1999). Knauseder (2007) presented leadership as the first key capacity to build a learning organization. Developing effective leadership practices and behaviours in the organizations became crucial to facilitate organizational learning.

Organizational learning could be a key to for developing the new thinking on leadership development for multiple levels in organizations. Previous research studies explored possibility of the relationship between organizational learning and leadership, but did not identify specific leadership behaviours and its effect on organizational learning and capacity of organizations to be learning organizations.

## **Problem Statement**

The purpose of this study was to discover if a relationship exists between leadership and organizational learning and learning organization concept. This research investigates relationship between leadership practices and its effect on organizational learning capabilities

and capacity of Northern Iraq universities to become learning organization. More specifically current research concentrates on transformational, transactional and laissez-faire leadership theories to find nexus with organizational learning at individual, team or group and organizational level and learning organization characteristics of universities in Northern Iraq.

Identifying different leadership characteristics and its effect on learning practices and learning organization capabilities of universities will yield connection.

### **Goal Statement**

This study aimed to analyse the relationship between leaders' behaviour and effect on organizational learning and learning organization specifically at Northern Iraq Universities both private and public universities. Based on review of the literature, transformational appears to have significant connections with organizational learning actions.

### **Research Questions**

- 1) What is the relationship between effect of transformational, transactional and laissez-faire leadership theories on northern Iraq universities to become learning organizations?
- 2) What is the effect of leadership practices on organizational learning at individual, team and over all organizational level?
- 3) What is the impact of laissez faire leadership on learning organization and organizational learning?

### **Novelty of the research:**

There were many researchers who did research on the effect of leadership theories and organizational learning as well learning organization where they found association between them in different regions across the world on academicians in the universities except in Kurdistan Region. The novelty of current research is to understand the academician's opinion on leadership theories, organizational learning and the efficiency of universities in the region to become learning organization. Practices of organizational learning are important for organization members to learn at individual, group and organizational level to respond to changing world. The concept of organizational learning and developing will hold the key to help facilitate the future by improving organizational learning capabilities through effective leadership practices.

Especially at universities where they are supposed to teach learning to their students, themselves becoming learning organization is complex rather than easy as they think. In this research, it is investigated to see relationship between leadership practices and its effect on organizational learning. Research further evaluates the universities' capabilities to become a learning organization where organizational learning practiced and institutionalized.

### **Practical and Theoretical Value**

The most important theoretical value of this thesis is that it will incorporate findings of university academicians' view about organizational learning and their view of leadership practices on university academic world. Academicians themselves teaches students how to be a leader and how to learn. Their own practices about leadership and organizational learning will yield significant results to literature and will contribute to academic world.

The practical value of this research will be actual use of findings by universities to be learning organizations and implementing organizational learning at different levels. Findings will shed light on different opinions of academicians at public and private universities.

### **Significance of the problem**

This study is unique in Iraq where leadership was misunderstood by dictatorship and country was managed by several decades. People were oppressed to share their opinion publicly which lead to a closed culture of keeping ideas to themselves. The researcher investigated the literature to find similar research work in the areas of leadership, organization learning and learning organization in Northern Iraq.

### **Research methods**

This research involves 1448 academic staffs of private and public universities in KRG, Iraq. Academic staffs of universities have been working at different departments and hold different kinds of academic and administrative titles. Theoretical framework of this research was a continuation of the study conducted by Watkins, Yang and Marsick on organizational learning (1993, 1996, 2001) and Full Range of Leadership model developed by Bass & Avolio (1997) on KRG universities of Iraq. This study investigated transformational and transactional leaders of universities by using the Dimensions of Learning Organizations Questionnaire (DLOQ) and Multi factor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ). DLOQ examines three levels of organizational

learning: (1) Individual Level (2) Team or Group Level (3) Organizational Level and seven dimensions of learning organization which includes: (1) continuous learning opportunities (2) promotion of dialogue and inquiry (3) encouragement of collaboration and team learning (4) empower people towards collective mission (5) connect the organization to its environment (6) establish system to capture and share learning (7) provide strategic leadership for learning.

MLQ investigates three types of leadership behaviors: (1) transactional leadership (2) transformational leadership and (3) laissez-faire leadership. The demographics encompass gender, marital status, age, university type, educational qualification, experience, and academic & administrative titles.

This research used quantitative research methodology. Quantitative research is a numerical means of measuring and analysing theories. The research instruments which included a test for seven dimensions of learning organization, three levels of organizational learning and three types of leadership behaviors have been tested and designed to reduce mistakes and biases. The data compiled using computer software – Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23 and Analysis of Moment Structures (AMOS) version 23.

### **Literature review**

The researcher explores literature on the behavior of leaders and the learning capacity of organizations. Behavior, leader and expected outcome of an organization are closely inter-related. Theory and practice of organizational learning is demonstrated as concentrated point in scrutinizing the outcomes of the organization, increased effectiveness, and capacity of the organization in learning. Organizational goals can be met by the behavior of leaders through transformational leadership which is expressed as the process applied by leaders for process change process and growth of the organization. The current research proposes a model on behavior of leaders which influences actions in various dimensions of learning organization that will provide outcomes of an organization positively.

### **Leadership Theories**

Leadership consists of process or style that is utilized by leaders to communicate with members, society and atmosphere related tasks apart from attributes and qualities of individuals may obtain

automatically. (Hersey and Blanchard, 1969). Research made on Leadership as related to specific situation but not absolute. The process of considering individual concerns of followers by the leaders is to engage them into conversation and emphasizing contentment of team members in an organization. Transformational leadership, transactional leadership and passive/avoidance leadership styles are very old in nature and domineering model of leadership styles during few decades towards research into business management area. (Pastor and Mayo, 2008).

Charismatic leadership propels towards public recognition in the USA elections which was observed many characteristics of charisma in Barack Obama, the first African American Presidents. Jung and Sosik ( 2006) observed that traits of involvement of impression management, attainment of self-actualization, motivation towards social power attainment, and self - monitoring. According to Stogdill (1974), analyzed various characteristics of leaders who are effective includes self-confidence and result oriented, persistence in achieving goals, strong inter-personal skills, capacity in handling interpersonal stress, involvement in solving problems in a creative manner and frustration toleration.

Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) theory explains the interactions between leaders and followers. Researchers investigated the impact of empowerment on leader-member exchange towards outcome. The proposed outcomes are turnover, job satisfaction, turnover, job performance, and citizenship behavior of organizations. Harris, Wheeler, and Kacmar (2009).

Financial goals of the organization are met by utilizing leadership practices and knowledge possession by leaders in an organization where it must be flexible to adapt required changes in enhancing productivity of employees. (Bass, 1985). Transactional leadership style defines as refinement management approach on behavior where leader accords incentives and rewards to employees for complying on anticipated goal and behavior and punishes for non-compliance. (Bass, 1985, 1999).

Transactional leaders depends on the structure of management based on hierarchy where employees' roles, agreements based on contracts, penalty or compensation depends on

performance are defined clearly as per the argument made by Burns (1978) and Bass (1985) by the concept developed towards “exchange of relationships” from leaders as well as followers.

Management-by-exception can be active or passive in its approach where leaders engage in Management-by-exception actively during monitoring process of deviations, errors and performance of employees as well as expecting them to commit mistake. Engagement of transactional leader occurs in management-by-exception passively when the leader takes appropriate action after employees who commit mistakes. (Bass, 1985, 1999). Transactional leaders regulate behavior of employees in agreement with employees to reward for their behavior in achieving the goals of the organization and punish them for non-achievement of goals of the organization. (Groves & Larocca, 2001).

Transformational leadership style is built on the idea of team of an organization where leaders generate an environment of dignity, support, trust but transactional leadership is built on the structure of hierarchy towards supervisor & modification of employee’s behavior to motivate them towards organizational goals. (Bass, 1985, 1999; Burns, 1978). Transformational leadership style creates nexus between reciprocal stimulation and elevation which transforms a follower into a leader and leader into moral agent. Burns (1978).

As per (Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & van Engen, 2003), “Idealized influence or charisma” consists of the components related to attitudes and behaviors where leader possesses specific attributes of personality and involves in the process to mentor and empower the behavior of employees that invokes vigorous discern of trust among them.

According to Antonakis et al., 2003, laissez-faire leadership style is regarded as absence of leadership and participation and attributed as eluding the process of decision-making and persuading the responsibility to the followers. According to (Furtner, 2012; Furtner & Baldegger, 2013), supervisor and sub-ordinates interaction is less and nexus yielding is ineffectual in laissez-faire. Absence of leadership is substituted by the competences and knowledge of followers in laissez-faire leadership.

### **Organizational Learning and Theories**

Many researchers have made an attempt to investigate organizational learning from the standpoint of cognition and behavior of people for the sake of apprehending the process of



learning. Researcher found the contrast between individual behavior and cognition towards organization learning. Fiol and Lyles (1985) discovered that modification of behavior may arise in the absence of cognitive relation development in his study and also observed that knowledge can be absorbed in the absence of modification of behavior.

### **Learning Organization**

Research made by Rijal (2009) proposed that learning organization needs a leader who can sustain in an unpredictable environment. Leaders must communicate vision to members and empower members of the organization to comprehend the change of environment, support them in responding properly during environmental changes, and provide learning climate in the organization. Transformational leader is required in collaboration of learning, motivation of employees in learning, and helping individuals in the process of learning towards managing themselves with change.

The argument made by Garvin et al. (2008) on process of transforming an organization into learning organization is vital to challenge the dynamic changes. According to Ellinger et al., 2003, the attributes of learning organizations was determined by DLOQ to ameliorate performance of the organization financially. Research finding made by (Ellinger et al., 2003) was significant in developing the concept of learning organization to help chief executive officers of the organizations whose concentration was on bottom line employees in accepting the current concept. Researcher identified the obstacles in developing learning organization. One of the obstacles is to convince a CEO who is tough minded to make him/her to understand the advantages of learning organization. It was observed that the organizations which were committed to learning organization will have payoff financially.

According to the research made by Chang and Lee (2007) to find the effect of transactional and transformational leadership on the attributes of learning and the job satisfaction of employees in the organizations of Taiwan, the transactional and transformational leadership styles had positive effect on the attributes of learning organizations and job satisfaction. FRL was utilized to investigate the leadership as reference model and Senge's five disciplines were reviewed to define and measure the attributes of learning organization.

According to (Senge, 1990; Johnson, 1998; Prewitt,2003; Sadler, 2003), many research studies made by many researchers on various factors that affect the development of learning

organization, it was recognized that leadership is the major factor which can affect the learning organization's development. Researchers proposed that learning organizations require special type of leadership that is better than the roles of conventional leadership. The transformation of a normal organization to learning organization involves change towards complicated system which difficult.

According to (Waldersee, 1997), the development of learning organization reveals meaning that a conventional organization will transform towards valuing people and stresses on performance improvement through learning which necessitates people to strive towards challenging the change where employees can stimulate environment of innovation, persuade collaboration and trust. Employees are ready to design a course in unexplored areas to improve through learning. Learning organization needs leaders who are effective and show direction to members of the organization and can accelerate the transition by not considering the control and top-bottom command. The basic role of leaders in transforming a conventional organization into learning organization is to attain the workforce to be transformed as intellectually equipped employees.

As per Sadler (2003), leaders in the learning organization need readiness towards continuous learning besides having open opinion about it. Leaders must encourage followers by posing questions that are challenging in nature and stimulate their curiosity intellectually. Leaders must hold the capacity in facilitating the learning of others by performing the role as mentor & coach. Leaders must provide incentives and required resources for learning. They must encourage an environment of learning in a cooperative way and instigate mechanisms to transfer individual learning to team learning in an organization in storing knowledge and experience of employees.

## **Methodology**

### **Introduction**

The aim of the study is to examine the relationship among different leadership styles, learning organization and organizational learning. Researcher used the Dimensions of the Learning Organization Questionnaire (DLOQ) and demographic/occupational survey and Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ). This chapter includes a description of the research design, population, sampling, instrumentation, data collection, and data analysis procedures.

## **Research Design**

The present research was done based on quantitative method where deductive approach was established to infer tendencies & trends, make forecasts, and evaluate the relationship or co-variation among independent and dependent variables. Quantitative method is less subjective than qualitative method in conducting research.

## **Assessments and instrumentation**

Two assessment scales were used in current research. The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) 5X short version was used to measure transactional, transformational and laissez-faire leadership behaviours. (Bass and Avolio, 2004). Organizational learning actions and learning organizations characteristics were measured by using the Dimensions of Learning Organizations Questionnaire (DLOQ). Yang, Watkins and Marsick (2004).

## **Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire.**

The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) 5X short measured leaders' behaviors by recognizing their characteristics of leading behaviours (Bass & Avolio, 2004). Antonakis (2001) observed that the MLQ 5X short was homogenous across various ordered series of samples of research and had more homogenous results by crossing a diversity of circumstances than the standard MLQ. The MLQ 5X short was used to disclose important dimensions of effective leadership perspective at various levels related to organizational studies (Avolio & Bass, 2004; Bass, 2000). Therefore, the MLQ 5X short was chosen because we used academicians of both private and public universities in KRG Iraq.

The MLQ 5X short (2004) not only has been filled by more than 15,000 respondents, but has been translated into over thirteen languages (Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, French, German, Norwegian, Swedish, Hebrew, Turkish, Arabic, Chinese, Thai, and Korean) and used in transnational researches (Avolio & Bass, 2004; Bass & Riggio, 2006). This research study used the questionnaire formed from original English-language, translated into Kurdish and Arabic version as well.

“The latest version of the MLQ 5X, has been used in nearly 300 research programs, doctoral dissertations and masters theses around the globe in the nearly ten years between 1995 and 2004” (Avolio & Bass, 2004).

The relative validity of the MLQ has improved as shown in two meta-analytic reviews (Judge & Piccolo, 2004; Lowe, Kroeck, & Sivasubramaniam, 1996). “The factor structure of the MLQ (5X) has been validated by both the discriminatory and confirmatory factor analysis” (Avolio & Bass, 2004, p. 5). Avolio and Bass (2004) state “reliabilities for the total items and for each leadership factor scale range from .74 to .94. All of the scales’ reliabilities were generally high, exceeding standard cut-offs for internal consistency recommended in the literature” (p. 48).

“The Cronbach alpha of transformational leadership behaviors from cumulative data ( $n = 27,285$ ) of MLQ were: idealized influence (II) attributes ( $\alpha = .75$ ) and behaviors ( $\alpha = .70$ ); inspirational motivation (IM) ( $\alpha = .83$ ); intellectual stimulation (IS) ( $\alpha = .75$ ); and individual consideration (IC) ( $\alpha = .77$ ). The transactional subscale reliabilities were contingent reward (CR) ( $\alpha = .69$ ), management-by-exception active (MBEA) ( $\alpha = .75$ ), and management-by-exception passive (MBEP) ( $\alpha = .70$ ). The laissez-faire (LF) leadership behavior ( $\alpha = .71$ ), were higher than .70. The MLQ 5X short subscales met the criterion of .70 as an acceptable value for Cronbach’s  $\alpha$  as a reliable scale “(Field, 2005).

The leader’s behaviour related to self-perception was measured by the “leader form”. The “Rater form” permits the followers in rating the specific behaviour of leaders. The 2004 MLQ manual suggests that the number of raters evaluating a single leader has varied in size from three to ten or more (Avolio & Bass, 2004). Both the leader form and the rater form of the MLQ 5X short have 45 questions according to rating scale ranging from “0 to 4: where 0 = not at all, 1 = once in a while, 2 = sometimes, 3 = fairly often, and 4 = frequently, if not always. “

The components of MLQ 5X short are Transformational leadership behaviors which are “idealized influence (attributes and behaviors), inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, individual consideration, contingent reward, management-by-exception-active, management-by-exception-passive, and laissez-faire leadership”

### **Dimensions of the Learning Organization (DLOQ) Questionnaire.**

The measure of organizational learning was made by using Dimensions of the Learning Organization Questionnaire (DLOQ) (Marsick & Watkins, 2003). The DLOQ has been taken into account as a useful instrument for “organizational consulting”.

Researchers and organizations aspire the capacity in diagnosing organizational situations and provide guidance towards organizational changes need a measure of learning which is strong in comparing organizations and exploring the theory. (Marsick & Watkins, 2003)

“More than 200 companies trans-nationally have used the DLOQ to measure their organizational learning behaviors in different fields. All sub-scales of the DLOQ are found to have a greater than .73” (Yang, Watkins, & Marsick, 2004).

The DLOQ furnishes an assessment that is valid and applicable for people in measuring learning dimensions of them within the organization (Hawkins, 2008; Reese, 2005; Watkins, Yang, & Marsick, 1997; Yang, Atkins, & Marsick, 2004; Yang, Watkins, & Marsick, 1998, 2004) and was proposed for usage in the research on behaviors of organizational learning. (Reese, 2006; Yang, 2003; Yang, Watkins, & Marsick, 2004).

The DLOQ serves people to comprehend organizational learning in difficult situations by using seven dimensions from three various levels in organization (individuals, teams, and organization). The original version of the DLOQ comprised of 43 items to measure the seven dimensions;

Yang et al. (2004) improved abbreviated version of DLOQ that consists of 21 items which was not depreciated from original theoretical structure. “From the given approaches through empirical validation procedures, the abbreviated version of DLOQ has been assimilated as an instrument applicable to measuring the concept of the learning organization.” Yang et al. (2004). In total, there are 21 questions in the short version of DLOQ using a scale from one to six (1 = Almost never to 6 = Almost always) to determine the degree of extent to which the situation and phenomenon happens in their organization. The DLOQ instrument contains seven dimensions as follows; create continuous learning opportunities, promote inquiry and dialogue, encourage collaboration and team learning, create systems to capture and share learning, empower people toward a collective vision, connect the organization to its environment, provide strategic leadership for learning. (Watkins and Marsick, 2004)

“Up to date, several studies have been done to examine the validity and reliability of measures of learning organizations in several cultural contexts: United States, Columbia, China and

Taiwan etc. “(Ellinger et al. 2002; Lien et al. 2006; Yang et al. 2004; Zhang et al. 2004; Hernandez 2000)

**Table -3.1: Reliability of MLQ and DLOQ with sub-factors**

Particulars	No. of items	Chronbach’s Alpha
Learning Organization / Organizational Learning	21	.892
Transactional Leadership	12	.708
Transformational Leadership	20	.880
Laissez-faire	4	.756

### **Population**

This study involves academicians who work in public and private universities in KRG Iraq. The study population included academicians of 16 public and 15 private universities under the Ministry of Higher Education of Kurdistan Regional Government.

Based on the interview made with officials of Ministry of Higher education, researcher came to know that there are about 10,000 academicians (Public universities: about 8000 academicians; and Private Universities: about 2000 academicians) in all public and private universities in Kurdistan Region of Iraq. (Ministry of Higher Education officials, 2017)

All members of the population use English, Kurdish, Turkmen and Arabic as the language of communication.

### **Sample Design**

According to Israel G.D. (1992, pg.1) “three criteria usually will need to be specified to determine the appropriate sample size: the level of precision, the level of confidence or risk, and the degree of variability in the attributes being measured” (Miaoulis and Michener, 1976).

Given 95% confidence level, 3% of margin of error, ideal sample size to represent entire current research population would be 964. (Creative Research Systems, 2012) and (Mark, Philip, Adrian, & 1, 2009)

Researcher collected 1488 responses which is appropriate number of responses to make the research proper to measure different types of leaderships' effect on learning organization and organizational learning of public and private universities KRG - Iraq

### **Data Collection procedures**

In order to begin with data collection, permission from presidents of universities and receiving authorization to use the MLQ 5X Short from Mind Garden, holder of the licence and DLOQ authors were completed. As the first step in the data collection process, researcher prepared consent form in Kurdish and distributed to Presidents of the universities and other related administrators in the universities. Researcher approached all faculties and departments under private and public universities. Respondents were given questionnaires manually in English, Kurdish, Arabic and Turkish versions. All the participants were requested to read the introduction of the questionnaire and they have been given informed consent form from the presidents of the universities. Researcher distributed 2000 questionnaires and received 1581 questionnaires back where 1488 were properly filled and used for the analysis. Researcher removed 93 questionnaires due to outliers and inappropriate number of missing data.

### **Data Analysis**

Data analysis for this study was based on the hypothesis for relationship between leader's behaviour and organization learning actions. All data collected through paper and was translated to statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 23 Version) and Analysis of a Moment Structures (AMOS 23 Version).

### **Results**

This chapter depicts the main characteristics of the academic staff of KRG universities with the objectives of establishing overview of respondents towards their superiors' leadership styles and their universities development in terms of organizational learning and learning organizations. To provide a statistical base for in –depth discussion in these chapters, descriptive statistics is used as a tool of exhibiting in these following sections. The first section provides demographic characteristics of samples of universities as well as respondents.

Based on the responses from the academic staff of universities, 18% of respondents answered the questionnaire in English, 52.2% answered in Kurdish and 29.8% answered in Arabic. This shows that majority academic staffs of universities are Kurdish. English spoken respondents are from diverse background including Turkmen, expatriates and other ethnicities.

67.5% of the respondents are male and 32.5% are female where majority of respondents comprises of male in the current research. This shows that female academic staffs are not well represented properly when comparing overall population.

Respondents related to Marital status comprises of 20.5% single category, 72.4% married category, 4.8% divorcee and others category 2.4 where respondents in this category are not willing to share their marital status. Majority of respondents come under married category.

Age of respondents was classified into 8 categories where 7% fall under the age between “ 20-25”, 22% fall under the age between “ 26-30”, 18% fall under the age between “ 31-35”, 16% fall under the age between “ 36-40”, 14% fall under the age between “ 41-45”, 9% fall under the age between “ 46-50”, 7% fall under the age between “ 50-55”, 8% fall under the age above 55 years. From the above table, we see that 40% of the respondents are between the age from 26 to 35 years which means most of the academicians are young and they are at the beginning academic careers.

Educational back ground of the respondents was classified into 4 categories where 26.7% are holding higher diploma degree, 42.2% hold master's degree, 24.7% hold PhD degree, 6.3% hold Post Doctorate degree. We can infer that majority of the academicians hold master's degree and young researchers which shows that region's lack of experience in academia.

Current research was conducted at public and private universities that come under Ministry of Higher Education, KRG, Iraq. 70% of the respondents belong to public universities and 30% belong to private universities. This proportion is appropriate with the total number of academicians in overall universities in the region.

Experience of the respondents comprises of 4 levels. 40.3% of respondents fall under ‘1-5’ years of experience, 30.1% of respondents fall under ‘6-10’ years of experience, 14.9% of respondents fall under ‘11-15’ years of experience , 5.6% of respondents fall under ‘15-20’ years of experience and 9.1% of respondents fall under the level of above 20 years of experience. As we



see from the above table, most of the academicians are inexperienced and at the beginning stage of their academic career.

Based on the Ministry of Higher of Education, KRG, regulations, academicians are classified into above mentioned four categories to be recognized to teach at university level. 54.4% of academicians hold assistant lecturer's title, 29% of academicians hold lecturer's title, 10% of academicians hold assistant professor's title, and 6.6 % of academicians hold professor's title. According to the above table, majority of academicians hold assistant lecturer's position which shows that many of them are young researchers and it is the fact that the academic title process is relatively new established and bureaucratically difficult to advance in the title stage.

There are several studies where validity of the both MLQ and DLOQ scales have been tested and proved to be valid. (Yang, Watkins and Marsick, 2004), (Bass and Avolio, 2004)

Researcher conducted Confirmatory Factor Analysis to validate proposed hypothesis of relationship between leadership styles and Organizational Learning. All range of goodness-of-fit indices is used in the validation of assumed models. These indices include Root-Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), Root Mean Square Residual (RMR), the Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Non-normed Fit Index (NNFI) and the Goodness of Fit Index (GFI).

The RMSEA value, considered as 'one of the most informative fit indices' (Diamantopoulos and Siguaw, 2000: 85), depicts the degree that the proposed theory fits the populations covariance matrix (Byrne, 1998). RMSEA values must satisfy the 0.06 or less criteria proposed by Hu and Bentler (1999), and in conformity with the criteria of a well-fitting model that the lower limit is near to zero while the upper limit is less than 0.08 (MacCallum et al, 1996).

The NFI, a sample-size sensitive statistics with its array between 0 and 1, describes the model by equating the  $\chi^2$  value of the model to the  $\chi^2$  of the null/independence model. The good fit array of NFI proposed by Bentler and Bonnet (1980) is of value higher than 0.90, and a more stringent cut-off criteria is proposed by Hu and Bentler (1999) in which NFI is higher than or equal to 0.95.

The CFI, a statistic which is regarded by a sample size with an array between 0 and 1, compares the sample covariance matrix and its null model. The nearer the CFI value to 1, the more convincing that the observed and the expected models are in a good fit. The indicative criteria of good fit of CFI are any value greater than or equal to 0.95 (Hu and Bentler, 1999).

The GFI computes the proportion of variance that can be described by the estimated population covariance (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2007). It is generally accepted that any GFI value reaching 0.90 or above indicates a well-fitting model. The same good fit criteria can also apply to AGFI measurement.

Confirmatory factor analysis is thus conducted upon the assumed models for the variables of leadership styles and organizational learning process.

Path analysis was made among transformational leadership, individual, team or group and organizational level of Organizational Learning. The path coefficient showing the direct effect of transformational leadership with individual, team or group and organizational level are 0.64, 0.26 and 0.27 respectively. This shows that leaders who exhibit transformational leadership characteristics influence the academic staffs of the universities highly at individual level where as the effect on team or group and organizational level is not as high as individual level. This might be due to the fact that transformational leaders inspire and move employees at the personal level highly comparing to team or group and organizational level. Above diagram gives us another interesting fact that effect of transformational leaders through individual level to team or group level is higher at 0.63 and from team work through organizational level 0.52. This indicates that transformational leaders may influence organizational level learning through individual and team or group level.

The modified above model with reference to the results of above Goodness of Fit indices statistical analysis, it is found to be Good fitting model for the sample of this research. This statement is supported by the values of RMSEA (0.057) confidence interval at 90% of RMSEA (0.055, 0.060), NFI (0.932), CFI (0.953), GFI (0.915) and AGFI (0.904) which satisfies the Good fit criteria of the above mentioned model.

Path analysis was made among laissez-faire leadership, individual, team or group and organizational level of Organizational Learning. The path coefficient showing the direct effect of

laissez-faire leadership with individual only is 0.12. This implies that when the leaders do not show any leadership characteristics or do not involve with their employees, they may take initiation and try to solve their own problems and perform their responsibilities on their own. As the relationship is weak yet significant, we may comment that employees perform the learning at individual level on their own. From the individual learning point of view, we see that there is a positive effect on team or group and organization level learning also.

The modified above model with reference to the results of above Goodness of Fit indices statistical analysis, it is found to be Good fitting model for the sample of this research. This statement is supported by the values of RMSEA (0.052) confidence interval at 90% of RMSEA (0.048, 0.057), NFI (0.957), CFI (0.965), GFI (0.962) and AGFI (0.942) which satisfies the Good fit criteria of the above mentioned model.

In view of integrated model of leadership styles and organizational learning, we see that transformational leaders who have idealized influence with attributes and behaviors which they are admired, respected and trusted by their followers and they provide meaning and challenge, inspire and demonstrate commitment with their followers, and they intellectually stimulate their sub-ordinates to be creative and innovative and they foster their sub-ordinates' professional growth and achievement by unleashing their potential to the fullest. By these characteristics, transformational leaders help their followers to achieve individual level of organizational learning in a high manner.

Transformational leaders influence may turn into organizational learning at team and organizational level as well. But their influence through individual level to team and organizational level can be higher than the direct effect on team and organizational level.

The statistical result was computed by each assessment with transactional leadership style with learning organizations factors. As we see above, transactional leadership characteristics of contingent reward, management-by-exception (active) and management-by-exception (passive) almost all sub-factors of learning organizations are significantly correlated with each other except Management by exception (active) and learning organization creating systems are not significantly correlated. Transactional leadership contingent reward which is an exchange process between leaders and sub-ordinates depend on the agreement of interest of both parties and promise rewards given upon satisfactory accomplishments of agreed assignments,

significantly correlated with all dimensions of learning organization sub-dimensions weakly. The highest correlation is shown with contingent reward between continuous learning and collaboration, team-learning sub-factors of learning organizations at (0.179\*\*) and (0.199\*\*) respectively. For management by exception active, still weakly correlated the highest correlation between continuous learning and dialogue enquiry sub-dimensions of learning organizations at (0.288\*\*) and (0.281\*\*) respectively whereas management by exception passive, even though correlation is significant, strength of correlation is very weak and the highest is 0.099\*\* with creating systems sub-dimension of learning organization. We can infer that transactional leaders may hold organizations to become learning organizations but the strength of this influence is very weak.

The result shows that there is a significantly positive correlation between transformational leadership sub-factors and learning organization sub-factors too except transformational leadership idealized influence and learning organization connect the organizations sub-factors is not correlated and there is significant negative correlation between idealized influence & create the systems sub-factors of learning organizations. We observe that there is moderate correlation between idealized influence behavior and continuous learning and inquiry and dialogue sub-dimensions of learning organization at (0.478\*\*) and (0.423\*\*) respectively. The highest correlation between inspirational motivation sub-factors of transformational leadership with collaboration and team-learning sub-dimensions of learning organizations (0.244\*\*), but this correlation is also weak. Intellectual stimulation sub-dimension of transformational leadership is moderately correlated with continuous learning sub-dimension learning organization at (0.415\*\*) which is the highest among other sub-dimensions of learning organization. Individualized consideration sub-dimension of transformational leadership moderately correlated with continuous learning and dialogue & enquiry sub-dimensions of learning organization at (0.498\*\*) and (0.422\*\*) respectively. There is weak negative correlation with individualized consideration and create systems also yet there is no correlation with connect the organization sub-dimension of learning organization also.

We observed that there are significantly weak correlations between laissez-faire and continuous learning, dialogue and enquiry, collaboration and team learning, and create systems sub-dimensions of learning organizations at (0.093\*\*), (0.085\*\*), (0.1.1\*\*), (0.072\*\*), and (0.065\*)

respectively where as there are no correlation between laissez-faire and empower people and strategic leadership sub-dimensions of learning organization.

Regression analysis shows that there is a positive significant relationship with transactional leadership sub-dimensions and learning organization.  $R^2 = 0.073$  ( $R=.270^a$ ,  $P<0.05$ ) which means sub-factors of transactional leadership was explained 7.3% of becoming a learning organization.

Regression analysis shows that there is a positive significant relationship with transactional leadership sub-dimensions and learning organization.  $R^2 = .142$  ( $R=.377^a$ ,  $P<0.05$ ) which means sub-factors of transactional leadership was explained 14.2% of becoming a learning organization.

Regression analysis shows that there is a positive significant relationship with transactional leadership sub-dimensions and learning organization.  $R^2 = .010$  ( $R=.101^a$ ,  $P<0.05$ ) which means sub-factors of transactional leadership was explained 1% of becoming a learning organization.

### **Limitations of the Research**

Bryant (2004) describes limitation regarding research generated by methodology. The following are the limitations for current research.

The current research was conducted based on quantitative method where researcher found relationship between leadership behavior and actions related to organizational learning were not specific as the same research would have been conducted “qualitative or mix-method”.

Researcher used two assessment instruments “(MLQ 5X AND DLOQ)” where the current study yields different results.

The current research may identify more results by utilizing various methods regarding analysis by framing various questions and hypotheses.

Researcher collected the data from the organization where the outcomes could describe the phenomenon during specific time.

Respondents of current study do not have the culture of research where they were not willing to participate which lead to delay in completing the research.

## **Conclusions and recommendations of the research**

The purpose of this research was to examine the relationship between leadership styles and organizational learning and learning organizations dimensions among academic staff of universities in KRG, Iraq by using the Dimensions of Learning Organizations Questionnaire (DLOQ) and Multi factor Leadership Questionnaire (MOQ) and demographic survey. A quantitative approach was conducted and the survey instruments were collected from 1448 academic staffs of universities in KRG, Iraq. Results of survey were depicted in the analysis chapter. To further examine the result of the study and answer the research questions and prove hypothesis of this research were presented in the introduction chapter, this chapter provides conclusion, discussion and recommendations to this study. On top of that, this chapter highlights limitations of this research.

The following conclusions were made with reference to research questions and hypotheses which were presented in Introduction Chapter. The null hypothesis “H<sub>0</sub>: There is no relationship between leadership practices namely transactional, transformational and laissez-faire and learning organization & organizational learning.” got rejected due to significant relation among sub-factors of leadership practices and organizational learning as well as learning organizations.

The first alternative hypothesis “H<sub>1</sub>: There is a relationship between transactional leadership and learning organization” got partially accepted. (Table: 4.16)

We found out that transactional leadership characteristics of contingent reward, management-by-exception (active) and management-by-exception (passive) almost all sub-factors of learning organizations are significantly correlated with each other except Management by exception (active) and learning organization creating systems are not significantly correlated. The highest correlation is shown with contingent reward between continuous learning and collaboration, team-learning. We can infer that transactional leaders may hold organizations to become learning organizations but the strength of this influence is very weak.

The Second alternative hypothesis “H<sub>2</sub>: There is a relationship between transformational leadership and learning organization” got partially accepted. (Table: 4.17)

We found that there is a significantly positive correlation between transformational leadership sub-factors and learning organization sub-factors too except transformational leadership

idealized influence and learning organization connect the organizations sub-factors is not correlated and there is significant negative correlation between idealized influence & create the systems sub-factors of learning organizations. We observe that there is moderate correlation between idealized influence behavior and continuous learning and inquiry and dialogue sub-dimensions of learning organization.. The highest correlation between inspirational motivation sub-factors of transformational leadership with collaboration and team-learning sub-dimensions of learning organizations, but this correlation is also weak. Intellectual stimulation sub-dimension of transformational leadership is moderately correlated with continuous learning sub-dimension learning organization which is the highest among other sub-dimensions of learning organization. Individualized consideration sub-dimension of transformational leadership moderately correlated with continuous learning and dialogue & enquiry sub-dimensions of learning organization. There is weak negative correlation with individualized consideration and create systems also yet there is no correlation with connect the organization sub-dimension of learning organization also.

The third hypothesis “H<sub>3</sub>: There is a relationship between laissez-faire leadership and learning organization” got partially accepted. (Table: 4.18)

We observed that there are significantly weak correlations between laissez-faire and continuous learning, dialogue and enquiry, collaboration and team learning, and create systems sub-dimensions of learning organizations where as there are no correlation between laissez-faire and empower people and strategic leadership sub-dimensions of learning organization.

The fourth hypothesis “H<sub>4</sub>: There is a relationship between transactional leadership and organizational learning” got rejected. Our SEM model for transactional leadership and organizational learning did not meet the good fit criteria.

The fifth hypothesis “H<sub>5</sub>: There is a relationship between transformational leadership and organizational learning” got accepted. (Table: 4.12 and Table: 4.13).

We found out that path analysis among transformational leadership, individual, team or group and organizational level of Organizational Learning. The path coefficient showed the direct effect of transformational leadership with individual, team or group and organizational level. This shows that leaders who exhibit transformational leadership characteristics influence the

academic staffs of the universities highly at individual level where as the effect on team or group and organizational level is not as high as individual level. This might be due to the fact that transformational leaders inspire and move employees at the personal level highly comparing to team or group and organizational level.

The sixth hypothesis “H<sub>6</sub>: There is a relationship between laissez-faire leadership and organizational learning” got accepted partially. (Table: 4.14 and 4.15)

We found that path analysis among laissez-faire leadership, individual, team or group and organizational level of Organizational Learning. The path coefficient showed the direct effect of laissez-faire leadership with individual only. This implies that when the leaders do not show any leadership characteristics or do not involve with their employees, they may take initiation and try to solve their own problems and perform their responsibilities on their own. As the relationship is weak yet significant, we may conclude that employees perform the learning at individual level on their own. From the individual learning point of view, we see that there is a positive effect on team or group and organization level learning also.

Given the above statistical analysis results, we found out that among the leadership characteristics of laissez-faire, transactional and transformational, they have influence to turn universities into learning organizations. Yet, laissez-faire leadership behavior is very weak effect to influence universities to be learning organization. This is contradictory to literature where researchers could find negative effect of laissez-faire on learning organization and organizational learning. (Avolio and Bass, 2013) and Crossan, Lane, & White, 1999; March 1991). With the help of Structural Equation Model (SEM), we found that even though there is a very weak correlation between laissez-faire and Organizational Learning & Learning Organization, when the leaders do not given directions or motivate their followers, sub-ordinates may take initiation to reach their objectives and perform their responsibilities. This may be more appropriate in the case of universities where sub-ordinates are academic staff. They are directly involved teaching and learning practices on their own universities. It is high likely that academic staff will find innovative ways to solve their problems which they will be facing.

We found out that transformational leadership behavior will influence organizational learning at all three levels and the highest at the individual level. Since transformational leaders are trusted and believed by their followers and have charisma, they will influence their followers directly.



The finding of current research is in congruence with finding of other researchers where transformational leaders influence their sub-ordinates higher than any other leadership behavior. (Marsick and Watkins, 2003). We find no relationship between transactional leadership and organizational learning with SEM model yet with correlation and regression analysis, we found out that transactional leadership behavior correlates positively with learning organization capabilities of universities. This is in congruence with the other researchers (Watkins and Marsick, 2003), (Antonakis and House, 2002).

### **List of Publications**

DINC, A., & CURA, F. (2011). Causes and effects of economic crisis in history. *African Journal of Business Management*, 10286-10293. **(SSCI)**

MOHAN, K., CURA, F., & Navulur, K. (2018). Customer Satisfaction in Inbound Call Centers: A Study on the Role of Responsiveness and Assurance in Perceived Service Quality. *International Journal of Advanced Engineering, Management and Science*, 80-84.

CURA, F., SHANKAR, U., & TALAAT, K. (2016). Measuring the Efficiency of Tourism Sector and the Effect of Tourism Enablers on Different Types of Tourism (Kurdistan). *TURIZAM*, 1-18.

CURA, F. (2014). Effect of Employee Commitment on Organizational Performance: Analysis of Northern Iraq Private and Public Banks. *International Journal of Social Sciences & Education*, 55-67.

CURA, F. (2016). Learning Organizations in Higher Education: Cases of Northern Iraq Universities. *International Journal of Science Technology and Management*, 58-65.

CURA, F. (2018). Impact of Organizational culture on organizational performance: Northern Iraq Private Universities. *International Journal of Pure and Applied Mathematics*, 4843-4859. **(SCOPUS)**

CURA, F., & TEBA, A. A. (2018). Accreditation Effect on Quality of Education at Business Schools. *International Journal of Social Sciences & Educational Studies*, 71-82.

UYGULAMA, İ., Abdurrahim, E., CURA, F., & Mustafa, Z. (2015). İŞ MEMNUNİYETİ VE ÖĞRENME KAPASİTESİNİN ÖRGÜTSEL PERFORMANS ÜZERİNDEKİ ETKİSİ. *BANKACILIK SEKTÖRÜNDE B*, 92-108