

## A Comparative and Narrative Analysis: Executive Leader as Team Builder at the University Level

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### Abstract

*This study aims to compare and narrate the difference in the role of team building, through self-assessed inventory by VC (Executive Leader), observation sheet filled in by co-workers as well as the narrated view of executive leaders regarding team-building of the newly established University of the region. A concurrent triangulation mixed-method design was followed. Vice-Chancellors of all Public*

### Key Words

Executive Leader,  
Leadership, Team  
Building, University,  
Narrative Views.

*universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan constitute the population of the study. According to the design, the same sampling technique was used. Four Vice-Chancellors of newly established Universities and five observers among their co-workers of each VC were taken as respondents of the study. There were significant differences among the self-assessed views of VCs regarding team building and views of their co-workers and narrative views of executive leaders at newly established universities. For team leadership, egalitarian style, knowledge of emotional intelligence and target-oriented communication are recommended.*

## Introduction

### The Team in an Organization

All organizations have units of people who work together to accomplish specific goals. A good team is led by high-performance leaders. Leaders give ownership to his team. Members of the team also act as a leader, taking up responsibility and exert their influence to complete the task. Every individual is clear about the goals to achieve and they contribute accordingly to carry out their task and interact with each other. They try to self-monitor and self-evaluate themselves to raise their performance. Reward system supports them for better performance (Guttman, 2008).

Guttman believes that it is difficult for the formal leader to make all decisions as they are facing complex challenges. Distributed leadership in layers to make key decisions can make the organization successful and they are jointly accountable for performance.

### How Teams Develop

Teams develop through different stages. These stages are in sequence and can be overlapped (Tuckman, 1977).

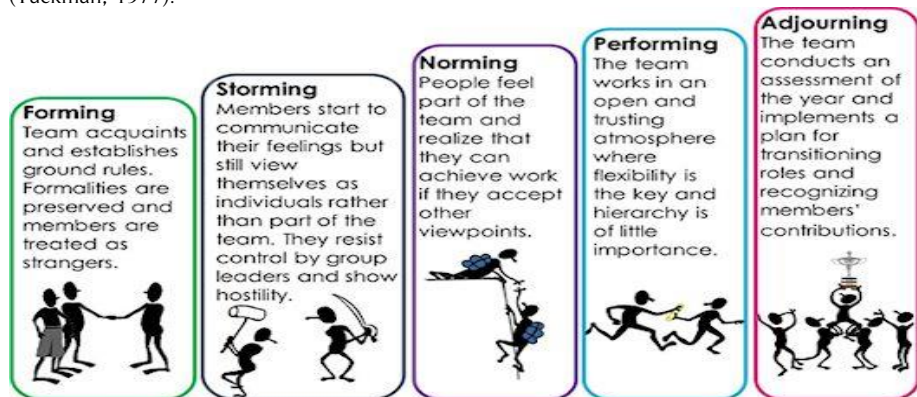


Figure 1: Tuckman Model.

There is a Welsh proverb, "He that would be a leader must be a bridge".

### Team Leadership Models

There are two main models of Team Leadership Models presented by Hill (2013) and Ginnett (2005). According to Hill's Model of team leadership, there should be flexibility, problem-solving abilities, and collaboration which is necessary for effective team leadership. Both internal and external actions influence the leadership decision for better team effectiveness. Internal leadership actions are further classified as task and relational leadership actions while external leadership actions consist of networking, negotiating support, assessing, sharing information, etc. to boost the performance of the team. (As shown in figure 2 below)

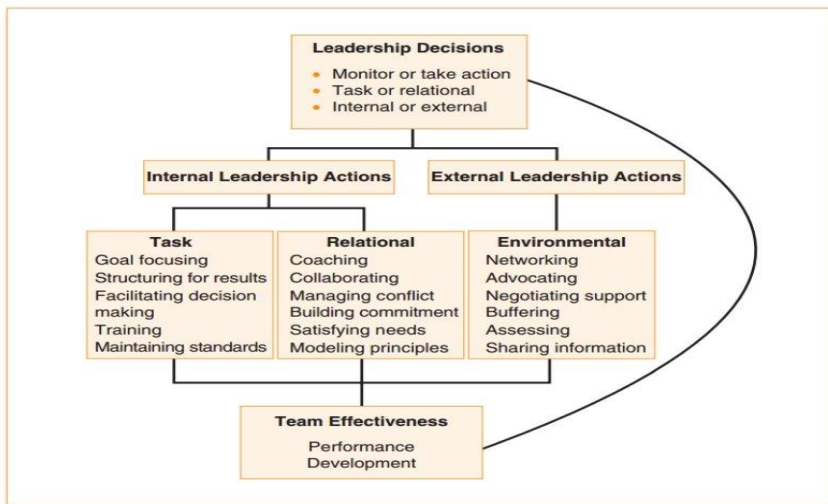


Figure 2: Hill's Team Leadership Model.

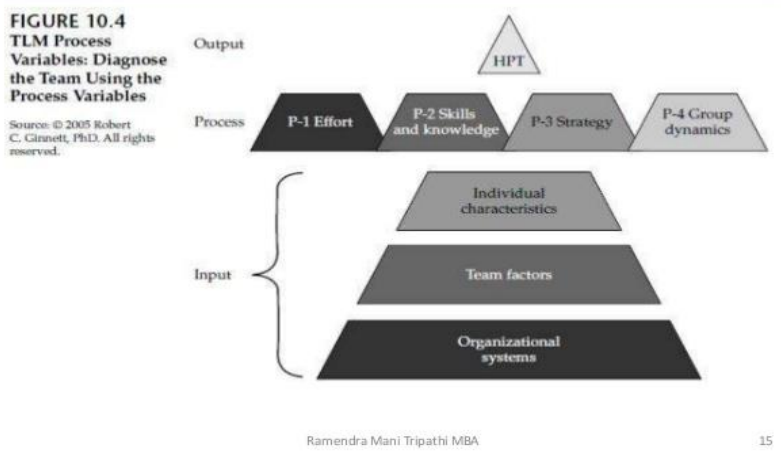
According to Dr. R. Ginnett (2001), "Leadership is basically work in group or team. The job of a leader is to make an effective team by creating a conducive environment".

He presented a model of Team Leadership. There are three main levels of the model: Input, process, and output.

Inputs are at the base consists of individuals, team and organizational factors. Outputs are the results of the team's work. It can be a team productive output in the form of goods, services, and decisions. During group performance, the ability of the members of the team enhances in the future. The growth and personal well-being of the individuals are enhanced with the group experience. There are four processes which measure the effectiveness. These are:

- Work efficiently,
- To perform the task well, there must be enough knowledge and skills.
- an appropriate strategy is needed to achieve the task,
- Role of productive and optimistic group dynamics.

# Team Effectiveness Leadership Model



**Figure 3: Ginnett's Team Leadership Model**

### Team Leader's Personal Role

The successful team depends on the confident and effective team leaders, his attitude and actions of the team leader, leader's interaction with team members. A leader should learn the new skills and qualities needed for team leadership and people have the will to change themselves. These are the specific changes leaders can make to develop effective team leadership.

- A clear and motivating vision should be uttered by team leaders that members of the team move in the same direction. Team norms and values should be shaped by the leader for accomplishing the vision.
- Cooperative and supportive team members play an important role in making teamwork effectively. Leaders can play a key role in build harmony rather than dictating them. Leaders should share power, ideas, and duty, and allow saying how to do work.
- The best leader admits that he doesn't know everything. He enables all team members to put in their talents and thoughts. A leader must discuss problems and concerns openly without fear of his own disgrace.
- A good leader allows people to get the training, development opportunities and resources they need and rewarded for their contribution to the organization.

The team leader has to keep people focused on accomplishing tasks, building a positive relationship for team effectiveness, productivity, and learning (Daft, 2014).

### Current Study

This is a mixed-method research study about the executive leadership role as a team builder. Four vice-chancellors of newly established universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and five co-workers of each VC were the participants of the study.

VCK was the founder of VC of University K. He remained Professor of Education. VCB remained Professor in Bio-Chemistry.

VCI headed various administrative posts as well as VC before becoming VC of this University I. VCW remained Professor of History and have a distinction in her academic career.

The researcher is interested to compare and elicit their narrative competence as a team builder. Narrative analysis is a newly developing concept in qualitative study and novelty of my work is based on the claim that nobody worked on executive leadership like this before in Pakistan. Data was collected by a part related to team building in Global Executive Leadership Inventory and observation sheet by Dr. Manfred (2005) on five-point Likert

scale and structured interview questions were asked to get views regarding team building. In conclusion, there were significant differences in views quantitatively as well as narratively.

### **Objectives of the Study**

- To assess in the self-assessed team building competence of different executive leaders of newly established University quantitatively.
- To compare the self-assessed views regarding the team-building of executive leaders with the observed views of their coworkers at their university.
- To compare the views regarding team-building of executive leaders of the newly established University in narrative form.

### **Hypotheses of the Study**

**Ho1.** There is no significant difference in the self-assessed views of executive leaders regarding team building in newly established universities.

**Ho2.** There is no significant difference in the self-assessed and observed views regarding the team-building of executive leader at the newly established University level.

### **Research Question**

Is there any variation among the narrations of University leaders regarding team building?

### **Method**

Concurrent Triangulation mixed method design was adopted. Three different data collection tools were used: Self-assessed Inventory, Observation sheet and Interview.

### **Participants**

- Four Vice-Chancellors, VCK, VCB, VCI, and VCW of newly established University of KP, Pakistan.
- Five participants from each University to observe their executive leader competency.

### **Procedure**

Total nineteen Public universities were established in which only 15 VCs were working in regular status while in remaining universities, there were acting VCs. This narrative study had been delimited to only four VCs and five colleagues of each VC of newly established Universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for in-depth study and to do work timely.

According to Creswell (2002), a case study requires 3-5 participants while sub-group sampling study requires  $> 3$  participants are suggested (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2007).

For the self-assessed Inventory of leadership for team building, designed by de Vries (2005) was adopted. Observation sheet was also part of it to be filled by colleagues on a five-point Likert scale.

Semi-structured interview questions under coding of team-building theme were recorded, transcript and narrated separately in the quotation form.

As the narrative study is qualitative in nature, so for the trustworthiness of the study, prolonged engagement and persistent observation, triangulation of data (from inventory, observation sheet, and interview) and member checking was the part of the study.

Data was collected through face to face interview and filling inventory personally from executive leaders and observation sheet from their co-workers. For data analysis through SPSS, the Friedman test was used to compare means and paired sample t-test and narrative part was a transcript and then interpreted through metrics and topology.

### **Results and Discussion**

Already set objectives of the study were kept in view and the data collected by the researcher were analyzed through Friedman test to explore the significant difference among the self-assessed views of the executive leaders of the newly established universities of KP region regarding team building.

**Table 1.** Self-Assessed Views of Executive Leaders Of KP Region Regarding Team Building

<b>Dimension</b>	<b>VCB</b>	<b>VCK</b>	<b>VCI</b>	<b>VCW</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Q</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Team building	5.00	4.18	4.18	4.9	4.56	21.29	0.00

The p-value in the above table shows the significant difference in the self-assessed views of executive leaders of newly established universities of KP region, therefore, the null hypothesis # 1 is rejected at 0.05 level of significance.

**Table 2.** Comparison of the Self-Assessed Views of Executive Leaders with the Observed Views by Their Colleagues Regarding Team Building in Newly Established Universities of KP Region.

<b>Views</b>	<b>VCK</b>	<b>VCB</b>	<b>VCI</b>	<b>VCW</b>	<b>Q</b>	<b>p-value</b>
<b>Self-assessed</b>	5.00	4.18	4.19	4.9	21.29	0.00
<b>Observed</b>	3.63	3.91	3.97	4.63	22.88	0.00
<b>t-value</b>	13.13	1.93	1.15	2.76		
<b>p-value</b>	0.00	0.08	0.27	0.02		

On the basis of table values which show the significant difference in the self-assessed views of executive leaders with an observed view of their colleagues regarding team building in newly established universities of KP region. So the null hypothesis # 2 is also rejected at 0.05 level of significance.

**Narrative Views of Executive Leaders Regarding Team Building**

There are some narrative views regarding team-building of selected executive leaders:

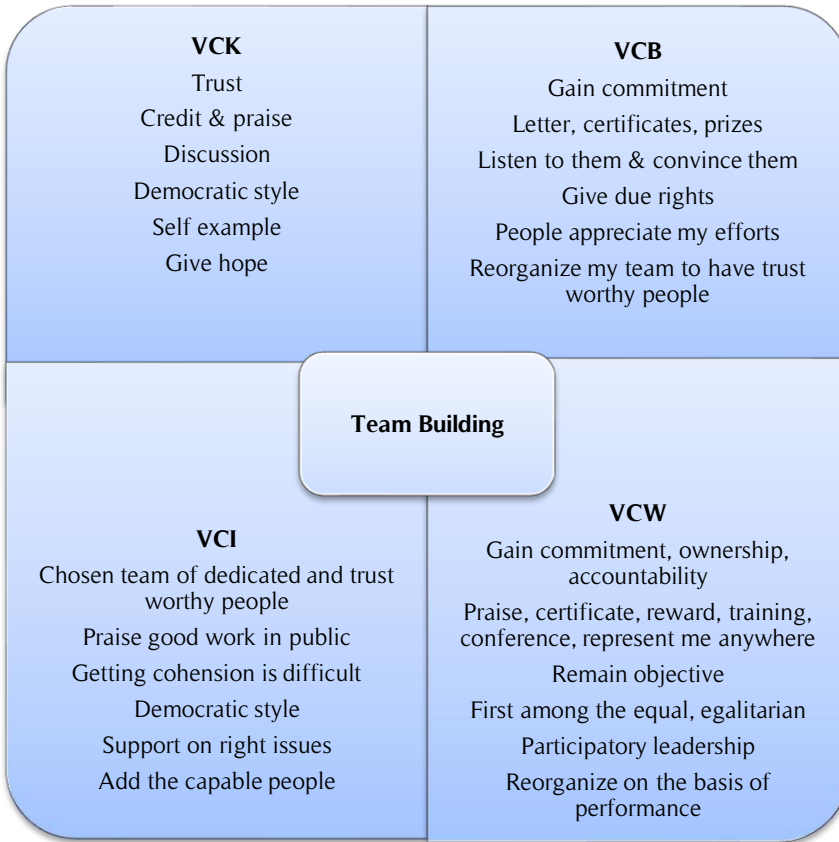
"My co-workers never betrayed the trust, I built on them. I always praise and give credit to genuine people of my team. Free discussion about things gives good results in the form of a better conclusion. I follow a democratic sort of leadership. For motivation of staff, self-example is quoted too. The bad news is delivered with optimism and tried to offer them my help where they need. I don't need to reorganize my team as it is already in form."(VCK)

"Commitment of my team is gained through meeting and discussion. Letter of appreciation, certificates, and prizes are usually given to motivate my team. Forgetting cohesion, both the groups are listened and convinced them accordingly to resolve the conflict. My efforts to develop the organization is appreciated by the people. Discussion, appreciation and due rights are given to motivate my team. Bad news to any individual is delivered secretly. Reorganization of my team is based on people following advice which are useful for the organization." (VCB)

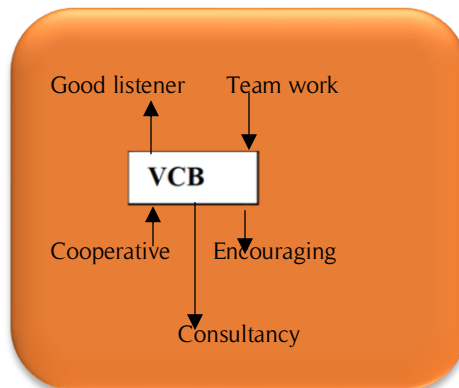
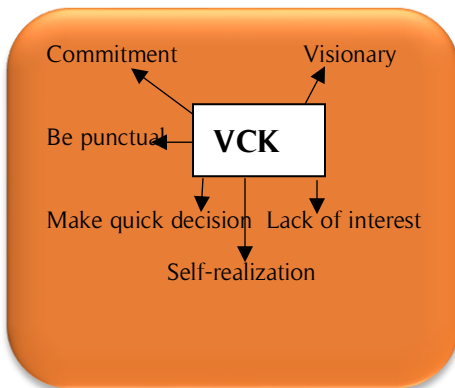
"My team consists of dedicated and reliable people who work for the organization. I publicly praise people on a good job. Cohesion among groups is difficult. I am a very democratic type of leader. I not only support my team but also help them out. I make a background for the person to listen to the bad news. Incapable will drop out automatically when you take the capable person." (VCI)

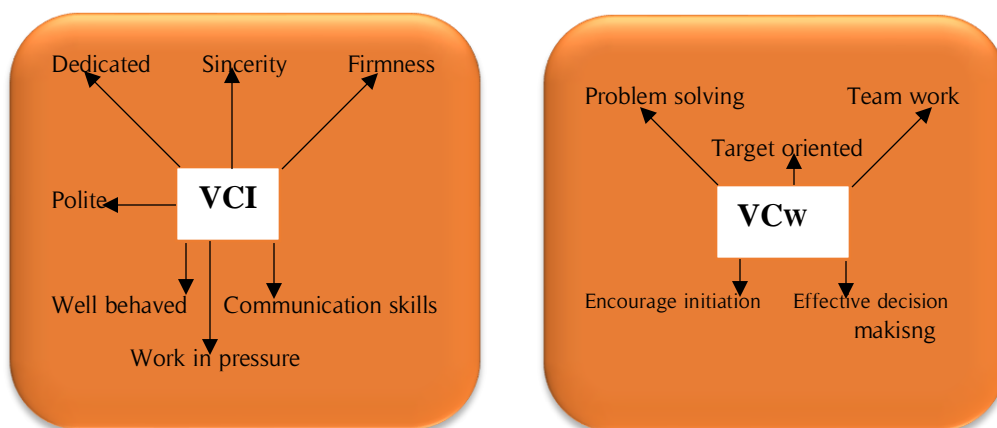
"Team commitment is gained by ownership, accountability, and right or specific people for specific work. Good work of a person is praised verbally, it could be certificate or shield, it could be in the form of financial rewards, participation in training, conferences or a person could represent me anywhere. The cause of disagreement has listened carefully, I remained objective to resolve it. I am a participatory or egalitarian sort of leader which is first among the equal. In the discussion, I usually lead from the front. I usually deliver bad news directly in a precised manner after rationalizing it. On the basis of performance, my team is reorganized." (VCW)

There are differences in their views regarding their experience and situation prevailed to them.



The Topology on the Basis of the Narrative View of their Colleagues





In an article by Kreunen et al. (2018), team learning behavior depends on task-focused leaders to do adaptive and developmental tasks.

An article published by Clarke (2011) in *Discourse and Society Journal* in which range of behavior of the CEO in the meeting was discussed with their five discursive strategies. It was concluded that the egalitarian leadership style is better to achieve durable harmony among the team.

An article published in the *Journal of Management Development* by Koman and Wolff (2008). The result shows that team performance is associated with emotionally competent group norms.

Another article published in *Organization Science* by Martin (2010) in which new theory is developed that suggested executive leadership groups with dynamic managerial capabilities and idea of an intermittent team.

Klein et al. (2009) did comprehensive research on various studies on team building effectiveness. It depends on the team size. A leader must have clarity about subordinates' roles and setting a goal.

In another paper, meta-analytic integration of research, Salas et al. (1999) studied the effect of team building on performance. The small size of the team increases performance. Other components are roles clarification, goal setting, and interpersonal relations.

Article by Ospina (2010) describes the narrative analysis of five leader's practices to foster relational bonds.

A study revealed that leader builds relations, provides information, support and empower their teams to achieve success (Druskat & Wheeler, 2017).

A study conducted by Smith et al. (2018) to compare the theories and themes on team leadership and it was revealed that knowledge and skills are required for innovation and improvement.

A study by Marrero (2015) was conducted to get views from ethnic and racial faculty to have interest and retention on executive leadership position.

Another study finding indicates the successful leadership gets success through collaboration, communication, underlying relationship, and networking internally and externally (Janson, 2007).

In the above articles, democratic or egalitarian style achieve the durable consensus, emotional intelligence improve the team performance, effective communication, goal setting and new theory of dynamic managerial capabilities in term of the episodic team were introduced.

## **Conclusions**

The following conclusions were made,

- Self-assessed views among executive leaders were significantly different regarding team building at newly established universities of KP region.
- The self-assessed view of executive leadership and observed view of their colleagues regarding team building at newly established universities of KP region were significantly different.
- Narrative views of the executive leadership regarding team-building were also different at newly established universities of KP region.
- Opinion among narrative views of leaders and observed view of colleagues regarding team building at newly established universities at KP region were also different.

## **Recommendations**

The following recommendations are made on the basis of the above conclusions and discussion:

- Democratic/Egalitarian style should be adopted as it achieves the long-lasting harmony among the leader and his co-workers. Frequent meetings play a vital role to build understanding and sharing their point of views. A leader should be a patient listener.
- A leader should know the targets and his communication with his team should be a target-oriented to achieve it and his work should be as guide and facilitator.
- Training regarding emotional intelligence should be given to the leaders as it plays an important role to improve the performance of the team as if the leader takes care of the emotions of co-workers and have the ability to cheer up or calm down others.
- The result may be compared by changing different situation and context to pave way for further research.



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