

**The Principals' Leadership behaviors and Teachers' Job Attitudes: Exploring the Moderating Effect of Perceived Task Abilities**

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**Abstract**

This study examined the moderating role of teachers' perceptions about their abilities related to task demands on three-way interactions of the principals' leadership behavior, teachers' job expectancies and teachers' work satisfaction. Path-goal Leadership questionnaire, Job Expectancies Scale and Job Descriptive Index were adapted to measure different variables of the study. Responses were received from 289 teachers working in 39 government colleges of districts Sargodha. For moderating analysis PROCESS macro for SPSS was used. Findings indicated that the interaction effects of teachers' ability perception with the four leader behaviors affected their work satisfaction. Low ability teachers were satisfied with their work while working under the leadership of directive principals whereas high ability teachers were happy with participative and delegating principals. The findings confirmed path-goal predictions for work satisfaction but not for Job expectancies.

Keywords: Path-goal Theory, Leadership behaviors, Job Expectancies, Work Satisfaction, Three-way interactions

**Introduction**

Leadership is an inspirational phenomenon without which organizations fail to grow and prosper. Literature on leadership reports numerous definitions because leadership includes a diverse interaction among the leaders, the situations and the followers (Khan, 2010). This variety in definitions has resulted in variations to conceptualize measure, investigate, and critique leadership (Hernandez, Eberly, Avolio, & Johnson, 2011). Vroom and Jago (2007) understand that almost all definitions explaining leadership share the understanding that the leadership encompasses the process of inspiration and influence. Yukl (1989) explained that leadership had been defined generally in terms of traits and behaviors of individuals in leadership positions, interaction patterns, role relationships, influence on followers, task goals and organizational culture, and follower perceptions. Empirical literature had identified different behaviors to enhance subordinate's performance. Yukl, Gordon, and Taber (2002) gave a hierarchical taxonomy where they consolidate all leader behaviors in three meta-categories i.e. task behavior, relations behavior, and change behavior.

Different leadership theories had emerged during last century. Path-goal theory is an outcome of situational element in leadership dynamics developed by House (1971). The Theory was an extension of Evan's conception (1970) who analyzed the association between leader initiating structure and consideration, and follower expectations and perception of instrumentality. That was a non-situational version of the theory. A more detailed version of

the theory was formulated by Robert J. House, which involved situational variables (House, 1971). This theory had been refined and protracted by House and his associates (House & Dessler 1974; House and Mitchell 1974) and has been contemporized by House in 1996 (Knight, Shteynberg & Hanges, 2011).

House declared that effective leaders employ behaviors that complement subordinates’ abilities and environments in a way that recompenses deficiencies and shortcomings and is instrumental to follower satisfaction (House 1996, 324). Path-goal theory, a much-noticed approach of leadership (Busse, 2014) is a situational theory assuming that behavior of effective leader has a positive effect on followers’ job satisfaction and motivation. Integrating the research and theory, the path-goal model suggests that:

1. Managers can incite subordinate efforts by giving rewards and connecting the rewards to the efforts and performance.
  2. Efforts would result in performance if there are no obstacles in doing the job.
  3. When the rewards received are valued, the receivers have fewer tendencies to quit the job.
- Northouse (2018) recognized that the theory may be considered as a process where leaders choose particular behaviors according to the employees ‘needs and the task environment to properly guide employees in the process of doing their work (path) for the completion of their task (goals).

Path-goal theory is complex theory because it involves four types of leader behaviors, a variety of subordinate and situational characteristics as moderators, some intervening variables and three dependent variables (House & Aditya, 1997). Clark (2013) summarized Path-Goal relationships in the following way.

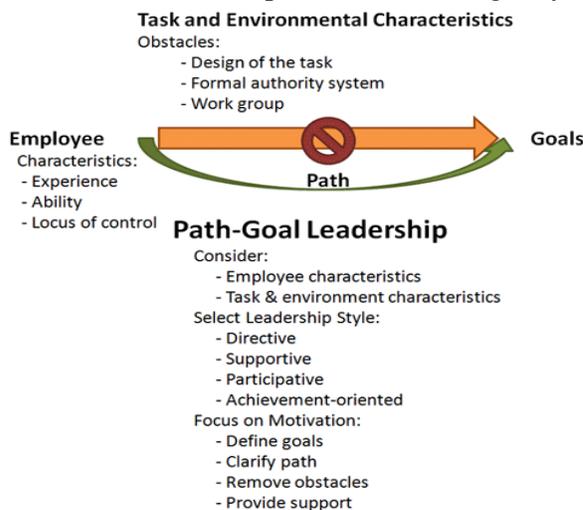


Figure 1. Path-goal model(Clark, 2013).

**Leader Behaviors**

Path-goal leader behaviors include; directive, supportive, achievement-oriented and participative leader behavior(House, 1971). Path-goal theory assumes that each of these four leader behaviors may be used by a leader in different circumstances and situations, depending upon employees characteristics (House, 1996). Path-Goal theory hypothesize that directive leadership may increase subordinate performance and satisfaction when the task and role is

ambiguous. When subordinates have a task that is unstructured or otherwise unpleasant, the leader may make performance of necessary work more tolerable by acting supportive and considerate and by trying to minimize the negative aspects of the task environment (House & Dessler, 1974). Participative leaders are hypothesized to increase employees' effort and performance where they have to accomplish an unstructured and non-routine task. Being a participant in decision making about task goals, plans, and procedures, employees learn more about their expected role. Achievement-oriented leaders attempt to improve the performance, set and define the standards, and ensure attainment of these standards by their followers (Alanazi, Alharthey, & Rasli, 2013). House and Mitchell (1974) projected that achievement-oriented leaders would cause followers to have more self-confidence in their capabilities to complete challenging tasks.

### **Perception about Ability**

Path-goal model involves two categories of situational variables; environmental variables and personal characteristics of the employees. This study covers only one personal characteristic of the teachers i.e. perceived ability of the teachers related to their task requirements and demands. It is a characteristic and a trait of employee on which leader behaviors are dependent. Employees' thinking of their own capability regarding their assigned tasks affects their attitude towards work and their performance. A person's perceptions about his/her own ability has a big influence on his/her behavior at work. A person's perceived ability is comprised of the practice and experience received in prior task and the person's innate aptitude for the task. Ability does not simply depend on innate factors but also is determined by the chances the individual has to acquire ability through learning. In organizations these opportunities are provided on a formal basis through training.

Path-goal theory hypothesized that an employee with high perception about ability would like to work with achievement oriented and participative leader, and an employee with lower ability perceptions would be comfortable working with directive and supportive leader (House, 1971, 1996). If the perceived task ability is low the subordinate may view coaching behavior of the leader as acceptable and satisfying, which is not true for the employees who perceive themselves highly capable. (House & Mitchell, 1974). Such workers may consider it as extremely close control. In such circumstances the satisfactoriness of the leader's behavior is determined by the characteristics of the subordinates (Dessler & Valenzi, 1977; Malik, Aziz, & Hassan, 2014; Silverthorne, 2001).

### **Work Satisfaction**

A worker's attitude toward task and the job is a big determinant of his/her satisfaction with work. According to Cropanzano and Wright (2001) it is generally being documented that a happy worker is a better worker. Researchers are always keen about exploring the factors which make a worker happy and satisfied. Work satisfaction is an attitude which represents a complex accumulation of cognition, emotions, and behavioral tendencies. A satisfied person holds a very positive attitude towards work, and on the contrary, a dissatisfied person may demonstrate defiance at workplace.

### **Job Expectancies**

Job Expectancy I ( $E_1$ ) may be explained as an employee's mental state when the employee anticipates that more effort expended will result in effective performance. Job

Expectancy II ( $E_{II}$ ) is explained as an employee’s mental and psychological state when the employee anticipates that effective performance will result in valuable rewards. This is the expectation that timely and high quality performance produces extrinsic rewards such as bonuses, increased pay and promotion (House & Dessler, 1974).

White and Bednar (1991) pointed out that in order to predict particular behavior in a specific situation, it is necessary to consider the individual’s expectancies surrounding the different possible behaviors in any situation. If the behavior related to an outcome is negative (e.g., the boss will remember to reprimand the worker for a mistake made on the previous day), the warm greeting behavior is less likely to occur. There are two elements that influence expectancies, a) a path element which stimulates expectancy I, and b) a goal element proposed to effect expectancy II.

The following figure explains the three categories of variables in terms of their inter relationships as explained by the proponents of the theory (House & Mitchell, 1975).

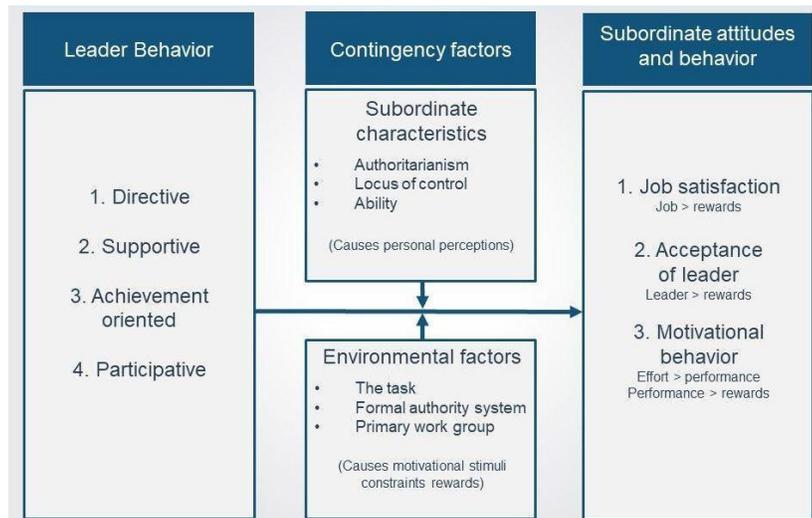


Figure 2. Path-goal Variables and relationships (House & Mitchell, 1975)

Over the years path-goal theory has stimulated numerous empirical field studies. Most of these have dealt with propositions about the effects of the moderators of leader structuring and consideration. While many studies have produced evidence concerning the effects of leader behavior on satisfaction, relatively few have addressed subordinate motivation or performance. Reviews of the empirical literature are available in research reports (House and Dessler, 1974; House and Mitchell, 1974). Both of these reviews confirm the theory, as did a meta-analysis by Indvik (1986) involving 87 empirical tests. Dessler (1973) conducted direct tests of the theory which were also supportive. Considering all the evidence, it appears that the path-goal theory scores well in forecasting the situational elements that interact with leadership to determine satisfaction. Research on theory testing has faced mixed results and reviews. Many studies support the theory while some do not (Alanazi et al., 2013; Aris & Kamarudin, 2009; Evans, 1996; Schriesheim & Neider, 1996; Silverthorne, 2001). Knight et al. (2011) stated that though path-goal theory is complex but it has given birth to substitute

for leadership theory and charismatic theory.

The proponents of the theory proclaim that theory may be used more as a tool for guiding research and enhancing insight than as a guide for managerial actions (House & Mitchell, 1974). Researchers have used this model in multiple fields such as learning organizations (Farhan, 2018), distance learning (Dewan & Dewan, 2010), Audit firms (Amahundu, 2016) and journalism (McQuarrie, 1989). As the figure 1 and 2 clarifies that the number of variables explaining the theory are numerous which make theory testing in its totality very hard. Further studies to test the theory to explore its strengths (Schriesheim & Glinow, 1977) may bring refinements and modifications in the theory, and help administrators use it more successfully in the future. The present study intended to test a part of this theory where all four leadership behaviors and teachers' perception about their abilities as moderator were examined in terms of their interaction effects on job expectancies and work satisfaction.

### **Objectives**

The objective of the study was to find out the relationship and gender differences in college principals 'leadership behaviors and teachers' Job attitudes (perception about abilities, job expectancies and work satisfaction). Moreover, it also evaluated the moderating effect of teachers 'perception about their abilities on the relationship between principals' leadership behaviors and teachers 'Job attitudes.

### **Hypothesis**

- $H_{o1}$  There is no relationship between principals 'leadership behaviors and teachers' Job attitudes.
- $H_{o2}$  There is no gender difference between principals 'leadership behaviors and teachers' Job attitudes.
- $H_{o3}$  There is no moderating effect of teachers' perception about their abilities on the relationship between principals' leadership behaviors and teachers' Job attitudes.

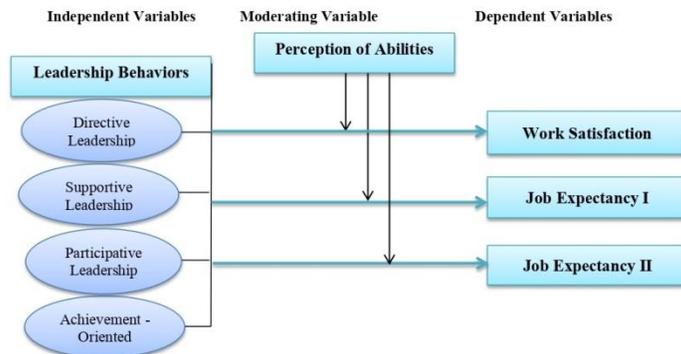


Figure 2. Conceptual Framework of leadership behavior, ability perceptions, work satisfaction and job expectancies

**Population & Sample**

Teaching faculty of all degree colleges, both male and female of district Sargodha were the population of the study. Total number of degree colleges in Sargodha was 39 (Male 20, Female 19). Eight teachers were selected from each college conveniently. Sample size of the study comprised of 312 teachers working on different positions in these 39 colleges. The researchers received 289 questionnaires back which make return rate 93%.

**Research Questionnaire**

Path-Goal Leadership Questionnaire (House & Dessler, 1974; House & Mitchell, 1974), the Job Expectancies Scale (House & Dessler, 1974), Work Satisfaction Scale (A part of Job Description Index by Smith, Kendall, and Hulin (1969)) were adopted to collect data about independent and dependent variables. For measuring teachers’ perception about ability, a part of Subordinate Personal Characteristic Scale (Awan, 2003) was used. All the tools used in this study were developed particularly to test the theory and were found reliable and valid (Awan, Zaidi, & Bigger, 2008; Awan, 2003; Indvik, 1986; Romeo, 1992). A pilot study was done with 30 college teachers for validation of the tools. Cronback Alpha Reliability Coefficients for all tools are given in table 1 which ranged from .76 to .93 and were in acceptable range.

**Results**

The data were analyzed using *t* test, Pearson correlation and *PROCESS macro for SPSS* in moderation analysis. For graphing the interactions a Windows software program designed by Daniel S. Soper to draw statistical interactions was used (DanielSoper.com)

**Table 1**

*Mean, Standard deviation and Reliability coefficients*

Questionnaires	Mean	SD	Reliability
1. Directive Leadership	2.95	.795	.93
2. Supportive Leadership	3.04	.833	.89
3. Participative Leadership	3.09	.838	.82
4. Achievement-Oriented	3.23	.978	.91
5. Job Expectancy I	1.77	.508	.84
6. Job Expectancy II	1.89	.692	.81
7. Work Satisfaction	2.53	.281	.89
8. Perception About Ability	3.68	.643	.76

The table 1 shows that college principals were less directive (M= 2.95, SD .79) and more supportive (M= 3.04, SD .83) and participative (M= 3.09, SD .83). Amazingly they were highly achievement oriented (M= 3.23, SD .97). Teachers working in these colleges were perceiving themselves highly able (M= 3.68, SD .64) but they were moderately satisfied with work (M= 2.53, SD .28) and had low expectancies from their job(E<sub>I</sub>: M= 1.77, SD .52 and (E<sub>II</sub>: M=1.89, SD .69).

**Table 2**

*Correlation between variables of study*

Variables	Expectancy I	Expectancy II	Work Satisfaction	AP
1. Directive Leadership	.347**	.303**	-.082	-.177**
2. Supportive Leadership	.505**	.488**	.062	.309**
3. Participative Leadership	.504**	.498**	.104	.342**
4. Achievement-Oriented	.452**	.415**	.151*	.733**
5. Ability Perception (AP)	.249**	.249**	.106	-

\* p ≤ .10, \*\* p ≤ .05.

The table 2 shows significant correlation between all variables except work satisfaction which was weakly and insignificantly related with leadership behaviors and negatively related with directive leader behavior. Directive leadership had inverse relationship with teacher’s perception about abilities  $r = -.177$ ,  $p < .05$ , whereas achievement oriented leadership was highly positively related with ability perception  $r = .733$ ,  $p < .05$ .

**Table 3**  
 Gender differences for the variables under study

	Variables	Gender	N	Mean	SD	<i>t</i>	Sig
1	Directive Leadership	Male	151	13.34	3.39	.249	.804
		Female	138	13.23	3.56		
2	Supportive Leadership	Male	151	14.89	3.91	-1.370	.172
		Female	138	15.56	4.37		
3	Participative Leadership	Male	151	15.90	4.31	1.921	.050
		Female	138	14.95	4.00		
4	Achievement-Oriented	Male	151	10.17	3.45	2.452	.015
		Female	138	9.16	3.56		
5	Job Satisfaction	Male	151	29.60	5.43	1.442	.150
		Female	138	28.63	6.03		
6	Expectancy I	Male	151	10.93	3.99	1.518	.130
		Female	138	10.26	3.40		
7	Expectancy II	Male	151	10.80	3.04	1.021	.308
		Female	138	10.43	3.04		
8	Perception about Ability	Male	151	15.05	2.49	2.199	.014
		Female	138	14.39	2.62		

Table 3 gives description of gender differences between leadership behaviors, outcome variables and moderator variable. There were significant gender differences for participative leadership ( $t(288) = 1.92, p = .050$ ), achievement oriented leadership ( $t(288) = 2.45, p = .015$ ) and perceptions about ability ( $t(288) = 2.19, p = .014$ ) and males were dominant in above mentioned leadership behaviors and they had stronger ability perceptions as compared to their female counterparts. It was also clear that males were more directive leaders and females were more supportive although the difference was not significant.

**Table 4**  
*Effect of Leadership on work satisfaction as moderated by Perception about Ability*

Work Satisfaction						
Model	Effect ( $\beta$ )	P	LLCI	ULCI	R <sup>2</sup>	R <sup>2</sup> Change
constant	42.479	.000	27.39	57.56		
Directive Leadership	-1.295	.026	-2.43	-.153	.030(3%)	.015
Perception about Ability	-.841	.109	-1.87	.189		
DL × Ability Perception	.083	<b>.039</b>	.004	.163		
constant	40.40	.000	26.93	53.87		
Supportive Leadership	-1.02	.030	-1.93	-.098	.030 (3%)	.018
Perception about Ability	-.803	.082	-1.71	.104		
SL × Ability Perception	.071	<b>.022</b>	.010	.131		
constant	40.51	.000	27.47	53.54		
Participative Leadership	-.991	.028	-1.87	-.103	.037 (4%)	0.021
Perception about Ability	-.881	.051	-1.76	.003		
PL × Ability Perception	.073	<b>.014</b>	.015	.131		
constant	38.28	.000	29.21	47.36		
Ach-Oriented Leadership	1.08	.033	-2.09	-.083	.048 (4%)	.025
Perception about Ability	-.821	.018	-1.50	-.136		
AchL × Ability Perception	.090	<b>.006</b>	.025	.155		

R<sup>2</sup> Change=Contribution of interaction term

The table 4 describes the results of moderation analysis using regression analysis through Process Macro for SPSS. As revealed in the table, leadership behaviors were significantly related to work satisfaction and perceptions about ability significantly moderated the relationship between leadership behaviors and work satisfaction, as the interaction effect in all four cases i.e. directive leadership × ability perception work satisfaction ( $\beta = .083, p = .039$ ), Supportive leadership × ability perception work satisfaction ( $\beta = .071, p = .022$ ), Participative leadership × ability perception work satisfaction ( $\beta = .073, p = .014$ ), and achievement-oriented leadership × ability perception work satisfaction ( $\beta = .090, p = .006$ ), were significant. These interactions are elaborated in the figure 3.

**Table 5**  
 Conditional Effects of Leadership on work satisfaction by Perception about Ability

Conditional effects					
Leader Behavior	Perceptions about Ability	$\beta$	$p$	LLCI	ULCI
Directive	Low	-.276	.030	-.525	-.026
	Moderate	-.060	.550	-.258	.137
	High	.156	.332	-.160	.471
Supportive	Low	.159	.193	.398	.081
	Moderate	.023	.790	.144	.190
	High	.204	.062	.011	.419
Participative	Low	.101	.395	.334	.132
	Moderate	.087	.305	.080	.254
	High	.275	.012	.061	.490
Achievement-Oriented	Low	.011	.948	.313	.335
	Moderate	.243	.079	.029	.514
	High	.475	.003	.162	.788

The conditional affects further makes it clear that directive leadership was effecting work satisfaction of low ability employees ( $\beta= -.276, p= .030$ ), whereas high ability teachers were satisfied with participative ( $\beta= .275, p= .012$ ), and achievement oriented leaders ( $\beta= .475, p= .003$ ).

These interactions are illustrated in the Figure 3.

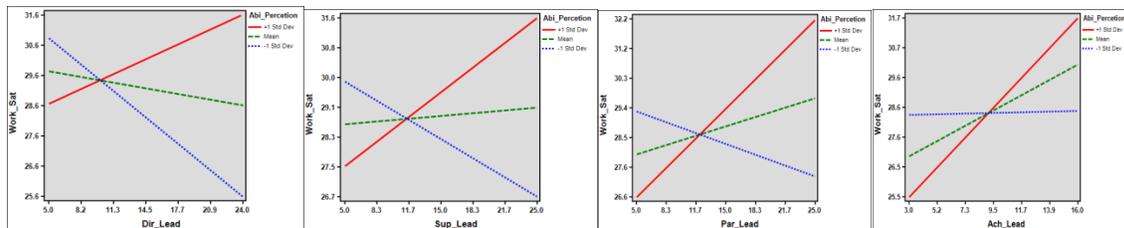


Figure: 3 Interaction effects for leadership behaviors and perceptions about abilities on work satisfaction.

**Table:**  
*Effect of Leadership on Expectancy I as moderated by Perception about Ability*

Expectancy I						
Model	Effect (β)	P	LLCI	ULCI	R <sup>2</sup>	R <sup>2</sup> Change
Constant	6.51	.144	-2.24	15.25		
Directive Leadership	-.238	.478	-.901	.423	0.23 (23%)	.011
Perception about Ability	-.131	.667	-.728	.467		
DL × Ability Perception	.047	.044	.001	.093		
Constant	3.72	.337	-3.91	11.35		
Supportive Leadership	.300	.256	-.219	.820		
Perception about Ability	.029	-.484	.543	.114	.265 (26%)	.001
SL × Ability Perception	.008	.635	-.025	.042		
Constant	3.66	.333	-3.77	11.09		
Participative Leadership	.323	.210	-.183	.827	.261 (26%)	.004
Perception about Ability	.0286	.911	-.475	.533		
PL × Ability Perception	.007	.692	-.026	.039		
Constant	5.79	.033	.457	11.14		
Ach-Oriented Leadership	.931	.002	.341	1.52		
Perception about Ability	-.069	.733	-.473	.332	.222 (22%)	.003
AchL × Ability Perception	-.021	.273	-.059	.017		

The table 6revealed thatinteraction effects of leadership styles and ability perceptions on expectancyI were not significantly apart from directive leader behavior.Perceptions about ability failed to moderate the relationshipexcept directive leadership behavior × ability perception expectancy I (β= .047, p= .044). All interactions elaborated in table 6 are further explained in the figure 4.

**Table:**  
*Conditional Effect of Leadership on Expectancy I by Perception about Ability*

Conditional effects					
Leader Behavior	Perceptions about Ability	$\beta$	$p$	LLCI	ULCI
Directive	Low	.338	.000	.193	.482
	Moderate	.582	.000	.399	.764
	High	.460	.000	.345	.574

The conditional affects further clarifies that directive leadership was effecting job expectancy I i.e. effort leads to performance, of low ( $\beta = .338, p = .000$ ), moderate ( $\beta = .582, p = .000$ ), and high ability employees ( $\beta = .460, p = .000$ ) almost equally. These interactions are demonstrated in the following Figure.

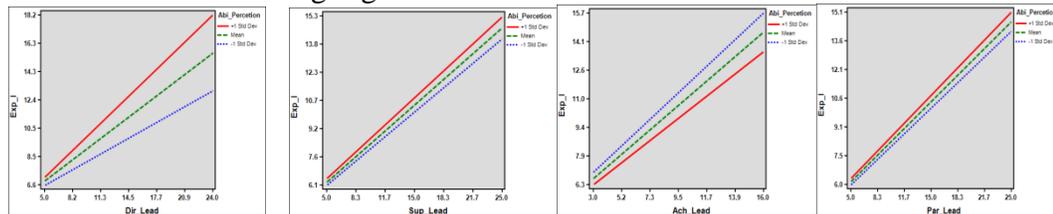


Figure: 4 Interaction effects of leadership behaviors and ability perceptions on Expectancy I.

**Table 8**

*Effect of Leadership on Expectancy II as moderated by Perception about Ability*

Model	Expectancy II					
	Effect ( $\beta$ )	P	LLCI	ULCI	R <sup>2</sup>	R <sup>2</sup> Change
Constant	9.89	.008	2.66	17.12		
Directive Leadership	-.403	.148	-.950	.145		
Perception about Ability	-.255	.311	-.749	.239	.211 (21%)	.019
DL × Ability Perception	.051	.009	.013	.089		
constant	7.469	.019	1.19	13.74		
Supportive Leadership	.052	.808	-.375	.480	.255 (26%)	.004
Perception about Ability	-.125	.560	-.547	.297		
SL × Ability Perception	.018	.196	-.009	.046		
constant	8.57	.005	2.51	14.6303		
Participative Leadership	-.005	.978	-.417	.4063		

Perception about Ability		-.214	.306	-.625	.1970	.264 (26%)	0.007
PL × Ability		.023	.096	-.004	.049		
constant		10.910	.000	6.435	15.38		
Ach-Oriented Leadership		.109	.663	-.385	.604		
Perception about Ability		-.303	.077	-.641	.034	.182 (18%)	.005
AchL × Perception	Ability	.021	.199	-.011	.053		

The table 8 has shown that interaction effects of leadership styles and ability perceptions on  $E_{II}$  were not significantly apart from directive leader behavior. Perceptions about ability failed to moderate the relationship except for directive leadership behavior × ability perception  $E_{II}(\beta = .051, p = .009)$ . All interactions elaborated in above table are further explained in the figure 5.

**Table 9**

*Conditional Effects of Leadership on Expectancy II by Perception about Ability*

Conditional effects					
Leader Behavior	Perceptions about Ability	$\beta$	$p$	LLCI	ULCI
Directive	Low	.213	.001	.094	.333
	Moderate	.344	.000	.249	.439
	High	.474	.000	.323	.625

Further explanation in the conditional affects showed that directive leadership was effecting job expectancy II i.e. performance leads to rewards, of low ( $\beta = .213, p = .001$ ), moderate ( $\beta = .344, p = .000$ ), and high ability employees ( $\beta = .474, p = .000$ ) almost equally. These interactions are demonstrated in the following Figure.

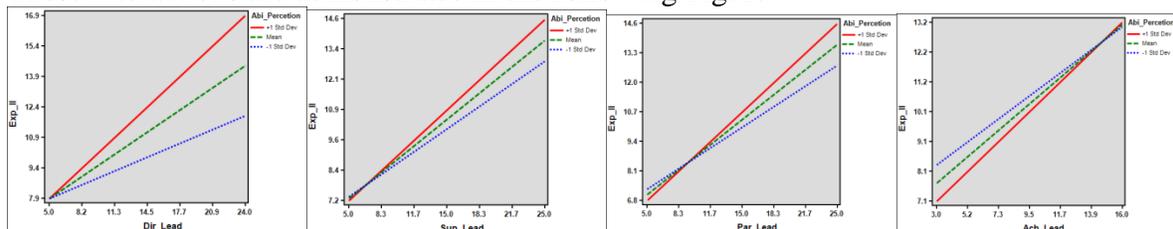


Figure: 5 Interactions effects of leadership behaviors and ability perceptions on Expectancy II.

**Findings**

- The results exposed that college principals were less directive and more supportive and participative. They were incredibly highly achievement oriented. Teachers working in these colleges perceived themselves highly able but they were moderately satisfied with work and had low expectancies from their job.
- The above table shows significant correlation between all variables except work satisfaction which was weakly and insignificantly related with leadership behaviors.

Directive leadership had inverse relationship with teachers' perception about ability, whereas achievement oriented leadership was highly positively related with ability perception.

- There were significant gender differences for participative leadership, achievement oriented leadership and perceptions about ability and males were dominant in above mentioned leadership behaviors and they had stronger ability perceptions as compared to their female counterparts.
- Leadership behaviors were significantly related to work satisfaction and perceptions about ability significantly moderated the relationship between leadership styles and work satisfaction, as the interaction effects in all four cases were significant. Directive leadership was effecting work satisfaction of low ability employees, whereas high ability teachers were satisfied with achievement oriented and participative leaders.
- The interaction effects of leadership behaviors and ability perceptions on expectancy I were not significant other than directive leader behavior. The conditional affects further made it clear that directive leadership was effecting job expectancy I (effort leads to performance), of low, moderate, and high ability employees almost equally.
- Perceptions about ability failed to moderate the relationship of leadership behaviors with expectancy II except for directive leadership behavior. Further explanation in the conditional affects showed that directive leadership was effecting job expectancy II (performance leads to rewards), of low, moderate and high ability employees almost equally.

### **Discussion and Implications**

The findings revealed that college principals were less directive and more supportive and participative. They were exceptionally highly achievement oriented. Teachers working in these colleges perceived themselves highly able but they were moderately satisfied with work and had low expectancies from their job. This was partly because of the peculiar nature of the population as college teachers basic qualification was master degree and many participants in the sample were possessing higher qualifications like Mphil and PhD. These faculty members are appointed on merit after a rigorous process of Punjab Public service commission and their seeing themselves highly able relative to the task demands is understandable. Leading such people demands participation and delegation so the heads were very rightly using the appropriate styles of leadership. This finding coincides with the theory proposition that depending upon the situation and the characteristics of the subordinate the leaders may use different appropriate behaviors (House, 1996). House proposes that employees will put more effort expecting that they will receive rewards. These rewards may be in the form of pay raise, promotion, professional development opportunities and better working conditions (Schriesheim, Castro, Zhou, & DeChurch, 2006). All these rewards in the government colleges are not linked with performance and are not generally available and are resulting in lower job expectancies.

There were significant gender differences for participative leadership, achievement oriented leadership and perceptions about ability and males were dominant in above mentioned leadership behaviors and they had stronger ability perceptions as compared to their female counterparts.

It was also clear that males were more directive leaders and females were more supportive although the difference was not significant. This finding confirms the notion that males are more oriented towards initiating structure behavior whereas consideration is more consistent with females stereotypically (Polston-Murdoch, 2013). Gender differences in participative leadership, achievement oriented leadership and perceptions about ability warranted that gender may be used as moderator variable in Path-goal conceptual framework as Polston-Murdoch (2013) found that gender predicted subordinates' commitment for directive and achievement-oriented behaviors.

The theory hypothesize that in case of high ability related to the task requirements and demands, the subordinate is unlikely to accept leader's coaching behavior and directiveness, and in case of high ability perceptions, direction may backfire and is most likely to have no positive effect on the motivation of the employees and may be considered as unreasonably close control (House & Mitchell, 1974, p. 6). The perception of the people at work place about their abilities to complete a task is very significant as a subordinate with high ability perceptions shall prefer shared leadership in the form of participation and would like to take the responsibility and complete the task independently (Awan et al., 2008). The subordinates with low ability perception would like to get directions whenever they find any obstacles in the completion of task (Awan, 2003). The results discovered that leadership behaviors were significantly related to work satisfaction and perceptions about ability significantly moderated the relationship between leadership behaviors and work satisfaction, as the interaction effects in all four cases were significant. Directive leadership was effecting work satisfaction of low ability employees, whereas high ability teachers were satisfied with achievement oriented and participative leaders. These results confirms path-goal prediction (House & Mitchell, 1974). Results revealed that subordinates were more satisfied with participative leader when they had high ability perception. All these results are in confirmation with Alanazi et al. (2013), Malik, (2012, 2013) and (Malik et al., 2014) who endorse the idea that directive mode of heads may hinder the performance of employees when they have high ability and experience and the leader needs to be more supportive when the system is rigid.

The interaction effects of leadership styles and ability perceptions on expectancy I were not significant other than directive leader behavior. The conditional affects further made it clear that directive leadership was effecting job expectancy I (effort leads to performance), of low, moderate, and high ability employees almost equally. The results also revealed that perceptions about task ability failed to moderate the relationship of leadership styles with expectancy II except for directive leadership behavior. Further explanation in the conditional affects showed that directive leadership was effecting job expectancy II (performance leads to rewards), of low, moderate and high ability employees almost equally just like expectancy I. This result coincides with Yukl (1989) Stinson and Johnson (1975) who stated that expectancies would increase by leader clarification of role requirements. These results were contradictory to path-goal theory for supportive, participative and achievement oriented leader behavior because when people are not confident about their ability, they need more support, but in case of high ability, a leader should set challenging goals and delegate responsibilities to show confidence in their capabilities.

### **Concluding Remarks**

Path-goal theory designates its usefulness in all occupations. The present study concludes that in higher education sector this theory is useful in predicting work satisfaction of high and low ability teachers but when it comes to motivation the study fails to verify the predictions of the theory except for directive leadership. The conflicting results on the Path-Goal predictions make it necessary that the researchers and theorists may broaden the conceptual and the contexts bases of the theory by further research in the field.

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