

Exploring the Relationship of Caring Leadership with Organizational Performance: An Empirical Study

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Abstract

There are only a few empirical studies in the literature that had explored implications of caring leadership in commercial organizations. However, these studies by researchers (Greenleaf 1977; Spears 2010) indicated a large potential for better leadership experience and performance of the organization, if caring leadership principles were applied. This paper explored the effect of caring leadership on the performance of commercial organizations within Pakistan. The study surveyed senior managers of these Pakistani commercial organizations and statistically tested relationships between caring leadership and performance of the organization and organizational commitment of employees. The study also tested the effect of organizational commitment of the supervisor on the organizational commitment of employees and also the effect of concern of supervisor for the feelings of employees on the commitment of those employees to the organization. The study used servant leadership instrument developed by Barbuto and Wheeler as a proxy for caring leadership.

Keywords: leadership, commitment, caring, empathetic, performance, organization, altruistic

1. INTRODUCTION

Schuitema described three conditions under which work is performed in an organization as “I am here to get”, “I give in order to get” and “I am here to give” (Schuitema, 2004, pp.62-64). In his view, good work is only performed under the third condition. The second condition referred to the process of trading effort for money. Schuitema stated that trading effort for money dispirits the ennoblement of employees at work. Therefore, any significant ennoblement of work at the workplace under these conditions is impossible as it would extract a heavy toll on loyalty, motivation, and performance of subordinates which would lead them towards crisis, unless, organizations would be revitalized with passion, spirit, and enthusiasm (Bolman and Deal, 2001).

The condition stated by Schuitema, “I am here to give” (Schuitema, 2004 pp.64) is closely related to the concept of servant leadership where leadership is defined as an act to serve a higher purpose, something beyond the individual level.

Where leaders would care for their employees and would give them the opportunity to grow in an unconditional manner, in return, employees would perform their work in an unconditional manner, which would produce a surplus at the workplace. This, in turn, would give rise to a new moral principle which would inspire employees to work collectively in order to produce a surplus at work place (Spears and Lawrence, 2004).

This paper would intend to empirically verify the effect of caring leadership on the performance of organizations by testing hypotheses such as caring culture in an organization would lead to better performance of the organization and also encourage subordinates to go beyond the call of duty, therefore, enhancing the performance of the organization. The paper would also intend to empirically verify the claim that sacrificing supervisors would develop sacrificing subordinates.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Schuitema (2004) stated according to a common understanding the basic motive of a leader is to achieve organizational targets by giving as less as possible. Since employees perform the actual work which is to produce products to be sold in order to obtain surplus profits. In this scenario, the effort of the subordinate would be considered as a commodity, and wage would determine the price of that commodity. Since wages paid to employees would always be less than the value of the products produced, therefore, the traditional relationship between employee and employer would be inherently unfair unless employees would be compensated in other ways.

Non-monetary compensation for employees, according to Hess and Cameron (2006), could be to help employees grow intellectually, materially and spiritually. This would be delivered when leaders would put their belief in the inherent worth of every employee with the commitment to develop talents of each individual and help them grow by nurturing their potential through transformative healing which would improve subordinate morale, motivation, and commitment which would result in enhanced overall organizational effectiveness (Hill, 2005). With this level of commitment, they would achieve what Schuitema (2004) stated the individual has a potential infinitely bigger than they could account for.

Excelling organizations, according to Spears (2004) and Bambale *et al* (2012), would enhance genuine concern for employees and would facilitate their development and career growth which would result in true value adding behavior at a workplace where employees would go beyond the call of duty to fulfill the tasks at hand. Central to both care and growth of subordinates and their performance is the concept of unspecified obligations which would be enacted in the form of high commitment where employees would give back more thereby making the organization successful. This, over time, would develop a balance in the exchange relationship. This emerging approach to leadership and service is called servant-leadership.

According to Greenleaf (1970), the vital concept of servant leadership is to serve others and this simple fact is central to leaders' greatness. Larry and Spears (2004) stated that the principle would prevail in future to the extent that successful organizations would be predominantly servant-led.

Spears (2010) had identified ten critical characteristics of servant leadership; listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of people and building community. Barbuto and Wheeler (2006) reduced these ten characteristics of servant leadership to five servant leadership factors using factor analysis. Which are; altruistic calling, emotional healing, wisdom, persuasive mapping, and organizational stewardship.

According to Barbuto and Wheeler, "altruistic calling describes a leader's deep-rooted desire to make a positive difference in others' lives". Leader high in altruistic calling would show deep desire to serve others. Therefore, he would put the interests of his followers ahead of his own interests. Altruistic calling, as highlighted by Spears and Lawrence (2004), would be the interdependence of well-being of employees on each other which would require benevolent spirit consistent with generosity in order to up lift others and develop the environment of support for each other at the workplace.

Similarly, "emotional healing describe a leader's commitment to and skill in fostering spiritual recovery from hardship or trauma" (Barbuto and Wheeler, 2006). Through emotional healing leader would develop good listening skills which would help him in creating a safe environment for employees to voice their professional and personal concerns, leaving subordinates with greater motivation to work.

Emotional healing, according to Autry (1991), would be to enable subordinates to heal themselves and others by providing an opportunity to develop adaptability, psychological alignment, and performance alignment in order to enable horizontal communication and cohesion where ideas may float in order to create a sustained performance by caring for both commitment and performance.

According to them “wisdom can be understood as a combination of awareness of surroundings and anticipation of consequences” (Barbuto and Wheeler, 2006). Leaders high in wisdom were keen observers of the situation and active anticipator of likely consequences. Wisdom, as confirmed by Sofield, Juliano, and Hammett (1990), would require developing relationships through open and honest communication at the workplace in order to develop system integrity. It would encourage a person to listen to a view different from their own although it would involve an inherent risk. Therefore, listening would require maturity and a sense of self-esteem. And maturity would require an ability to give and receive trust that would then provide an opportunity to nurture business processes. It would also enable the leader to pick clues from the environment and understand their implication on the business and its employees.

Similarly, “persuasive mapping describes the extent to which leaders use sound reasoning and mental frameworks” (barbuto and Wheeler, 2006). Persuasive mapping would enable leaders to use sound reasoning to conceptualize greater possibilities to get the tasks done. Persuasive mapping, as believed by Haney, Sirbasku, and McCann (2010), would be an act of employees striving to perform in accordance with the expectations of their leaders. He stated that if expectations of leaders would be consistently positive and high then self-esteem of employees would be consistently raised and they would engage their efforts to deliver performance consistent with expectations of the leader. If leaders would engage employees not only in current work but also in decision making then it would make the process of implementing a decision less costly and more effective. As it would enable employees to align their work according to the decision taken and would create shared ownership of ideas with a possibility to contribute to the growth of the organization.

Organizational stewardship, according to Barbuto and Wheeler (2006), is “the extent that leaders prepare an organization to make a positive contribution to society”. They had described leaders high in organizational stewardship were those who had strong ethical values and continuously strived to add value to the lives of subordinates and made them effective workers. They further stated organizational stewardship, i.e. commitment to the growth of employees and linking it to organizational performance, is an essential component of servant leadership would lead to employee motivation to go beyond the call of duty. Organizational stewardship, as established by Barbuto and Wheeler (2006) and Williamson (2009), would be an ethic or value for taking responsibility for the well-being of the community and making sure that the strategies and decisions undertaken would reflect the commitment to give back. Therefore, stewardship would be sustaining desired levels of performance which in a business setting would translate into equipment, process, facility, and reliability that would bring in participation, quality, and service. Where employees aligned commitment and cause in order to serve the organization best by creating a place of their own choice. As each employee wanted to invest in things that mattered so that their input would lead to the success of the organization if they step aside they left a better workplace for the people to come. Block (1993) confirmed that it would create the willingness and commitment to be accountable for something bigger than oneself. The leader along with employees would take personal responsibility to care about something owned by someone else.

Autry (1991) stated leadership would begin with knowing oneself, being available at the moment with the intent to understand its needs and demands towards organizational performance. Organizations that practiced servant leadership gave back to employees a lot more than the monetary wages. As consequence employees were satisfied, committed and produced much more monetary value for the organization thereby made the organization successful.

3. MODEL

The paper would empirically explore the relationship of caring leadership behavior with the performance of the organization, based on a data set of ninety-three executives from commercial organizations of Pakistan who completed an online survey.

3.1. Spears and Lawrence (2004) had argued that profit maximizing organizations were moving away from autocratic, hierarchical and traditional modes of leadership towards a different way of working – one that would encourage others by seeking their involvement in decision making thereby developing and articulating the concept of team work and community through their caring behavior. Caring behavior of a leader would be enhanced by the personal and professional growth of workers while improving performance of the organization. Literature provides theoretical relationship between leadership behavior and performance of the organization. However, lack of empirical research in literature highlighted the need to empirically link caring leadership behavior with performance of the organization as Peterson, Glavin and Lange (2012) had highlighted that there may be few aspects of leadership that had an impact on performance of the organization but could not take attention of researchers until now. They stated that researchers had also argued that behavioral patterns of leaders had serious consequences for the front line employees of the organization. Therefore, this would suggest the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1- Higher the caring leadership, higher would be performance of the organization.

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3.2. Many researchers including Greenleaf (1970) and Flint (2012) had argued that caring leaders could be identified by their actions, words, and sacrifice for their employees. They could be recognized by the achievements of their employees as individuals and as teams. Caring leaders would not be concerned about their title as a leader, they would work behind the scenes and would have a major influence on the people they work with. Caring leaders would work to put others first. Therefore, many employees would want their time and attention. Such a leader would be popular as a caring leader because he would treat employees fairly and with respect which, over time, would be converted into employees' commitment towards the organization. However, lack of empirical research in literature highlighted the need to empirically link caring leadership with employee commitment. This would suggest the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2- Higher the caring leadership, stronger would be employee commitment to the organization.

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3.3. Flint (2012) had argued that caring leaders believe in building caring relationships with the people they work with and help them grow both in their personal and professional capacity by helping them improve their skills and develop their full potential. Caring leaders consistently exhibit traits such as; caring for and having a positive impact on people through their leadership, build real relationships with employees, open minded, great communicator, they would seek and give feedback, great listener, involved with their team, helpful, they would manage and resolve conflict, would set goals and expectations, believe in accountability for the results, they would motivate and encourage employees, establish a vision so employees would understand their role, don't blame others, give praise, constantly train their people – both one-on-one and in groups, team builder, shows patience, serve with humility, their actions match their talk, willing to pay the price for building relationships; which show their concern for employees' feelings and thereby enhance employees' commitment. Caring leaders believe that if they could make the real difference in the lives of their employees by helping them succeed would be the best way to develop employee commitment. Pfeffer and Veiga (1993) stated that employees work harder because of the increased involvement and commitment that comes from having more control and say in their work; people work smarter because they are encouraged to build skills and competence; and people work more responsibly because more responsibility is placed in hands of employees further down in the organization. These practices, according to them, work because they are grounded in sound social science principles. However, lack of empirical research in literature highlighted the need to empirically link the concern for employees' feelings with employee commitment. This would suggest the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 3- Higher the concern for employees feelings, higher would be employee commitment.

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3.4. Kuye and Sulaimon (2011) highlighted that caring leaders would encourage employee involvement in decision making which would create a sense of belonging among the employees as well as the amiable environment in which both the management and employees would voluntarily contribute to healthy industrial relations. This would increase employees' commitment to the intent of improving work performance leading to positive work attitude and high performance. They further state that deep employee involvement in decision making would allow frontline employees who are closest to the customer to influence the planning process thereby increasing the likelihood of delighting the customer through increased organizational performance.

The benefits of employee involvement, as highlighted by them, are; it increases employee's morale and job satisfaction and enhance productive efficiency; it provides employees the opportunity to use their private information which can lead to better decisions for the organization; the ideas and information of employees may enhance organizational flexibility, product quality, and productivity thereby increasing organizational performance.

Flint (2012) had argued that building caring relationships with the people caring leaders lead, and helping them improve their skills and develop their full potential, is best for the employees and would develop employees' commitment thereby enhancing a sustainable competitive advantage for the business through employees' commitment.

Many researchers including Waldman and Ramirez *et al* (2004), Spears and Lawrence (2004), Flint (2012) had highlighted that in competitive and highly demanding business environment of today the leader and employees would need to care about one another, employees would also need to care about one another because both would need to care about what they do together which would enhance employees' commitment. Since what they do together would be interdependent and caring leaders believed that a team would be successful if they would be interdependent as it would show their commitment towards the task at hand. Their diversity could turn out to be the major strength which could be highly functional and performance oriented for the organization. Researchers highlighted that competitive advantage through caring leadership could be developed by developing and implementing a consistent process over time through positive struggle and experiences of employees. However, lack of empirical research in literature highlighted the need to empirically link commitment of an organization's employees with the performance of the organization. This would suggest the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 4- Higher the commitment of an organization's employees, higher would be the performance of the organization.

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3.5. Many researchers including Waldman and Ramirez *et al* (2000), Spears and Lawrence (2004), and Flint Jr. (2012) highlighted that caring leaders would offer hope and guidance by helping their employees understand their responsibility and to ensure that employees understand the objectives and then provide resources to accomplish those objectives. However, the principal resource of employees in an organization is the leader. Therefore, the leader would need to serve his employees and think of himself as a resource for his employees because it's the employees who accomplish actions and tasks that produce results. Researchers argued that high performance expectations stimulated by the relationship of caring leader and employees would encourage employees to give their best to the organization and produce results beyond expectations. However, lack of empirical research in literature highlighted the need to empirically link supervisors, who were willing to sacrifice developed employees who were also willing to sacrifice. This would suggest the following hypothesis:

Hypotheses 5- Supervisors, who were willing to sacrifice, would develop subordinates, who were also willing to sacrifice.

4. METHODOLOGY

The study used servant leadership as a proxy for caring leadership in an organization as it was corroborated by Sinha (1984). We had used a calibrated 46 question instrument developed, tested and validated by Barbuto and Wheeler (2006) in order to assess the level of caring leadership being practiced in an organization. The instrument measured servant leadership practiced by the leader of each respondent and also by the respondents themselves. A combined average score was then calculated which would represent the level of caring leadership practiced in an organization.

Barbuto and Wheeler (2006) further consolidated servant leadership measure into five factors which were; altruistic calling, persuasive mapping, emotional healing, wisdom and organizational stewardship.

The study would use altruistic calling as a measure of willingness to sacrifice and would use emotional healing as a measure of organization's concern for feelings of their employees.

Respondents were requested to rate their willingness to go beyond the call of duty for their organization on a five point scale in order to measure the commitment of employees to the organization.

93 respondents from a total of two hundred online questionnaires sent out completed the survey with a response rate of about 47%. Respondents were senior managers who had attended executive education workshops at Rausing Executive Development Center (REDC), Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS) over the last two years. Respondents were sent at least one reminder.

In order to control for Common Method Bias (CMB), we performed factor analysis using Herman's single factor method in SPSS. The single factor explained only thirty-eight percent of the variation because the data was extracted from same subjects at the same point in time. However, since the variation explained by the single factor is less than fifty percent, therefore, it showed that the measures do not have a significant influence on the results.

5. ANALYSIS

5.1. Hypothesis 1: Organizations with a high level of caring leadership would perform better

A significant positive correlation was found between caring leadership and performance of the organization as mentioned in Table-1, which clearly indicated as the level of caring leadership increase in an organization there would be a related increase in the performance of the organization. Research findings were consistent with Hill (2005) where he referred to caring leadership as an initiative to serve others in order to develop and nurture human potential, promote both personal and professional growth in others, and build an organizational community which would enable the organization to perform better.

The data also explored the relationship of caring leadership in an organization and the performance of these organizations using Figure-1, the line graph showed as caring leadership would improve from low to medium the performance of the organization would increase at a very steep rate. However, when caring leadership would improve from medium to very high the performance of an organization would improve but the increase in performance would not be as high as the initial increase.

We explored the relationship between the performance of the organization and caring leadership through a linear regression model where

$H_0: \beta = 0$ (Caring Leadership was not a useful predictor of the Performance of the Organization)

$H_1: \beta \neq 0$ (Caring Leadership was a useful predictor of the Performance of the Organization)

The above mentioned hypothesis was supported by the following linear regression model where both variables were on a five point likert scale:

$$Y_1 = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \varepsilon$$

Where, Y_1 = Organizational Performance, X_1 = Caring Leadership

With 5% chance of being wrong we had sufficient evidence to state that a significant relationship existed between the performance of the organization and caring leadership which indicated that if caring leadership would exist in an organization, organizational performance would increase by 0.173.

The relationship highlighted that 3.9% of the variability in performance of the organization would be explained by caring leadership in an organization. The remaining 96.1% variability in performance of the organization could be explained by other factors.

5.2. Hypothesis 2: Organizations with a high level of caring leadership would have strong employee commitment

A significant positive correlation was found between caring leadership and commitment of the employee to the organization as mentioned in Table-1, which indicated that as caring leadership would increase in an organization there would be a related increase in the commitment of employees towards the organization. Research findings were consistent with Schuitema (2004) where he stated that the act to serve others in an unconditional manner would extract true ennoblement from the leader as the noble leader would care for the subordinates and would give them the opportunity to grow in an unconditional manner which would raise the commitment of employees towards the organization.

The data explored the relationship of caring leadership in an organization with the commitment of employees to the organization using Figure-2. Line graph showed as caring leadership would improve from low to high the commitment of employees towards the organization would increase at a very steep rate.

However, when the caring leadership would improve from high to very high the commitment of employees to the organization would stay constant and would not increase further which indicated a maximum practical level beyond which the commitment of employees would not increase.

We explored the relationship between the commitment of employees towards the organization and caring leadership through a linear regression model where

$H_0: \beta = 0$ (Caring Leadership was not a useful predictor of Commitment of Employees to the Organization)

$H_1: \beta \neq 0$ (Caring Leadership was a useful predictor of Commitment of Employees to the Organization)

The above mentioned hypothesis was supported by the following linear regression model where both variables were on a five point likert scale:

$$Y_1 = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \epsilon$$

Where Y_1 = Employees' Commitment, X_1 = Caring Leadership

With 5% chance of being wrong we had sufficient evidence to state that a significant relationship existed between caring leadership and commitment of employees towards the organization which indicated that if caring leadership would exist in an organization, commitment of employees towards the organization would increase by 0.14.

The relationship highlighted that 4.4% of the variability in the commitment of employees towards the organization would be explained by caring leadership in an organization. The remaining 95.6% variability in the commitment of employees towards the organization could be explained by other factors.

5.3. Hypothesis 3: If the feelings of employees were taken care of, the commitment of employees would increase.

A significant correlation was found between concern of the organization for employees' feelings and the commitment of employees to the organization as mentioned in Table-1, which highlighted that the concern of the organization for employees' feelings was not a core factor to increase the commitment of employees towards the organization. However, the study does not have sufficient data to state that the concern of the organization for employees' feelings had any relationship with the commitment of employees towards the organization.

The data explored the relationship of the concern of organization for employees' feelings and the commitment of employees to the organization using Figure-3. Line graph showed the concern of the organization for feelings of employees would increase from very low to low there would be a large increase in the commitment of employees to the organization. However, it was followed by an inconsistent pattern of change in the commitment of employees to the organization as the concern of the organization for the feelings of employees improved further. The graph indicated a certain minimum amount of concern for feelings would be needed. However, when the minimum basic requirement of emotional well-being would be met, no additional benefit would be achieved by giving any further emotional support. The trend observed in the line graph may be related to the cultural biases where prevailing social belief represented the concept that people who focus on feelings are considered weak. The line graph indicated a clear understanding that the effect of emotional support on the commitment of employees to the organization would be limited beyond the minimum level.

We explored the relationship between the commitment of employees to the organization and the concern of organization for feelings of their employees through a linear regression model where

$H_0: \beta = 0$ (Concern of Organization for Feelings of their Employees was not a useful predictor of the commitment of Employees to the Organization)

$H_1: \beta \neq 0$ (Concern of Organization for Feelings of their Employees was a useful predictor of the Commitment of Employees to the Organization)

The above mentioned hypothesis was supported by the following linear regression model where both variables were on a five point likert scale:

$$Y_1 = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \epsilon$$

Where Y_1 = Commitment of Employees to the Organization, X_1 = Concern of Organization for Feelings of Employees

With 5% chance of being wrong we had sufficient evidence to state that a significant relationship existed between the concern of organization for feelings of their employees and commitment of employees to the organization which indicated that if the organization would be considerate to the feelings their employees then commitment of employees to the organization would increase by 0.074.

The relationship indicated that 2.3% of the variability in the commitment of employees to the organization is explained by the concern of organization for feelings of their employees. The remaining 97.7% variability in the commitment of employees to the organization may be explained by other factors.

5.4. Hypothesis 4: Higher the commitment of employees in an organization, higher was the performance of that organization.

A significant positive correlation was found between the commitment of employees to organization and performance of the organization as mentioned in Table-1, which indicated that as the commitment of employees to the organization would increase there would be a related increase in the performance of the organization. The research findings were consistent with Schuitema (2004) where he stated that a caring leader would enable his subordinate to perform his work in an unconditional manner which would produce a surplus at the workplace and would enable the organization to perform better.

The data explored the relationship of commitment of employees to the organization and performance of the organization using Figure-4. Line graph showed the commitment of employees to the organization would improve from medium to high there would be a significant increase in the performance of the organization. When it would further increase from high to very high there would be an increase in the performance of the organization, however, increase in slope would not be as considerable as the initial increase.

We explored the relationship between the performance of the organization and commitment of employees to the organization through a linear regression model where

$H_0: \beta = 0$ (Commitment of Employees to the Organization was not a useful predictor of the Performance of the Organization)

$H_1: \beta \neq 0$ (Commitment of Employees to the Organization was a useful predictor of Performance of the Organization)

The above mentioned hypothesis was supported by the following linear regression model where both variables were on a five point likert scale:

$$Y_1 = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \varepsilon$$

Where Y_1 = Commitment of Employees to the Organization, X_1 = Performance of the Organization

With 5% chance of being wrong we had sufficient evidence to state that a significant relationship existed between the commitment of employees to the organization and performance of the organization which indicated that if the commitment of employees to the organization would increase then, the performance of the organization would increase by 0.312.

The relationship indicated that 5.6% of the variability in performance of the organization was explained by the commitment of employees to the organization. The remaining 94.4% variability in performance of the organization may be explained by other factors.

5.5. Hypothesis 5: Supervisors who were willing to sacrifice, develop subordinates, who were also willing to sacrifice.

A significant positive correlation was found between sacrificing attitude of the supervisor and the sacrificing attitude of the subordinate as mentioned in Table-1, which indicated that as sacrificing attitude of supervisor would increase there would be a related increase in sacrificing attitude of the subordinate. Research findings were consistent with Barbuto and Wheeler (2006) where they stated that sacrificing supervisors would enable the subordinate to sacrifice with a deep desire to serve others.

The data further explored the relationship of sacrificing attitude of supervisor and sacrificing attitude of subordinate using Figure-5. Line graph showed sacrificing attitude of supervisor would improve from very low to low there would be an increase in the sacrificing attitude of the subordinate, however, the increase would be negligible. When the sacrificing attitude of supervisor would improve from low to high there would be a larger increase in sacrificing attitude of the subordinate.

When the sacrificing attitude of supervisor would improve from high to very high there would be an increase in the sacrificing attitude of the subordinate, however, the increase would be very small.

We explored the relationship between sacrificing attitude of the subordinate and sacrificing attitude of the supervisor through a linear regression where

$H_0: \beta = 0$ (Sacrificing Attitude of the Supervisor was not a useful predictor of Sacrificing Attitude of the Subordinate)

$H_1: \beta \neq 0$ (Sacrificing Attitude of the Supervisor was a useful predictor of Sacrificing Attitude of the Subordinate)

The above mentioned hypothesis was supported by the following linear regression model where both variables were on a five point likert scale:

$$Y_1 = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \epsilon$$

Where Y_1 = Sacrificing Attitude of the Employee, X_1 = Sacrificing Attitude of the Leader

With 5% chance of being wrong we had sufficient evidence to state that significant relationship existed between sacrificing attitude of the supervisor and sacrificing attitude of the subordinate which indicated that if the supervisor had sacrificing attitude towards his subordinates and the organization, then sacrificing attitude of the subordinate would be increased by 0.371.

The relationship indicated that 1.79% of the variability in sacrificing attitude of the subordinate was explained by sacrificing attitude of the supervisor. The remaining 98.21% variability in sacrificing attitude of the subordinate may be explained by other factors.

6. DISCUSSION

Anchored in literature on caring leadership, this research would provide support to the concept that leaders who desired to serve and build a strong organization more than they desired compensation and benefits would naturally tend to engage in caring leadership (Peterson, Galvin and Lange, 2012) with the objective to stimulate thought and action within their organization in order to build a better, more caring organization (Spears and Lawrence, 2012 pp. 11).

The paper is in line with the argument presented by Melchar and Bosco that the competitive and demanding nature of the industry today would require more time and effort committed to leadership enhancement and community development activities. In advance business environment, organizations would need to adapt to caring leadership in order to improve and grow as a community in the course of delighting their customers by serving them well and meeting their needs. Melchar and Bosco had argued that organizations would need to identify and meet the needs of their employees through caring leadership which would enhance the performance of the organization. Flint had argued that caring leaders would work to put others first. They would treat employees fairly and with respect which over time would convert into employees' commitment towards the organization. He further stated caring leaders would consistently exhibit traits such as; having positive impact on employees, great listener, open minded, would seek and provide feedback, showed patience, served with humility, involved with their team, would manage and resolve conflict; which would show their concern for employees' feelings and therefore would enhance employees' commitment. They believed that if they could truly help their employees succeed by helping them improve their skills and develop their full potential would enhance employees' commitment which would develop sustainable competitive advantage for the organization – helping it to excel. Flint argued that caring leaders would encourage employees to seek opportunities to serve and lead without the concern of their titles which would raise the quality of life throughout the organization. This in turn, as highlighted by Flint, would develop a competitive advantage for the organizations. Flint had argued that the competitors could create a similar building, purchase the same equipment and raw materials, could produce the same products or services, and could chase the same customers (pp. 2-3). However, in order to develop caring environment, organizations would need a caring team that would realize its awesome responsibility for leading, and impacting the lives of employees while at the same time would serve as stewards of the business, its resources, and the results. This would be difficult to develop for the competitors. Therefore, caring leadership would provide a unique balancing act that would require a passion for improving lives of employees in an organization that not many leaders had developed.

Leaders, as highlighted by Spears and Lawrence, had created a sense of uneasiness in the way they served and lead their customers, employees, organizations and themselves. Caring leadership, in response to uneasiness, created a balance between and / both approaches as opposed to either serve or lead.

Caring leaders would understand that, as highlighted by Flint, they had more challenging and difficult role to play as they would need to encourage, guide, inspire, motivate, and support employees in ways that would bring them together in order to accomplish organizational goals and objectives. The leader had the responsibility to make employees realize and understand that they would need to care about what they with the leader do together by communicating them the needs of the organization as to what needs to be achieved and how. Therefore, caring leadership was about concentrating on employees who would work each day to improve the performance of the organization by giving them the opportunity to feel good about accomplishing something of value – something bigger than themselves that could not be achieved in isolation. Caring leaders would embed in their employees the responsibility to help the community and make the organization grow together by enhancing the commitment of employees.

The commitment of leaders to the growth of employees could be measured by the improvements in lives of their employees. Such as; to enhance their employee's capacities, gave them opportunities to grow, allowed them to talk about their discomfort and enabled them to maximize their potential (Spears and Lawrence, 2004).

To be perceived as a caring leader, as argued by Spears and Lawrence, was the desired change that needed to be handled in a sensitive fashion in order to grow both the employees and the organization. Such leaders were considered “very astute” as they would understand the importance and impact of responding in a healing manner as problems and crises developed. Caring leaders would understand that their key task was to create and maintain a positive environment where employees were motivated to work. This act of caring leadership would require a change of emphasis to a more balanced approach to leadership and management where greater reliance was on the application of management which consisted of human relations (Spears and Lawrence, 2004).

Caring leadership, as highlighted by Spears and Lawrence, required a deep understanding of our organizations which could become a potential healing agent in their lives and their communities if both leaders and employees would let it. Learning to heal was the powerful strength of transformation and integration. In order to encourage the healing process in organizations leaders would need to encourage employees to listen and empathize with those, they work with. Now, many leaders had realized the importance of healing within their organizations because problems and crises were bound to develop. Therefore, it was not the problem or crises that would come as a challenge but how leaders would respond to that problem or crises demonstrate the “true heart” (Spears and Lawrence, 2004 pg. 140-141) of the organization.

In order to develop empathy for customers, caring leaders must learn to empathize with themselves and their employees. Caring leaders would also need to help their employees empathize with each other and with customers. One technique for caring leaders to develop empathy, as suggested by Spears and Lawrence, was through mental imagery. They were of the view that a leader may unfold a program or event through mental imagery in order to view the program or event from customers' point of view. Mental imagery and visualization would enable the leader and the employees to anticipate problems and implement their solutions, identify critical moments of interaction, which Spears and Lawrence had termed as moments of truth, with the customers and experience the entire program or service. It may be used as a powerful tool to improve the quality of a program. The cycle would begin by visualizing the very first point of contact between the customer and the organization. It would contain all the thousands of moments that combined to create the total customer experience and would end when the customer would consider the service complete. It may begin again when the same person would come back for more. Therefore, visualizing the cycle of service chart would enable the leader and employees to identify potential moments of truth for the customer and observe things as the customer would observe and experience them. This tool could be used by employees in order to enhance the chain of moments of experience of the customer and to make employees understand how the succession of moments of truth would lead to a complete perception of quality by the completion of each cycle. It would also make employees realize that experience of a customer was cumulative and therefore, should be managed accordingly.

Caring leadership was the essential component of building a model organization. It would require interest, compassion, and concern for the leader and it would demand self-sacrifice, wisdom, tough-mindedness, and discipline (Spears and Lawrence, 2004).

7. CONCLUSION

Our results highlighted the importance of caring leadership, the concern of the organization for feelings of their employees and sacrificing attitude of the leader in developing sacrificing attitude in subordinates, enhancing the commitment of employees to the organization and thereby enhancing the performance of the organization.

The current study had added value to the study of caring leadership by attempting to evaluate the contribution of caring leadership in commercial organizations of Pakistan. The results showed that the relative contribution of caring leadership and commitment of employees to the organization were necessary but not sufficient conditions to gain insight into the essence of better performance of the organization.

The primary objective of this study was to examine the impact of caring leadership on the commitment of employees to the organization and performance of the organization. The research also examined the impact of concern of the organization for feelings of their employees on the commitment of employees to the organization, impact of commitment of employees on the performance of the organization and impact of sacrificing attitude of the supervisor on sacrificing attitude of the subordinate.

Our results had implications at the firm level which showed that concern of organization for feelings of their employees had a limited impact on the commitment of employees to the organization. However, caring leadership had a significant positive impact on the commitment of employees to the organization and performance of the organization. A direct significant relationship was found between the commitment of employees to the organization and performance of the organization and a direct significant relationship was found between sacrificing attitude of supervisor and sacrificing attitude of a subordinate, results were in line with the previous literature.

Although results were promising, we had interpreted them with caution until future research would be conducted with different samples and additional measures of performance of the organization, commitment of employees to the organization, and sacrificing attitude of employees.

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Question	Caring Leadership Score	Employees Commitment to the Organization	Performance of the Organization
Performance of the Organization	.229*	-	-
Employees Commitment to the Organization	.208*	-	.238*
Organization's Care for Feelings	-	.123	-

9. Tables and Graphs

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

Table 1: Correlations between Performance of the Organization, Caring Leadership Score and Employees Commitment to the Organization

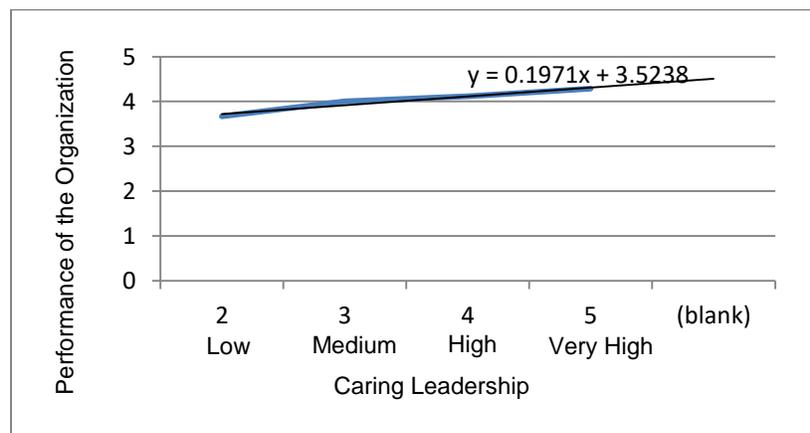


Figure 1. Exploring the relationship between Organizations Caring Leadership Score and Overall performance of the organization

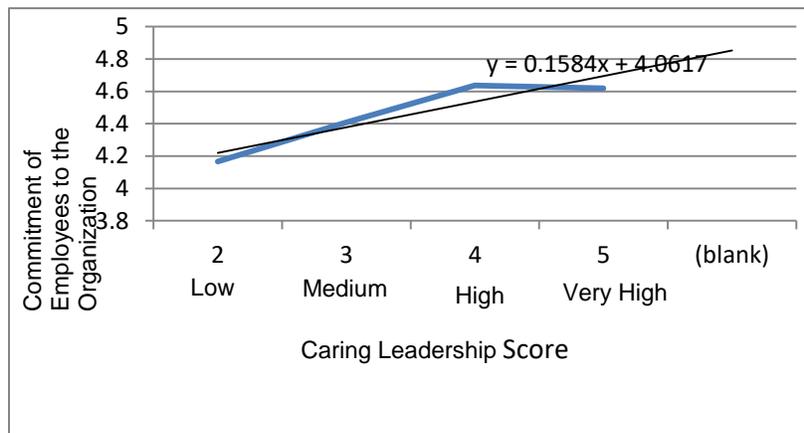


Figure 2. Exploring the relationship between Caring Leadership Score in an Organization and the Commitment of Employees towards the Organization

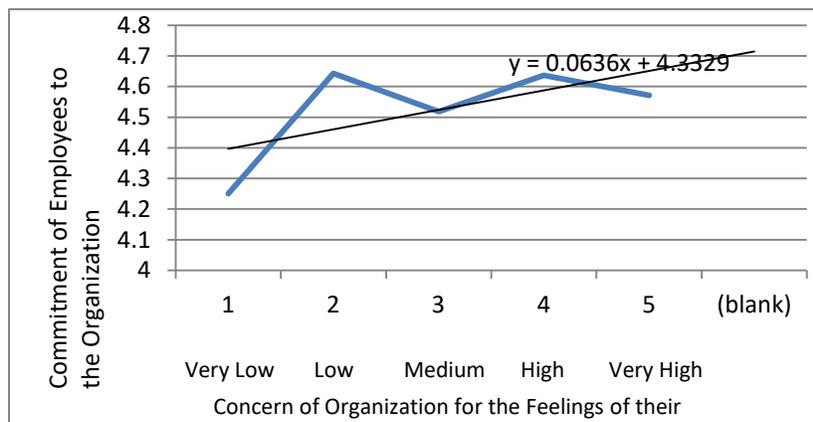


Figure 3. Exploring the relationship between Concern of Organization for the Feelings of their Employees and the Commitment of Employees to the Organization

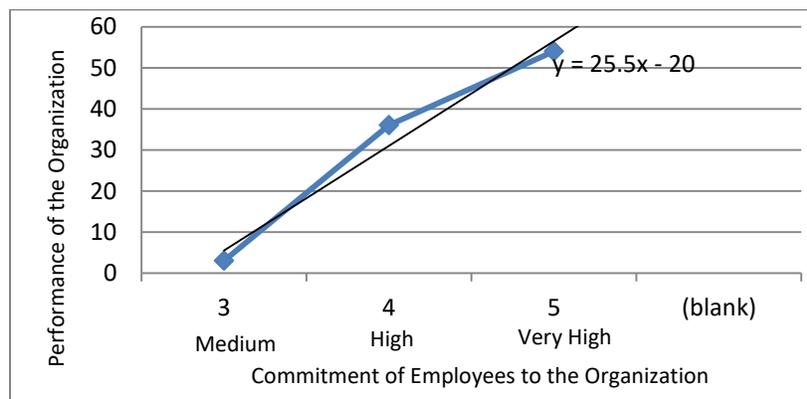


Figure 4. Exploring the relationship between the Commitment of Employees to the Organization and Performance of the Organization

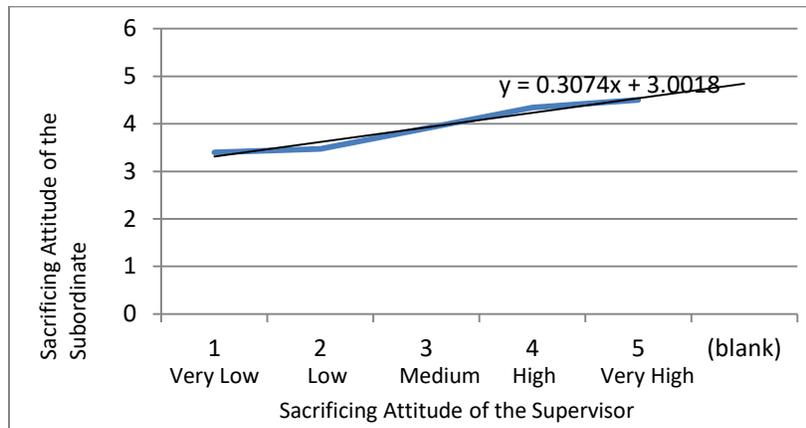


Figure 5. Exploring the relationship between the Sacrificing Attitude of the Supervisor and the Sacrificing Attitude of the Subordinate