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# The Impact of Transformational Leadership Style on Crisis Management in Yemen Organizations

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## Abstract

This study aims to examine the impact of transformational leadership style on crisis management and to examine the moderating effect of manager's crisis experience on the relationship between transformational leadership style and crisis management in Yemen organizations. Data was collected from 239 large private organizations in Yemen, through the self-administered questionnaire procedure. Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) was employed in the data analysis. The result indicates that transformational leadership style has a significant positive influence on crisis management. The result also reveals that the manager's crisis experience moderate the relationship between the transformational leadership style and crisis management. In practical terms, the results of the current study offer several implications for managers regarding the importance role of the factors enhancing crisis management in Yemen organizations. Moreover, leader with a prior crisis experience is more capable to handle the crisis situation. The limitation of the current study and the recommendation for the future study are highlighted.

**Keywords:** Crisis Management, Manager's Crisis Experience, Transformational leadership

## Introduction

Crisis is an unexpected, dramatic, and unprecedented event that forces an organization into chaos and may destroy the organization (Prewitt, Weil, & McClure, 2011). However, the 2011 crisis in Yemen adversely impacted the employment, large, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), product and food prices and basic services in public and private organizations in Yemen. It is estimated that 15 percent of all private-sector workers and 30 - 40 percent of factory workers lost their jobs, while the salary of most employees was reduced by around 20 percent and unpaid leave was extended by up to six months (UNDP, 2013). In such circumstance, crisis management is essential to minimize economic losses and to ensure companies' survival (Sfakianaki, Iliadis, & Zafeiris, 2015). Effective crisis management can minimize the impact of the crisis on organizations (Spillan, Parnell, & de Mayolo, 2011). A review of the previous literature has revealed that in times of crisis, effective leaders have taken crucial actions to reduce the concerns of the organization members and inform them

how the crisis could affect them (Yukl, 2010). DuBrin (2013) stressed that to mitigate the consequences of the crisis, transformational leadership is the best choice, and it works perfectly in the immediate and post-crisis stages. Likewise, in a crisis situation, transformational leadership has been identified by researchers as the most comprehensive and effective approach. Transformational leadership style has been extensively and intensely studied, whereas transformational leadership style during the crisis still needs to be explored (Alkhawlani, Bin Bohari, Haderi, Ahmed, & Rahim, 2016; Alkhawlani, Bin Bohari, & Shamsuddin, 2019). Research on the importance of the transformational leadership during a crisis situation, are still scant, according to Pillai (2013), who advocated that there is still much to learn about the effectiveness of transformational leadership across cultures during a crisis situation. However, crisis experience enhances the crisis leader's sense-making abilities of the situation, and their learned lessons contribute to a more confident. Thus, manager's prior experience in a crisis situation assist to understand approach of crisis readiness (Cronin, 2015). Many studies mentioned that leader experience of a crisis makes the organization to be better prepared for future crises (Kovoor-Misara, 1996; Rousaki and Alcott, 2006).

According to the discussion above, there is a lack of empirical studies that have investigated the important factors affect crisis management, especially during crisis confrontation, such as leadership style and the role of manager's crisis experience. The gap is excited and justifies the need for empirical studies to be conducted while the Yemen organizations are experienced the crisis. Therefore, this study aimed to examine the impact of transformational leadership style on crisis management and to examine the moderating effect of manager's crisis experience on the relationship between transformational leadership style and crisis management in Yemen organizations.

## Literature Review

### Transformational leadership

It is a fact that crisis and leadership are inextricably related. Every follower looks up to the leaders during a crisis situation and expects them to do something (Zhang, Jia, & Gu, 2012). In a crisis situation, transformational leadership can lead the organization towards a better future by encouraging the organization's members to express their ideas on how to cope with the crisis and work collaboratively, to either manage or avoid crisis situations (Harwati, 2013). Transformational leadership can be defined according to Bass and Avolio (1994) as "a set of interrelated behaviors, including idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individual consideration" (Dust, Resick, and Mawritz, 2014). The model of transformational leadership was developed by Bass and Avolio (1994), including four primary factors: "idealized influence, individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation and inspirational motivation". Transformational leadership components are explained in details as follow.

- Idealized influence: Instilling pride and respect for the leader; shares a vision and sense of mission. Representation of a trustworthy leader and acts as a role model for the follower.
- Individualized consideration: Leaders treat each subordinate differently according to his or her particular needs and capabilities.

- Intellectual stimulation: Leaders “stimulate followers’ efforts to be innovative and creative by questioning assumptions, reframing problems, and approaching old situations in new ways”.
- Inspirational motivation: Leaders “behave in ways that motivate and inspire those around them by providing meaning and challenge to their followers’ work”.

Source: Rowold and Heinitz (2007)

Transformational leadership has been studied extensively; several studies have reported that the transformational leadership style has been associated with numerous variables, such as organizational learning (Mirkamali, Thani, & Alami, 2011); employee effectiveness (Srithongrun, 2011); creative flexibility (Sharma, Nagar, & Pathak, 2012); communication competency (Çetin, Karabay, & Efe, 2012); leadership effectiveness (Zhang *et al.*, 2012); and employees’ job satisfaction (Munir, Rahman, Malik, & Ma’amor, 2012). Only limited empirical studies have focused on the relationship between transformational leadership and crisis management, such as Hasan and Rjoub (2017), who examined the association between leadership styles and crisis management in the Ministry of Planning in Erbil, Iraq; the findings reveal that transformational leaders can predict crisis management. Similarly, Sarkar and Ray (2015) examined the role of transformational leadership style in crisis management, targeting the correctional officers of the West Bengal organizations and found that transformational leadership style has a significant association with crisis management. In addition, previous research has mentioned the requirement for more research on the association between transformational leadership and crisis management ( Alkhawlani, *et al.*, 2019; Cho & Tseng, 2009; Pillai, 2013; Zhang *et al.*, 2012). Thus, responding to the recommendation of the previous research, this study hypothesized that:

**H1:** There is a positive relationship between transformational leadership and crisis management.

### **Manager’s Crisis Experience**

Crisis experience can be defined as knowledge and the skills that individual or organization gained, in particular, situation, specifically, during crisis situation (Alkhawlani, *et al.*, 2019). In literature, only very few studies regarding crisis experience such as Reynolds (2009) found a positive relationship between crisis experience and effective communication but no relationship between crisis experience and transformational leader behavior. In addition, Carmeli and Schaubroeck (2008) assumed that crisis experience would be positively associated with crisis-preparedness, but the results of the study didn’t support the hypothesis. A further study conducted by Guth (1995) argued that there is a relationship between organizational size and crisis experience. Cronin and Parry (2014) explained that leadership had prior crisis experience is more confidence, and it being reflective in their decision making. Moreover, Rousaki and Alcott (2006) argued that prior experience of the crisis is associated with increasing crisis readiness. In the same line, Schwarz and Pforr (2011) confirmed the association between crisis experience and crisis preparedness. As discussed above all studies mentioned the important role of crisis experience in enhancing crisis management, but no study examines categorical variable manager’s crisis experience as moderator effect in relationship between transformational leadership, and crisis management. Therefore, this study hypothesized that:

**H2:** There is a positive relationship between manager's crisis experience and crisis management.

**H3:** Manager's crisis experience moderates the relationship between transformational leadership style and crisis management.

### **Crisis management**

Crisis has a harmful result on the organization stability that leads to the serious question, whether or not organizations would be able to continue after crisis situation (Seeger, Ulmer, Novak, & Sellnow, 2005). Therefore, crisis management has been established to efficiently and effectively prevent and reduce the negative consequences of the crisis situation. Crisis management has been extensively studied during the past three decades and defined by many different authors. There is no single definition that is commonly agreed upon the term of crisis management (Coombs, 2007). Santana (2004) defined crisis-management as, "an ongoing integrated and comprehensive effort that organizations effectively put into place in an attempt to first and foremost understand and prevent crisis and to effectively manage those that occur, taking into account in each and every step of their planning and training activities the interest of their stakeholders. Numerous models of crisis management have been developed by researchers, such as Coombs (2007); Cronstedt (2002); Fink (1986); Jaques (2007); Loosemore and Teo (2000); Myers (1993); Smith (1990). Mitroff, Pauchant, and Shrivastava (1988); Mitroff, Shrivastava, and Udvardia (1987) developed a crisis management model, which includes five mechanisms that need to be in place: "signal detection; prevention/preparation; damage containment (limitation); recovery and learning". This model represents the holistic crisis life cycle that stimulates action throughout the crisis, and not only during the pre-crisis or post-crisis period, like other models. However, previous studies have identified the factors influencing crisis management, such as long-term strategy, internal and external strategic orientation and crisis readiness (Mostafa, Sheaff, Morris, and Ingham (2004); organization size, job level crisis experience and crisis readiness (Rousaki and Alcott (2006); management experience and crisis readiness (Parnell, Koseoglu, and Spillan (2010); organizational type, organization size, organization age and crisis preparedness (Ritchie, Bentley, Koruth, and Wang (2011); and strategy innovation, strategy on low costs and crisis readiness (Spillan *et al.*, 2011). Accordingly, no study accommodates transformational leadership, manager's crisis experience and crisis-management stages. Therefore, this study examined the effect of those factors on crisis management.

### **Methodology**

The present paper used the quantitative method and was conducted in Yemen. The target population is large private organizations that registered under the Ministry of Industry and Trade in Yemen. The top management is representative of the population of the current study. These respondents met the requirements of the study by providing valid and accurate views of their organization. The Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table was used for determining the sample size of the present study, which is 281 large private organizations in Yemen. Simple random sampling was used to select the respondents. Out of the 281, only 239 questionnaires were returned. The questionnaire was adapted from previous studies (Alkhawlan, *et al.*, 2016; Sadeghi and Pihie, 2012). The instrument had been validated by earlier researchers and deemed to be ideal for the current study. A five-point Likert scale was used to measure the two variables, namely transformational leadership and crisis management. The manager's

crisis experience was examined as a categorical variable. A cover letter attached to each questionnaire explained the objective of the survey and assured the respondents of the confidentiality of their responses.

## Results

The PLS-SEM (Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modeling) approach was employed in data analysis in this study. Hair, Hult, Ringle, and Sarstedt (2017) recommended that PLS analysis involves two stages for reporting the results: the assessment of the measurement model in the first stage; and the assessment of the structural model in the second stage.

### Assessment of Measurement Model

According to Hair *et al.* (2017), the key criteria used to evaluate the measurement model are internal consistency reliability, convergent and discriminant validity. To evaluate the convergent validity of reflective constructs, researchers consider the outer loadings of the indicators and the average variance extracted (AVE). The recommended values for the outer loadings, according to Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, and Tatham (2006), are  $\geq 0.5$ , and preferably  $\geq 0.70$ ., the average variance extracted (AVE) should be  $> 0.5$ , and the composite reliability (CR) should be  $> 0.7$ . The researcher conceptualized transformational leadership style and crisis management as second-order constructs, which is consistent with theoretical concept and supported by Hair, Hult, Ringle, and Sarstedt (2014), who recommended utilizing second-order construct to reduce the number of relationships in the model. Thus, the method suggested according to Hair *et al.* (2017) in PLS-SEM is the repeated indicator approach for the second-order construct. Table 4.1 shows the results of convergent validity which exceeds the recommended values and representative sufficient convergent validity.

Table 4.1  
*Convergent Validity First & second Order*

<b>Constructs</b>							
Second Order Construct	First Order Constructs	Item	Loadings	AVE	CR		
<b>TFLS</b>		<b>TFLII</b>	0.792	0.604	0.858		
		<b>TFLIM</b>	0.628				
		<b>TFLIS</b>	0.821				
		<b>TFLIC</b>	0.849				
	TFLII	TFLIIA3	0.608	0.670	0.909		
		TFLIIA4	0.872				
		TFLIIB5	0.867				
		TFLIIB6	0.885				
		TFLIIB7	0.829				
		TFLIM10	0.904			0.798	0.940
		TFLIM11	0.913				
	TFLIS	TFLIM12	0.911	0.825	0.950		
		TFLIM9	0.843				
		TFLIS13	0.923				
		TFLIS14	0.915				
	TFLIC	TFLIS15	0.933	0.836	0.953		
		TFLIS16	0.861				
		TFLIC17	0.925				
		TFLIC18	0.914				
		TFLIC19	0.933				
<b>CM</b>		TFLIC20	0.884	0.583	0.874		
		<b>CMSD</b>	0.751				
		<b>CMPP</b>	0.852				
		<b>CMDC</b>	0.681				
	CMSD	<b>CMBR</b>	0.775	0.751	0.923		
		<b>CMLR</b>	0.749				
		CMSD1	0.901				
		CMSD2	0.900				
		CMSD4	0.879				
	CMPP	CMSD5	0.782	0.753	0.955		
		CMPP10	0.879				
		CMPP11	0.885				
		CMPP12	0.859				
		CMPP13	0.812				
		CMPP7	0.858				
		CMPP8	0.877				
	CMDC	CMPP9	0.902	0.763	0.951		
		CMDC15	0.848				
		CMDC16	0.869				
		CMDC17	0.878				
CMDC18		0.900					
CMDC19		0.886					
CMDC20		0.860					
CMBR	CMDC22	0.908	0.805	0.943			
	CMBR23	0.899					
	CMBR24	0.889					
	CMBR25	0.892					
	CMLR26	0.913			0.818	0.947	
CMLR27	0.881						
CMLR28	0.920						
CMDC29	0.904						

**Notes:** CM=crisis management (CMSD=signal detection, CMPP= preparation & prevention, CMBR = Business recovery, CMDC= Damage containment, CMLR= Learning); TFLS= transformational leadership (TFLSIC= Individualized consideration, TFLSII= Idealized

influence, TFLSIM = Inspirational motivation, TFLSIS= Intellectual stimulation, AVE = Average Variance Extracted CR = Composite Reliability

The second criteria to examine the measurement model is discriminant validity. There are several methods to calculate discriminant validity; one of the highly recommended methods is related to the Fornell and Larcker (1981) criterion. It compares the square root of the AVE values with the latent variable correlations. Specifically, the square root of each construct's AVE should be greater than its highest correlation with any other construct. This criterion is considered as a more conservative method to assess discriminant validity (Hair *et al.*, 2014). Table 4.2 shows the results of the Fornell-Larcker criterion, which achieved the required criteria.

Table 4.2  
*Fornell-Larcker Criterion for second-order constructs*

	CM	TFL
CM	<b>0.764</b>	
TFLS	0.375	<b>0.777</b>

Notes, TFLS= transformational leadership style, and CM=crisis management

#### Assessment of PLS-SEM Model Results

To assess the structural model, Hair *et al.* (2017); Valérie (2012), recommended that the primary evaluation criteria for PLS-SEM results are the coefficients of determination ( $R^2$  values) as well as the size and significance of the path coefficients. The  $f^2$  effect sizes, predictive relevance ( $Q^2$ ), and the  $q^2$  effect sizes give additional insights into the quality of the PLS path model estimations, followed by the mediating effect. However, as the endogenous variable constructed as second-order, Ringle, Sarstedt, and Straub (2012) recommend to follow the two-stage approach instead of repeated indicator approach during the assessment of the structural model because if the second-order variable is used as an endogenous construct, almost all of its variance is explained by its indicators. The result of bootstrapping illustrated in Table 4.3 and Figure 4.1.

Table 4.3  
*Results of Hypotheses Testing*

Hyp	Relationship	Beta	SE	T-value	P-value	Findings
H1	TFLS -> CM	0.132	0.07	5.303	0.03	Supported
H2	MCE -> CM	0.38	0.07	1.887	0.00	Supported

Notes, TFLS= transformational leadership style, MCE= Manager's Crisis Experience and CM=crisis management



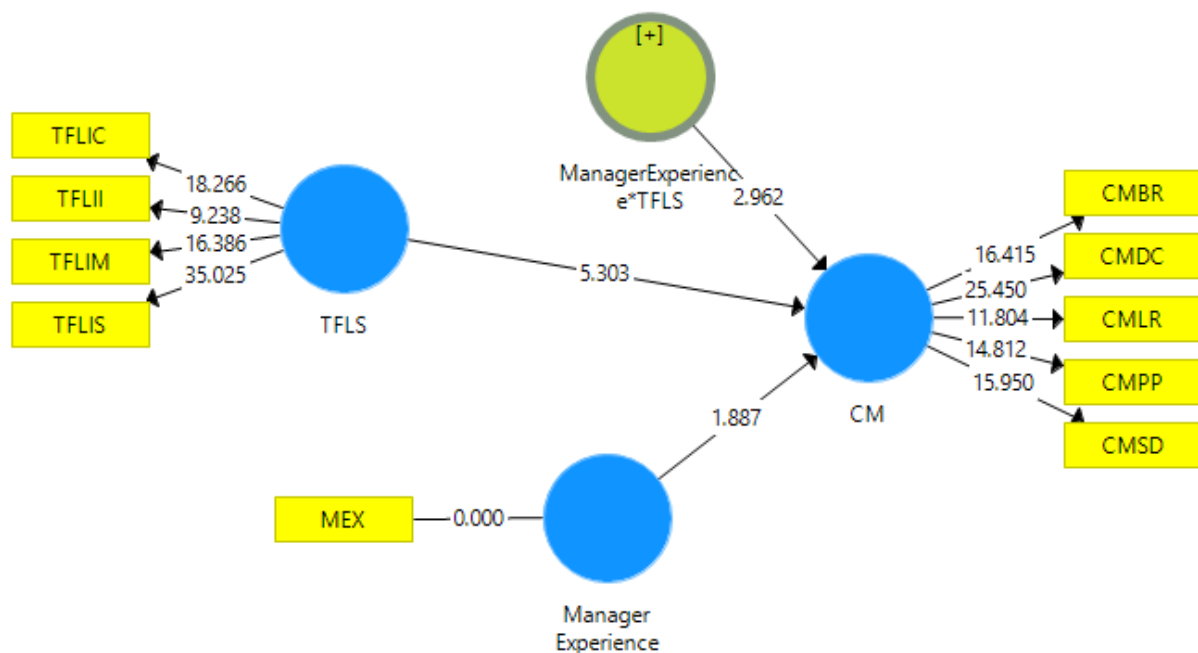


Figure 4.1

The structural model with moderator

Table 4.3 shows the results of hypotheses testing. Specifically, the result of hypothesis one (H1) shows that transformational leadership style is positively related to crisis management ( $\beta = 0.132$ ,  $T = 5.303$ ,  $P = 0.03$ ). Therefore, hypothesis one (H1) is supported. The result of hypothesis two (H2) indicates a significant positive relationship between manager’s crisis experience and crisis management ( $\beta = 0.38$ ,  $T = 1.887$ ,  $P = 0.000$ ). Therefore, hypothesis two (H2) is also supported.

Table 4.4.

*Moderator result*

Hyp	Relationship	Beta	SE	T-value	P-value	Findings
H3	ManagerExperience*TFLS -> CM	0.182	0.061	2.962	0.002	Supported

Notes, TFLS= transformational leadership style, MCE= Manager Crisis Experience and CM=crisis management

Next, we tested the moderation effect of manger’s crisis experience in the relationship between transformational leadership and crisis management by conducting the bootstrapping procedure, as suggested by Hair, Black, and Babin (2010). The results of hypothesis three (3) illustrated in Figure 4.1 and Table 4.4. The finding indicated the existing of the positive moderating effect of manager’s crisis experience on the relationship between

transformational leadership and crisis management, with the result of ( $\beta = 0.182$ ,  $P = 0.002$ ,  $T = 2.962$ ). Therefore, hypothesis three(H3) is supported as well.

## **Discussion & Conclusion**

### **Discussion**

This study aims to examine the impact of transformational leadership style on crisis management and to examine the moderating effect of manager's crisis experience on the relationship between transformational leadership style and crisis management in Yemen organizations. The result in Table 4.3 explained that for every unit increase in transformational leadership, there is an expected increase of 0.132 in crisis management. Further, transformational leadership style as idealized influence, consider the leaders to become a role model for the followers, whether they exhibit certain personal characteristics or "charisma" often seen as being high on morality, trust, integrity, honesty and purpose. Also, leaders tend to be admired, respected and trusted; so, followers determine and follow their leader's instructions. This result is consistent with previous studies, such as Alkhawlan, *et al.* (2019); Cho and Tseng (2009); Hasan and Rjoub (2017); Zhang *et al.* (2012).

The second research objective is to determine the relationship between manager's crisis experience and crisis management which is confirmed by the result in Table 4.3 ( $\beta = 0.38$ ,  $T$ -value = 1.887), which indicated a significant positive relationship. This finding is consistent with the previous studies, such as Cronin (2015); and Schwarz & Pforr (2011). Also, supported by many studies which mentioned that manager with prior crisis experience is able to handle the crisis in a proper way (Kovoor-Misra, 1996; Rousaki and Alcott's, 2006).

The third research objective of this study is considered as one of the main contributions of the current study, which is to examine moderating effect of manager's crisis experience on the relationship between transformational leadership and crisis management. According to the result shown in Table 4.4, manager's crisis experience enhances the relationship between transformational leadership and crisis management. The result of the study emphasizes that the moderating effect of crisis experiences is existed and would improve the handling of the crisis and lead to better control and reducing the crisis consequences.

### **Limitations**

The limitation of the current study related to the generalizability; the findings of this study cannot be generalized to a wider context across cultures of other countries since the data collected for this study is limited to Yemeni large private organizations. Different cultures and different educational environments may furnish different impacts of transformational leadership style on crisis management. Future research is recommended to focus on the mediating and moderating roles of the factors that influence crisis management during a crisis situation.

### **Conclusion**

The current study reveals that transformational leadership is important factors that can enhance crisis management during the confrontation of the crisis situation. In addition, the moderating effect of manager's crisis experience approved to enhance the relationship between transformational leadership and crisis management, which could expand the body of knowledge in the crisis management field. Therefore, this study has achieved its objectives,

and it is important for the leaders in the large private organizations in Yemen to employ the results of this study in order to respond more effectively and efficiently to the crisis.

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