

AUTHENTIC LEADERSHIP STYLE AND ACADEMIA'S CREATIVITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS: INTRINSIC MOTIVATION AND MOOD AS MEDIATORS

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Abstract

Using multisource data of 302 paired responses (supervisor-employee dyads), this study examined the effect of Authentic Leadership Style (ALS) on academia's creativity with mediating role of their intrinsic motivation and mood in higher education institutions (HEIs) of Pakistan. Heads of departments (HoDs) in HEIs were asked to report their leadership style and creativity of their academic staff, whereas academia rated their intrinsic motivation and mood at work. ALS was regressed with creativity, intrinsic motivation and mood of academia to measure the direct relationships, whereas mediations were tested using bootstrapping technique. A strong influence of ALS on academic staff's creativity, their intrinsic motivation and mood were found. Additionally, a partial mediating role of intrinsic motivation and mood was found between ALS and creativity of academic staff.

Keywords: Authentic Leadership Style, creativity, intrinsic motivation, mood of employees, Higher Education Institutions.

1. Introduction

Due to the rapid technological developments and changing nature of business processes, organizational environment in general and human resource in particular are more turbulent now than ever. As a result, organizations need to be more creative to survive, grow and lead (Jung *et al.*, 2003). Creativity is a crucial factor that has the potential of not only tackling such challenges but it also serves as a leading force for knowledge development and uplifting the social and economic development (European University Association, 2007).

Zhou and Shalley (2008) explained creativity as the ideas related to products, services, procedures and processes that are both novel and useful for organizations (Shalley *et al.*, 2004). The notion of creativity received considerable attention in the past decade from different scholars, academics and practitioners (e.g., Shalley *et al.*, 2004; Isaksen and Akkermans, 2011; Cerne *et al.*, 2013) and hence, substantial evidence suggests that creativity significantly contributes to innovation and other organizational outcomes (Amabile, 1996). The same demand for creativity applies to higher education institutions (HEIs). However, very little focus has been given to this particular sector in the past studies, particularly to its employees' (i.e., teachers and researchers) creativity (European University Association, 2007).

As HEIs are the main players in developing the human resource of a country, they have a central responsibility of nurturing the learners to understand their potential and creativity (Jackson, 2008; Berkovich, 2014). For fulfilling this task, the 'teachers and researchers' (henceforth academia) also need to be creative, to cope with the challenges and expectations faced by HEIs. The focus on the creativity of the academia is thus of particular importance, because it is this group of people, whose efforts in the form of teaching and research, impact every spectrum of society. Due to these multidimensional perspectives and expectations from HEIs, leadership style of their managers (i.e., heads of departments at all levels) becomes critical (Berkovich, 2014). Evidence from research on other sectors suggests that different contextual and personal factors (e.g., motivation, personality, cognitive styles, demographic variables and leadership styles, etc.) influence the creativity of employees (Amabile, 1996; Isaksen and Akkermans, 2011; Cerne *et al.*, 2013).

However, the findings of these studies have variations (Zhou, 2003; Alrifi, 2012), particularly with regards to leadership styles. For example, one study conducted by Frese *et al.* (1999) suggested that due to supervisor's encouragement, employees tend to be more creative. Whereas George and Zhou (2001) argued that supervisor's close monitoring is negatively associated with employees' creativity. In another study, Gumusluoglu and Ilsev (2009) showed a positive relationship between transformational leadership and employees' creativity. A closer look reveals that these studies have focused on different leadership styles, however there is paucity in research on Authentic Leadership Style (ALS) (Luthans and Avolio, 2003; Walumbwa *et al.*, 2008), which is a relatively newly developed and less researched style especially in the context of HEIs and their academia's creativity (Rego *et al.*, 2012, 2014).

Authentic leaders, through their deliberate attempts in the HEIs, facilitate and encourage such an environment which motivates employees intrinsically to bring out the best of them in terms of their creative behavior (Gumusluoglu and Ilsev, 2009). The notion of intrinsic motivation showed a partial mediation between transformational leadership and creativity in the past researches in other sectors (i.e., Shin and Zhou, 2003; Gumusluoglu and Ilsev, 2009). However, Shalley and Perry-Smith (2001) in their study also could not prove any significant mediation of intrinsic motivation. Shalley *et al.* (2004) suggested that one of the reasons of such weak mediation can be other contextual factors in play such as the mood of the employees. Moods are pervasive states which are temporary and can be influenced by contextual factors (George and Brief, 1992) such as leadership. We also think in similar lines and propose a model where we argue that the mood of employees and their intrinsic motivation as suggested by Shalley *et al.* (2004) are both important mediators between ALS and employees' creativity, and need to be studied together, which will hopefully fill the above mentioned void. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to fill this void by examining the effect of ALS on creativity of academia with mediating role of intrinsic motivation and mood in HEIs.

2. Conceptual framework and hypotheses

2.1. Authentic Leadership Style (ALS) in HEIs

Authentic leadership is defined by Walumbwa *et al.* (2008) as 'a pattern of leader behavior that draws upon and promotes both positive psychological capacities and a positive ethical climate, to foster greater self-awareness, an internalized moral perspective, balanced processing of information, and relational transparency on the part of leaders working with followers, fostering positive self-development' (Walumbwa *et al.*, 2008, p. 94). Based on this definition, authentic leadership style is a four-dimensional concept: self-awareness, relational transparency, internalized moral perspective and balanced processing.

Self-awareness means to know one's own self, acknowledge and understand your strengths and weaknesses, attitude, mental capacity, and values and beliefs (Avolio and Gardner, 2005). Relational transparency means to be one's real self, genuine and not fake to himself as well as towards the team members by sharing true, relevant and timely information including one's true feelings and considerations (Kernis, 2003). Internalized moral perspective means that leaders must have strong moral values which cannot be tilted by peer pressure and other environmental factors (Avolio and Gardner, 2005). The leaders must adhere to such values which are only based on high standard of morality and which arise from one's own inner conscious (Ryan and Deci, 2002). Finally, balanced processing means to evaluate a situation from all the angles before arriving at any conclusion while minimizing personal liking and disliking (Gardner *et al.*, 2005). This also means that leaders must be open to suggestions from other employees and key stakeholders while refraining from rigidity along with

a flexible attitude which promote creativity and innovation (Isaksen and Akkermans, 2011; Cerne *et al.*, 2013).

Most of the literature around ALS argues that leader's actions and words must not contradict, and they should demonstrate what they say (Gardner *et al.*, 2005; Walumbwa *et al.*, 2008). Such a behavior is most needed in HEIs as leaders of these institutes have a key role in building the nation by developing its human resource (Opatokun *et al.*, 2013). Since authentic leaders exhibit high moral standards, are aware of one's own self, open and transparent in their dealings, and have a balanced approach for taking key decisions, they will give priority to their academia and institutions' needs over their personal needs. Thus, by behaving ethically, leaders will improve relationship with the academia which will also improve their sense of psychological safety and eccentric idea generation (Avolio *et al.*, 2004; Zhang and Bartol, 2010; Opatokun *et al.*, 2013).

2.2. Authentic Leadership Style and academia's creativity

Today, it is a known fact that the focus of organizations is now shifting from a traditional resource based view to a more knowledge based view. Therefore, the creativity of employees must be augmented (Zhou and Ren, 2011) to be able to gain a competitive advantage. Particularly for HEIs, the role of creativity is at the center for making these institutions more learning organizations (European University Association, 2006). To better achieve this purpose, the leaders and managers (HoDs) need to create a positive work environment. Authentic leaders focus on the positive behaviors of the subordinates, are more transparent in their dealings and promote a supportive work environment (Peterson *et al.*, 2012). Therefore, these behaviors of leaders will improve the employees' positive attitude towards work with improved self-efficacy and autonomy. Consequently, there are more chances of creativity in employees with high self-efficacy (Gumusluoglu and Ilsev, 2009). Similarly, the theory of self-determination (Deci, 1971) also emphasized that the improved sense of autonomy will lead academia to a more creative behavior at work as they will psychologically feel safe to share new ideas and solutions to the problems with their Heads of departments (HoDs).

It is further argued that relational transparency, which is a component of ALS, promotes creativity through open expression of ideas, transparent processes and an open communication system. This way, a strong bond between the HoDs and academia will be developed, and they will then openly share their ideas and feelings with the HoDs (Muceldili *et al.*, 2013). Similarly, authentic leaders are self-confident people, because they know their strengths and weaknesses, values and principles, etc. (Walumbwa *et al.*, 2008), therefore, such leaders with improved self-confidence will also enhance academia's self-confidence by following their leaders. As a result, academia will not hesitate to look into issues from a different perspective to bring more out of the box solutions to the problems, thus enhancing their creativity (Muceldili *et al.*, 2013). In addition, leaders with more self-awareness will know their weakness-

es which they will strive to overcome by learning and development. The theory of self-determination (Deci, 1971) also explains this phenomenon in similar lines and suggests that if leaders believe in learning and development, they will also encourage and promote such atmosphere where learning and development will flourish, thus further improves employees' creativity as such a supportive environment will compel employees to share new ideas and test and learn new things (Kernis, 2003), improve optimism (Avolio and Gardner, 2005), sense of autonomy (Ryan and Deci, 2000), and more creative behavior. Therefore we propose that:

H1: Authentic leadership style of HoDs will positively influence the creativity of academia.

2.3. Authentic Leadership Style, intrinsic motivation and creativity

Motivation is a characteristic which compels individuals to do some work (Deci and Ryan, 1985). The theory of self-determination by Deci and Ryan (1985) conceptualized motivation into three main dimensions; one of them is the intrinsic motivation. If an employee involves himself in some activity on volunteer basis and solely for the purpose of joy and excitement, he is said to be intrinsically motivated (Ryan and Deci, 2000). Intrinsic motivation is considered to be an important factor of creativity (Amabile *et al.*, 1986) which is also proved in many past studies (Shalley *et al.*, 2000; Zhang and Bartol, 2010). The intrinsically motivated employee will be more attached and focused on his work, thus, prompting creative behavior (Gumusluoglu and Ilsev, 2009).

The notion of autonomy is an important need for intrinsic motivation (Deci, 1971). Since authentic leaders provide and facilitate a supporting work environment where new ideas are encouraged, criticisms are taken positively, information flows transparently, and a trusting environment is built; therefore, enhancing the sense of autonomy of their followers (i.e., academia). As a result, academia will feel more confident, secure, intrinsically motivated, and thus will feel free to try new experiments (Fraleigh and Shaver, 1998). Authentic leaders in HEIs lead by example; they focus on the positive sides of academia and encourage them to develop these positive skills further, thus improving a positive relationship with employees (Valentine *et al.*, 2011). This further impacts the intrinsic motivation of academia, and as a result they feel joy and excitement in bringing out of the box solutions to the problems, thus they become more creative. Therefore:

H2a: Authentic Leadership Style of HoDs will positively influence academia's intrinsic motivation.

H2b: Intrinsic motivation will mediate between Authentic Leadership Style of HoDs in HEIs and creativity of academia.

2.4. Authentic Leadership Style, moods of academia and creativity

Mood is an important part of human life which affects people's behavior in several ways. Mood is often defined as unintentional or diffused emotional condition which is considered durable but moderated (Otto *et al.*, 2000). Previous researches suggested

two dimensions of mood: positive and negative (Burke *et al.*, 1989). It is argued that mood of academia affect their cognitive abilities. Positive mood enhances memory and make academia happy, and as suggested by Levine and Burgess (1997) that happiness perks up recall. Therefore, it is proposed that if academia is happy at work, they tend to be in good mood with improved cognitive ability, thus more creative. O'Malley (2000) also argued in similar lines and suggested that academia in good mood will work harder as compared to those who are unhappy and in a bad mood.

The role of leaders or HoDs has become more important to lead by example and to provide such a working environment which inspire and affect academia's mood positively. Authentic leaders will provide such an environment where their main focus will be on the positive behaviors of academia (Gardner *et al.*, 2005), and their belief about the balanced processing will balance the work and life demands of the academia. The academia will feel a sense of ownership and relatedness with their institutions as also explained by the theory of self-determination (Deci, 1971). For academia to be stress free, happy and in a good mood, the balance between their personal lives and job demands is imperative (Benton, 1995). Authentic leaders also promote and encourage ethical work environment, transparent process and fair treatment for all (Avolio and Gardner, 2005; Berkovich, 2014). Thus, the academia's sense of dignity will also be enhanced because they will not feel deceived or treated unfairly. This will further make them comfortable and in a good mood at work. Isen (1998) suggested that employees (academia) in a good mood will be able to recognize problems more effectively; they will take broader perspective into account; their minds will get sharper and thus will be able to easily solve complex problems by making unseen connections between diverse and scattered information; hence, resulting in high creativity. Therefore:

H3a: Authentic leadership style of HoDs in HEIs will positively influence the mood of academia.

H3b: Positive moods of academia will mediate between authentic leadership style of HoDs in HEIs and the creativity of academia.

A conceptual framework of this research is given in Figure 1.

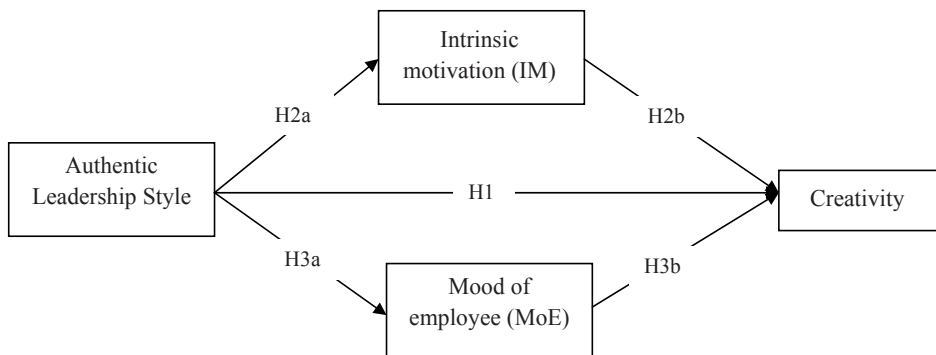


Figure 1: Conceptual framework

3. Methodology

A self-administered questionnaire was used to collect data for this study. This method gives the respondents the opportunity to answer the queries on the spot. All of the respondents participated voluntarily, and complete anonymity was assured to them. The questionnaire was divided into two subparts: the first part, to be filled by employees, comprised of statements for measuring their intrinsic motivation (Ryan and Deci, 2000) and mood (Moll, 2007); whereas, the second part, to be filled by the HoDs, comprised of statements for measuring ALS (Wulambwa *et al.*, 2008) and creativity of employees (Oldham and Cummings, 1996). The details of these scales are given in the later parts.

3.1. Sample

The target population was the academic staff of different public sector HEIs in Federal constituency of Pakistan. A convenient sampling technique was adopted because of the unknown schedule of different academia in different institutions. We asked the heads of departments to self-rate the ALS questionnaires (Wulambwa *et al.*, 2008) as they will be in a better position to know whether they fake things or behave realistically. They will also be able to know their strengths and weaknesses. We also asked the HoDs to rate the creativity of different academic staff who participated in this survey. The purpose of this technique was to avoid the common method bias and bring more rigor to the methodology. We asked HoDs to rate the creativity of each academic staff under his/her command and write their staff IDs and institutions' name on their respective questionnaires for the purpose of identification. Each HoD had around 12 to 15 academic staff under his command. On the other hand, academic staff was asked to rate the intrinsic motivation and mood sections of the questionnaire and write their IDs and names of institutions. Both parts of the questionnaire (filled by HoDs and academics) were matched according to the institutions' names and their IDs. Only those questionnaires were considered complete and included in the final analysis which were filled by both HoDs and academics and successfully matched. A total of 500 questionnaires were distributed, among which 302 usable questionnaires were returned. Therefore, a response rate of 60.4% was recorded.

Among the respondents, 31.8% were of the age of 30 and below, 32.5% were between 31 and 40 years old, 23.8% were between 41 and 50 years old, and 11.9% were 51 years of age and above. Out of the total respondents, 68.5% were male whereas 31.5% were female. As far as their education is concerned, 14.2% of the respondents were Masters qualified, 46.7% were MS/M.Phil and 39.1% were PhD qualified.

3.2. Measures

Apart from the demographic information, four different scales were used to measure the four variables under study. For authentic leadership we used the 16 items one dimensional scale of Walumbwa *et al.* (2008) whom adopted the same method in their previous studies. A Likert scale was used for this purpose, and each item was

rated from 0 to 4 where 0 means 'not at all' and 4 means 'frequently if not always'. The reliability test was done, and the alpha (α) value of 0.92 was recorded which is highly reliable. A sample item for this scale is 'As a leader, I seek feedback to improve interaction with others'. Creativity was measured by using three items scale of Oldham and Cummings (1996). A supervisory (in our case HoDs) rating technique was used to rate the creativity of academia. This technique is consistent with the previous researches (e.g., Baer *et al.*, 2003). Each item was measured from 1 being the 'lowest value' to 5 being the 'highest value'. The alpha (α) for this scale was measured as 0.82. A sample item is 'How original and practical is this person's work?'. Furthermore, for the mood of academia respondents were asked to think about their moods in past two months and rate 'good vs. bad', 'happy vs. sad', 'comfortable vs. uncomfortable' and 'tense vs. calm' on the scale from 1 to 5 points, where 5 being in good mood and 1 being in bad mood and vice versa. This 5 items scale was adopted from Moll (2007). The reliability of this scale was also measured, and alpha value was 0.82. Finally, the scale for intrinsic motivation was adopted from the Work Extrinsic and Intrinsic Motivation Scale (WEIMS), which is based on the theory of self-determination by Ryan and Deci (2000). It is a six factors scale with three items for each factor. Thus, the three items for intrinsic motivation were taken from Ryan and Deci's (2000) WEIMS scale. The scale was measured using a five points Likert scale (i.e., from 1 being 'does not correspond at all' to 5 being 'corresponds exactly'). The alpha (α) value for this scale was recorded as 0.70. A sample item is 'I do my work because I derive much pleasure from learning new things'.

4. Results

Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics, such as means, standard deviations and correlation coefficients of the study variables. The results depicts a moderate positive, significant correlation between Authentic Leadership Style (ALS) and Creativity ($r = .557, p = 0.000$). Similarly, Authentic Leadership had also a moderate but significant correlation with Mood of employees ($r = .470, p = 0.000$). Authentic Leadership had a moderate correlation with Intrinsic Motivation ($r = .360, p = 0.000$). Similarly, Creativity also had a moderate correlation with Mood and Intrinsic Motivation, having values ($r = .604, p = 0.000$) and ($r = .558, p = 0.000$) respectively.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics and correlation coefficients

	Mean	(SD)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1 Age	2.16	(1.006)	-						
2 Gender	1.31	(0.465)	-.278**	-					
3 Education	2.25	(0.688)	.466**	-.141*	-				
4 Intrinsic Motivation	3.76	(0.601)	-.114*	.068	-.067	(.70)			
5 Mood	3.57	(0.774)	.021	.167**	-.089	.472**	(.82)		
6 Creativity	3.75	(0.831)	.046	.077	-.053	.558**	.604**	(.82)	
7 ALS	3.48	(0.918)	.144*	.092	-.060	.360**	.470**	.557**	(.92)

** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$. alpha (α) reliability in parenthesis

4.1. Hypotheses testing (direct effects)

We hypothesized a positive influence of Authentic Leadership Style (ALS) on creativity of academia in hypothesis H1. The results from analyzing the regression are presented in Table 2 (Model 1), which supports hypothesis H1 (i.e., $\beta = .66$, $p = 0.000$). Similarly, in hypothesis H2a we proposed a positive influence of ALS on intrinsic motivation of academia. The results in Table 2 (Model 2) were also in line with hypothesis H2a (i.e., $\beta = .30$, $p = 0.000$). Hence, H2a was also supported. In hypothesis H3a, a positive influence of ALS on the mood of academia was proposed which was also supported from the results as can be seen from Table 2 Model 3 (i.e., $\beta = .51$, $p = 0.000$).

Table 2: Regression Analysis Results

	Authentic Leadership Style		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Creativity (β)	0.66**		
Intrinsic Motivation (β)		0.30**	
Mood of Employees (β)			0.51**
R ²	0.31	0.13	0.22
Adjusted R ²	0.30	0.12	0.21

** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$

4.2. Testing the indirect effects (through mediators)

In hypotheses H2b and H3b, we proposed the mediating effect of intrinsic motivation and mood of employees between ALS and creativity. We tested these hypotheses via bootstrapping technique of Preacher and Hayes (2008) by using their SPSS version of macro. This method is appropriate for measuring the hypothesis of mediations as it controls the type 1 error relatively well (MacKinnon *et al.*, 2002). This test was run with a recommended bootstrap sample of 5000. The results highlight the difference between direct and total effect of ALS and creativity (.352, $p = .000$) and (.659, $p = .000$) respectively (both significant). The difference between the total and direct effect is the total indirect effect of the mediators' set, i.e., intrinsic motivation and mood of employees, with point estimate (see Table 3) value of .3069, $p = .000$ and CI of .2072 (Lower) and .4222 (Upper), i.e., it can be claimed that the total and direct effect of ALS on Creativity is a non-zero value (Preacher and Hayes, 2008). Therefore, the mediating role of Intrinsic Motivation and Mood of academia between Authentic Leadership Style and Creativity is supported. Hence, these results support the hypotheses H2b and H3b. It is important to underline that since the direct and indirect effects were both significant, we can argue that partial mediation exists between ALS and Creativity of academia through Intrinsic Motivation and their Mood at work. Furthermore, it is also evident from the results that specific effects of both mediators exist also separately (see Table 3).

Table 3: Mediating roles of Intrinsic Motivation and Mood between Authentic Leadership Style and Creativity

	Authentic Leadership Style			Bias corrected Conf. Interval (CI)	
	DATA (Point estimates)	BOOT	SE	Lower	Upper
	Intrinsic Motivation	.1272**	.1277	.0375	.0655
Mood	.1797**	.1777	.0408	.1075	.2695
Combine effects	.3069**	.3053	.0534	.2072	.4222

Note: Bias corrected, 5000 bootstrap samples

5. Discussion

During the past few decades and due to rapid technological developments, creativity has become critical for the organizations' smooth running and successful competition on the market. Particularly, it is more important for the HEIs, which are under such intense pressure from different stakeholders. Thus, to cater these needs and demands, more creative solutions are expected from them. Achieving this aim may not be possible without the academia's creative behaviors and attitudes to timely respond to such needs and demands. For HEIs to flourish such attitudes and behaviors on campus, the role of leadership becomes in the limelight. Past studies have shown inconsistent results of the influence of different leadership styles on the followers' creativity (Cerne *et al.*, 2013). However, relatively fewer researchers have focused on the ALS and its influence on academia's creativity in HEIs.

Therefore, this study attempted to fill this void by providing an alternative model to demonstrate the mechanism through which authentic leaders in HEIs influence academia's creativity. Specifically, we shed light on the influence of ALS on creativity of academia from different perspectives. To this end, we first measured (1) direct impact of ALS on creativity, (2) on intrinsic motivation and (3) on the mood of employees. Later, we tested the mediating role of intrinsic motivation and mood of employees between ALS and academia's creativity. A survey technique was adopted for collection of data from different HEIs in Pakistan.

Our first hypothesis was supported by the data where we found significant direct impact of ALS on the creativity of academia which was proposed in our first hypothesis. This finding is in line with the previous studies in other industries (e.g., Cerne *et al.*, 2013). Therefore, we empirically proved and documented that ALS of HoDs through their authentic behavior and dealings at work will have a positive influence on the perception of academia regarding the morality, genuineness and support for open communication of their leaders. We also found support for our second hypothesis from our data where we tested the impact of ALS on employees' intrinsic motivation. This finding was also in line with the previous studies on the leadership and intrinsic motivation (e.g., Gumusluoglu and Ilsev, 2009; Shalley *et al.*, 2000). Thus, we proved that since authentic leaders facilitate such a supportive environment where they not only try to overcome their own weaknesses but they also support and encourage their staff to develop and improve their knowledge and skills further. Such

an environment gives the staff value, autonomy and respect and, as a result, employees feel secure, stress free and thus intrinsically motivated to do their work in a more professional and creative way.

We tested the mediating role of intrinsic motivation between ALS and creativity in the third hypothesis, which was supported by the data. Hence, this finding was also in line with the previous studies on other sectors and different contexts (e.g., Alrifi, 2012; Fraley and Shaver, 1998; Zhang and Bartol, 2010) where ALS was largely an unexplored notion particularly in HEIs settings. By bringing evidence from different HEIs in Pakistan, we have filled this void which is certainly an added contribution to the theory. Besides, we tested the impact of ALS on the moods of employees which was also supported from our data. Therefore, this finding also supports the suggestion of O'Malley (2000), who states that academia in a good mood will work harder as compared to those who are unhappy and in a bad mood. We further found support for our final hypothesis in which we tested the mediating role of mood between ALS and creativity. Therefore, this finding was also in line with the previous studies (e.g., Isen, 1998), which suggested that good mood sharpens the minds for finding out creative solutions for complex problems.

6. Conclusions

6.1. Implications for managers

Among the practical implications is the appropriateness of authentic leadership style for HEIs as highlighted by Opatukun *et al.* (2013). Other implications are that since authentic leadership style can effectively enhance the intrinsic motivation of their staff, therefore this style must be encouraged by the top management for the heads of different departments. It is also important to understand that the leadership style of top management needs to be the same as they expect from others to demonstrate. Additionally, since academia members are among the highest educated people, they certainly expect more autonomy from their management as they feel themselves capable of handling difficult situations on their own.

Similarly, academia also expects their managers to trust them and give them respect (Opatukun *et al.*, 2013). If the HoDs demonstrate authentic leadership style, this expectation of academia can be easily fulfilled as authentic leaders can easily motivate their employees through their transparent processes, open communication, balanced approach, and acceptance and improvement of their own weaknesses. These attempts must be deliberate as pointed out by Gumusluoglu and Ilsev (2009) and Muceldili *et al.*, (2014). Consequently, academia will be more intrinsically motivated and attached to their work. This behavior of leaders will also make academia more satisfied and in a good mood at work for most of the time. Therefore, as the results show both the intrinsic motivation and mood of academia have positive influence on their creative behavior at work.

Likewise, past researches have shown that a closer monitoring will negatively affect the creativity of employees (George and Zhou, 2001). Authentic leaders also dis-

courage such close monitoring and believe on trusting their employees and encourage their staff to make mistakes and learn. Therefore, HEIs can take full advantage of authentic leadership style in bringing out creative solutions to the problems and challenges which we highlighted in the first part of the paper, and make their institutions progress and compete on sustainable basis which is the need of the time.

In order to develop and promote authentic leadership and authentic leadership styles, the top management of the HEIs as well the HoDs need to take the lead. They should practice this style more and more, be realistic, honest and open in communication with their subordinates. Extensive training and development sessions about the understanding of ALS can also be a key for developing this style. Besides, HEIs should start rewarding such moral, ethical and honest behaviors at work in order to reinforce its importance and thereby encouraging more and more of such behaviors at work. Furthermore, more autonomy to HoDs at work will also help in developing this style because they will feel that their employers trust them by allowing them to take their own decisions. This sense of autonomy will enhance their self-esteem as well (Wulambwa *et al.*, 2008). Therefore, they will reciprocate the same behavior in the form of honesty, truthfulness and authenticity in their behaviors in order to fulfill that trust. Finally, it is recommended for HoDs to treat employees as they expect themselves to be treated. This way they will be able to indicate authentic behavior and therefore, subordinates will also reciprocate in the same way.

6.2. Limitations and future research

Several limitations must be kept in mind when reading this paper. First, we used multi rater methodology to avoid common method bias; however the data on the mood of employees and their intrinsic motivation were collected at the same time. A time lagged approach in this case may further improve the findings in the future researches. Secondly, our focus was only limited to two mediating variables i.e., intrinsic motivation and mood of employees. Future research may also take other variables such as perceived organizational support or fairness perception as mediators between the variables under study. Thirdly, our research was conducted in Pakistani universities only, therefore generalizability may be a possible limitation. Similar researches can be conducted in different parts of the world or a cross comparison may also be a good idea to see the similarities or differences between the findings.

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