The Role of KRG Policy on Transactional Leadership and Crisis Management

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Abstract

The effective leadership style has had significant impact on crisis management as an important process to prevent crisis, disasters and unexpected risks. Many studies have been conducted on the impact of leadership styles on crisis management in both private and public sectors. Nonetheless, very little research has been conducted to observe the moderation effect of government policy in the relationship between leadership styles and crisis management in general, and especially in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq's public institutions. Therefore, employing Crisis Management Theory and Path Goal Theory, this study has evaluated the impact of the KRG policy on the relationship between the transactional leadership style and the crisis management in the KRI public sector. To obtain the research objectives and test the hypothesis, quantitative research design, cross-sectional survey method was adopted. For the purpose of this study, a total of 700 questionnaires were distributed to the public institutions of the KRI, a total of 297 completed and valid questionnaires were returned. Accordingly, the collected data was analyzed by SmartPLS 3.3.3 software program. The results of this study supported the hypothesized impact of moderating impact of government policy on the relationship between transactional leadership style and crisis management. Nevertheless, direct relationship between transactional leadership and crisis management was not. Finally, this study has ended with conclusions explaining theoretical and practical contributions and suggestions.

Keywords: *Crisis Management, Transactional Leadership Style, Government Policy, KRI and Public Sector.*

Introduction:

Crisis management is a very important process to prevent crisis, disasters and unexpected risks [1]. Many studies have been generally conducted on the impacts of leadership attributes on the crisis management in the private and public sectors [2, 3]. Nevertheless, few research conducted on the moderation role of government policy in crisis management in the Kurdistan Region's public institutions [4, 5]. The main aim of this paper is to explore the impact of the KRG policy on the relationship between the transactional leadership style and the crisis management in the public sector. The study distributed questionnaires among the managers in the Kurdistan Regional Government's public institutions adopting quantitative research design, cross-sectional survey to explore the effectiveness of the moderation role of government policy on transactional leadership style and crisis management in the critical crises faced to the Kurdistan Region of Iraq.

Problem Statement

The public sector of Kurdistan Region was faced to several issues and crises since 2014 to 2018 due to several reasons. Firstly, the KRG was not able to pay the salary of the employees in the public sector. Thus, the employees started to demonstrate against the government and showed the KRG an all-out strike. Secondly, the public and private investment projects were stopped for the KRG could not pay the companies' financial rights and many schools, hospitals, bridges, roads and other public projects remain uncompleted [6, 7]. Thirdly, for not getting their salaries for several months, the phenomena of bribery and corruption have encountered in the public sector. To deal with disruptive, anticipated and not anticipated situations which threaten harming or even collapsing an organization or its stakeholders a good crisis management is needed. Furthermore, the crisis management is considered to be a way of minimizing and dominating the consequences of a crisis.

Consequently, this leads to investigate the impact of a good crisis management in solving issues and problems faced to Kurdistan Region using the. In addition, many scholars have conducted studies suggesting investigations about the effectiveness of crisis management in governing and solving issues and crises. Namely, [8-10] argues that "hence the more a crisis is prepared for, the less it will be a crisis". Further, [11] have recommended for future research about the significance and thoroughness of the crisis management in the developed countries. Moreover, [12, 13] have investigated the "three-stage conceptual framework for crisis signal detection" to prevent the happening of crises from the beginning. More research can identify the types of crisis and find mechanisms to prevent or mitigate the consequences of the crisis. As a result, so as to answer the questions related to the successful crisis management, more studies are needed.

On the other hand, it is argued that the level of the leadership skills and styles in managing the issues facing the public sector is very significant to mitigate and control the crisis consequences in the KRG public institutions [14, 15]. As a result, many researchers investigated the relations between leadership and crisis management. They focus on a particular leadership style in a particular crisis circumstance. For example, [16-18] have made research on the impact of transactional and transformational styles on the financial crisis, recommending future research on the effectiveness of these kinds of leadership in other crises. Therefore, it is suggested by crisis leadership researchers that further investigations could obtain the answer of what provides success for leaders in the crisis circumstances.

In addition, another variable that affects crisis management is the government laws, regulations and policies. There are studies that have been conducted to investigate the role of government policies to address certain issues associated with particular public services. For example, a study was conducted on the disadvantages of the waste crisis has used the government policy as an independent variable to

reduce the aftermath of the construction waste technology [19, 20]. Furthermore, [21, 22] examined the government policy influences on the entrepreneurship development, concluding that the reactions of government policy determine the success of the entrepreneurial activities in any nation. Also, [23, 24] investigated the effects of Malaysian government's national integrity policy on the perception of corruption practices in Malaysia. Nonetheless, governments should very well translate their policies to reduce the outcomes of the crises affecting any sector of the country [25, 26].

In a related study, the effect of Nigerian government policy on the relationship of the transformational leadership as an organizational resources factor and the waste management crisis was examined, it was found that the government policy can play a moderating role in this relationship [27-29]. Nevertheless, in another study, the moderating role of Government Policy on Entrepreneurship was examined but this time found that government policy is not significant [30, 31]. Among all these reviewed studies, none of them examined the moderating role of government policy in relation to leadership and crisis management in the public sector, which is the gap identified for the present study due to limited resources and studies on the influence of the government policy on the crisis management.

As a result, this paper tries to deal with the aforementioned gaps by exploring the moderating role of government policy in the relationship between transactional leadership style and crisis management in the public sector of the Kurdistan Region, using Path Goal Theory of Leadership and Crisis Management Theory. Furthermore, the study makes future recommendations to conduct research to pay more attention on the influence of the government policies and legislations on the crisis management through different styles of leadership since each style is effective in certain type, time and place of the crisis.

Research Question

The main question of this study which is going to be used as the guidance and basis of the study is: does the government policy moderate the relationship between the Transactional leadership style and crisis management in the KRG public sector? Based on the mentioned problems, the study is geared towards answering the following research questions:

1. Does the transactional leadership have a significant influence on the crisis management?

2. Does the government policy moderate the relationship between Transactional leadership style and crisis management?

Research Objective

Generally, this study tries to find out the moderating impact of government policy in the relationship between the Transactional leadership style and crisis management in the KRI public sector and pursues directly to examine the followings:

1. To investigate the significance of the transactional leadership on the crisis management.

2. To identify the moderating impact of the government policy on the relationship between transactional leadership style and crisis management.

Theoretical Framework

In this study, for examining the impact of transactional leadership and crisis management, Crisis Management Theory has been used, while for examining the moderation significance of the Government Policy the Path Goal Theory has been used as a supporting theory.

Crisis Management Theory

The crisis management theory was first developed by [32, 33]. The theory studies and explores the operations of the organization management at the crisis circumstance. This theory tries to explore and find a set of concepts and bases which becomes independent on the individual willing. Although scholars have different understanding about the processes and characters of crisis management, most of the studies are in harmony that crisis management is a series of procedures or steps by the administration of an organization so as to deal with a disastrous situation.

The essential danger to the good organizational viability is that there are other factors of how the organizations are perceived by both employees and stakeholders although they can keep their growth and do everything to maintain the stakeholders' understanding. Public organizational reputation needs to be viable and settled so as to pull off new coming challenges.

There are several threats that may affect organizations including: a fiasco in crisis management due to the administrative team or managers' treatment plans as a simple and singular solution [34]; and managing crises in a better way [35]. Each organization usually has the needs to maintain and develop, however, when it is faced with risks, there should be a management policy to at least minimize the losses. Like private sector, public sector organizations are faced to the unexpected threats and sometimes the outcomes are more dangerous. Therefore, the authorities are trying to prevent and control the crises through different instruments. The crisis management theory has been successfully employed in different public sector organizations such as Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, South Korea, Turkey and several European Countries [36, 37]

The crisis management theory serves also as an important theoretical guide that facilitates governments to have immediate response to the signals of risks and crises. The theory also is useful for the government to prepare the related administration or ministry to react against the shocks so as to mitigate the losses. The crisis management theory provides a sort of framework that offers insights on how the several ministries, authorities or governments (like Iraqi government and the KRG) that are involved in a crisis can adequately frame and devise a collaborative system which can control and solve any political or economic issues that create crises in the future.

Path Goal Theory

Another supporting theory is the path goal theory of [38, 39] which suggests that leader has the obligation to provide essential information and duly support for effective achievement of work goals. This theory focuses on leader, follower and situation whereby. Moreover, [40-42] have explained situational as two class variables i-e environmental and subordinate characteristics followed by the moderation of numerous task characteristics (environmental forces). Based on this theory, the model of the current study indicated the moderation of government policy [43, 44].

In addition, based on that theory, the model indicates that government policy and transactional leadership style effects on employees (staff) commitment to crisis management policies. [45, 46] declares that government policy affects the relationship between organizational factors (transformational leadership) and the subordinates for the construction waste management, clarity clear the path of employees to understand the work and increase performance. [47-49] using path goal theory and supporting with conceptual models suggesting that the leadership style (behavior) is important for staff understand the job requirement to commitment to service quality. Another study followed path goal theory of leaders, which describe two categories task related (job design) and supervisor consideration [50, 51].

The justification for choosing House's path goal theory (1971) as the supporting theory is as follows:

Firstly, the focus of the current study is on the transactional leadership style in the Kurdistan Regional Government and the respondents of this study are among the

major players in the public sector. Secondly, the objectives of the current study relate to the moderating impact of government policy on the relationship between the leaders (leadership) and crisis management. That is, the path goal theory focuses on both of independent, dependent and moderating variables; leader, follower and the whereby situation (crisis situation). Therefore, according to this theory, the model of the current study indicates that the moderation of government policy affects the relationship between transactional leadership style and crisis management.

Conceptual Framework

As [52, 53] suggests that the theoretical framework presents the relationships between several variables so as to be investigated by the researcher in the study. Therefore, for this research, the framework describes the relationships between Transactional Leadership Style as the independent, and government policy as the moderating variable, and the crisis management as dependent variable. Figure 1 illustrates the proposed conceptual framework for this study.
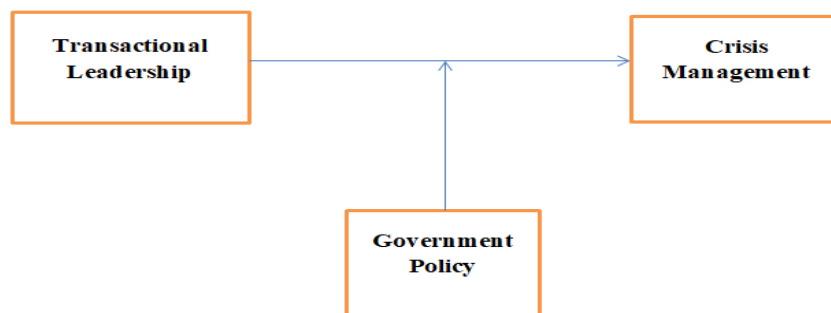

Figure 1: Proposed Conceptual Framework

Hypothesis Development

According to [54, 55], there are non-directional and directional types of relationships that have been tested among variables in the hypotheses. In the directional hypothesis, one variable direction exists in which the independent variable affects the dependent variables, like the influence of transactional leadership style (independent variable) and crisis management (dependent variable). Further, although the relationship directions are not identified, there is also the non-directional hypothesis among two variables, like the impact of government policy on the relationship between transactional leadership and crisis management. The followings are the explanations pertaining the relationship between the variables.

Transactional Leadership and Crisis Management

One of the elaborations of leadership is that it is a process of keeping authority over a group of people to achieve some identified objectives. Leaders augment enthusiast and motivation in their subordinates so as to raise their activities to reach the organizational goals. That is, leadership is a way to fulfill the organizational goals when while the managers encourage their co-workers to accrue superior performance [56-58]. Therefore, managers having the transactional leadership style must be familiar to utilize flexible attitudes in order to appreciate the motivation of the subordinates, consider the motivational urges, and choose appropriate way of leadership in line with the prevailing situation and then assume the desirable actions concerning the workers to realize the organizational objectives.

Many individuals try to perform the role of a leader, meanwhile, a few of them actually accomplish the skills of leadership and could prove to be efficient and effective leaders. Transactional style is defined as the leaders who guarantee that followers do

the right activity at the exact time in accordance to the specifications. Transactional leaders reward their subordinates promptly and accordingly so as to reach the specific targets, punish them for any shortfalls, as well [59-61]. The dimensions of this leadership, which are contingency reward, management by exception active and management by exception passive, have significant impact on the organizations especially in the crisis time [62, 63].

Transactional leadership relies on contingency reward program so as to enhance the employee's skills because rewarding is one of the best approaches to boost the subordinates' performance when the organization is in critical situations (Burns, 1978). Transactional leaders provide rewards in exchange to the level in which the employees effort to meet the organizational objectives. That is, leaders can explain to their followers the oppertunities and organization's akcnowledgement when the goals accomplished [64, 65]. Furthermore, good reward system is not only useful for encouraging followers for providing higher services; it also urges them to solve daily threats facing their organization responsively.

Furthermore, the transactional leadership style gives the leaders opportunities to actively and passively supervise their followers as well as clarifying each individuals roles and duties. In some situations, the level of monitoring followers for mistakes or violations is emphasized by leaders [66-68]. Meanwhile, in certain situations, especially when the threats can be prevented, the transactional leaders are waiting for mistakes and deviations to occur then the leader latches specific actions to make corrections [69-71].

Finally, a number of studies have proven that transactional leadership has significant influence on crisis management through their behavior with the employees in different types of organizations. [72-74] suggests that the transactional leaders have notable impact on crisis management in the Yemeni private and public sectors. Additionally, [75, 76] concludes that this type of leadership has the direct attribute to rescue the organization to survive in the crisis period. Moreover, [77, 78] has also focused that transactional leadership style positively reflects on the future of the organization   through rewarding employees as well as active and passive management. Thus, according to these clues, the following hypothesis is presented for empirical testing:

H1: Transactional leadership is significantly related to crisis management in the KRI public sector.

Moderating Impact of Government Policy on the Relationship between Leadership Style and Crisis Management

Government policy is utilized as a clue for making judgment following an assigned purpose within the structure of goals as well as the administration visions as identified by the top level management [79, 80]. Governmental policies are made as a framework to manage a wide range of issues. That is, policies help the individuals to have a clear understanding about the basic requirements of organization. Further, the government can modify laws and regulations. When a government makes a policy, this may affect people or everyone in the society at large in particular issues [81, 82]. To illustrate, government policies can even alter an amount of tax individuals or organizations pay, laws of immigration and pension, landfill tax, and diversifying the government's resources. Importantly, lower levels of clear government policies put negative influences on employees in terms of organizational commitment especially during the crisis.

The government policies and regulations indicate the willingness, desires and commitment to come up with an efficient management of all resources. It is a fact that to provide political, economic and social stability there is a need for a more holistic policy. [83, 84] suggests that good policies for managing crises enable the organization to perform its daily activities, while the crisis is developing. Furthermore, to reduce the

impact of an unexpected threat happening in the circle life of the organization, crisis management requires planning, coordination to arrange, and respond to the threats which may restrict or limit operational activities [85-87].

In addition, organizations are required to prepare for sudden events as crises occur at any time and to any organization. Meanwhile, it is noted that leadership styles can directly and indirectly affect employee behaviors and outcomes in managing crises. The results have shown that leadership style was significantly related with crisis management. As argued by [88, 89], crisis management is influenced by the leadership styles in the public and private organizations. Hence, theoretical understanding of path goal theory suggests the idea that effective leaders should ideally take measures to follow governmental or organizational policies and regulations in order to attain organizational goals.

Principally, when the organization goes under an unstable situation, effective leaders try to mitigate the severe consequences through various concepts and dimensions. Furthermore, managers can be seen as critical in translating and fulfilling procedures and rules and minimize the effects of the crisis experienced by the organization. Concepts such as rewarding employees, idealized influence attributes, motivation, integrity, honesty, appreciation of others, and empowerment are too general and needed to be specified. Therefore, organizations should give more explanations for their policies so that supervisors can effectively manage the threats coming to the organization [90, 91].

As [3, 11] has argued that leader`s behavior can positively influence subordinates` performance, leadership guidance is important to encourage and direct employees when they experience ambiguity in the organization policy. Meanwhile, sometimes the organization's human resources has shortage in effective supervisors, then the organization needs some rules and regulation to deal with the upcoming unwanted events. In the final discussion, [15, 30] have suggested that while the results between the dependent and independent variables are unexpectedly changing, weak or unclear; a third variable, moderator or mediator, could be introduced to understand the situation. Therefore, based on this assumption, the following hypothesis is formulated:

H4: Government policy positively moderates the relationship between transactional leadership style and crisis management in the KRI public sector.

Methodology

To explore the research problem and objective, the quantitative method was used in this study together with dependence on the primary and secondary data sources. Further, the key instrument appointed to collect primary data is survey approach.

Research Design

The research design is dependent on the research philosophy, structure of the study and the aim of the research analysis. Recalling the objectives of this study, it attempts to empirically test the transactional leadership in connection to crisis management. Moreover, the current study also investigates the government policy as a moderator amongst these variables. Therefore, in this study quantitative design is going to be employed to reinforce the authenticity of the research. Further, among the four approaches of quantitative method; experiment, secondary data study, observation and survey, the latter will be utilized to collect data from recipients.

Sampling

To cover and give equal chance to almost all the populations which was the managers of the public institutions of the three ministries operating in the Erbil Province the current study has employed the cluster sampling, and the randomness of the

sample still exists which is more appropriate for quantitative data (Anderson, 2004). Further development of cluster sampling in Multi-stage or multi-stage cluster sampling also exists. Based on that, in this research (multiple stage) cluster sampling has been used in which according to [88, 92] the target population was divided into geographical units, cities and towns followed by simple random selection. In such multi-stage cluster sampling, obviously random sampling is feasible as cluster sampling provides effective sampling and avoids bias.

Based on multi cluster sampling, the whole country (Kurdistan Region of Iraq) was selected in the first stage. In the second stage, the sample was distributed based on four provinces known as Erbil, Sulaymaniya, Duhok and Halabja. Moreover, from these four provinces, Erbil was selected and divided into ten clusters based on its larger districts. Nonetheless, purposely clusters of Erbil (central), Koya, Shaqlawa, Rawandiz and Soran were chosen because the main headquarters of ministries general directorates are located there. These clusters were selected based on the location of the public institutions in Erbil, Kurdistan Region of Iraq. The probability method was used to select in order to perform selection with equal probability or with probability proportional (pps).

Respondents' Profile

In this study target population is the public institutions of the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research (MHESR), Ministry of Interior (MOI) and Ministry of Education (MOE). Managers are the prime target population of this study, serving in the public sector institutions of Erbil. As per the KRG Personnel Council Report of 2019, there were 3855 registered managers serving in the public institutions of the three mentioned ministries across Erbil province. As the total population for this study is 3855, referring to the [89, 93] the total number of respondents for a population of 3500 should be 346 and 351 for population of 4000. Hence a total number of 350 respondents were required. For responsive and sufficient data collection, researcher added 50% in the original sample size as suggested by [85, 94], sample size 10 times the numbers of studying variables.

Table 1 reveals that 8.41% of respondent's age is between 25-29 years, 41.07% of respondent's age is between 30-39 years, 26.61% of respondent's age is between 40-49 years, and 23.91% of respondent's age is 50 years or more. Besides, 26.59% respondents have a diploma, 29.29% have a bachelor's degree, and 24.93% have a master's degree, and 19.19% of respondents having a doctorate. The length of service of respondents as follows; 7.07% of respondents have 1-year experience, 33.33% of respondents have experience 1 to 5 years, 46.81% of respondents have 5 to 10 years of experience, and 12.79% of respondents have experienced more than 10 years. Finally, 27.95% of respondents are among General Managers class, 37.71% of respondents are among Managers class, 28.96% of respondents are among Executive Officers, and the remaining are in others.

Table 1

Demographic (N=297)

Variable	Classification	Frequency	% age
Age	21 – 29 years	25	8.41
	30 – 39 years	122	41.07
	40 – 49 years	79	26.61
	above 50 years	71	23.91
Education level	Diploma	79	26.59
	Bachelors	87	29.29
	Master	74	24.93
	PhD/ Doctorate	57	19.19
Length of Service	1 year	21	7.07

	1-5 year	99	33.33
	5-10 year	139	46.81
	Above 10 year	38	12.79
Level of Manager	General Manager	83	27.95
	Manager	112	37.71
	Executive Officer	86	28.96
	Others (Please specify)	16	5.38

Measurement Items

The crisis management was measured through adapting the twenty nine item scale of (Alkhawlani, 2016) while Transactional Leadership style was assessed by the 12 Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) of [92, 95]. Finally, to evaluate government policy, a 7-item scale by [96, 97] was adapted on a 5-point Likert-scale type.

Data Collection and Data Analysis

For the purpose of this study, the actual data collection started after the pilot study approved by the supervisor and took 4 months; that is, until January 2021. Using self-administered questionnaire, the data was collected in the Capital of Kurdistan Region of Iraq. Accordingly, the questionnaires were given to the administration with stamped self-addressed envelopes for the convenient return of the questionnaires. The administration of the three ministries distributed questionnaire. Due to the pandemic COVID-19 crisis and other collection issues the response rate was very low. Thus, the researcher adds 50% in the original sample size as suggested by [74, 95] so as to overcome with such issues in collecting the questionnaires. Nonetheless, approximately after five weeks of distributing the questionnaires, more than 250 questionnaires were collected. Hence, 150 of which were correctly completed and usable. These 150 questionnaires were regarded as early responses and were employed in conducting non-response bias on the main study constructs.

The main reason behind the problem of the low rate of the usable completed questionnaires belongs to the lockdown due to the COVID-19 in the KRI. After that, follow up phone calls and (SMS)s were sent to the managers to remind the respondents who got the questionnaire but not returned the form. Furthermore, for the rest of the managers, they got the questionnaire through online. As a result, more questionnaires were filled and among them 147 questionnaires were correctly filled which were considered as late response. In total, 382 questionnaires were collected representing 54% of the response rate in which only 297 questionnaires were regarded as usable as some significant parts of other questionnaires were noted as incomplete.

In the current study, PLS-SEM technique was adopted to establish both models, namely measurement and structural models. The measurement model was conducted to explain the validity and reliability of the variable that is used in this study. Structural Equation Model was employed to conduct multivariate correlation analysis to establish correlations and relationships effects among variables that are used in the study. Furthermore, PLS-SEM technique was used in the algorithm as well as in bootstrapping the moderation of government policy between transactional leadership and crisis management.

The data analysis has followed several procedures. First of all, the data collected was entered in the SPSS software program to ensure that it is appropriate for the PLS analysis. The researcher conducted initial data screening and cleaning procedures such as identification of missing data, common variance and outliers as per the explanations of [85, 98] have also explained outliers which refer to the observations that has a unique mixture of features or characteristics that can be specifically outlined as distinct from other observations.

After that, for the purpose of ascertaining measurement model, individual item reliabilities, internal consistency reliabilities, convergent validity and discriminant validity were calculated using SmartPLS 3.3.3 software. Later, the standardized bootstrapping was also executed whereby the current research runs a structural model with 5, 000 subsample 297. More importantly, as suggested by [99, 100] the model was examined to assess path coefficients, predictive relevance, and level of the r-square values. Furthermore, a supplementary PLS-SEM analysis (i.e., moderator analysis) was conducted after the assessment of direct impacts. Finally, following the suggestions of, the strength of the moderating impact by using Cohen's (1988) effect size formula was evaluated.

Results of Analysis

For the purpose of this study, the researchers employed partial least squares (PLS) path modeling to analyze data. Recently, this approach has received widespread recognition in quantitative data analysis [77, 101].

Reliability and Validity

This study has one exogenous variable (TSL). Government policy (GOP) is used as a moderating construct. Finally, CM is endogenous variable. All constructs were measured at five-Likert scales. The purpose of descriptive analysis is to find out the minimum, maximum, mean, and standard deviation of constructs. Table 2 shows descriptive analysis of the constructs.

Table 2

Descriptive Analysis of the Constructs

Latent Constructs	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation (SD)
TSL	297	1	5	3.7246	0.75241
GOP	297	1	5	3.8805	0.81949
CM	297	1	5	3.8879	0.75792

Meanwhile, this study used CR to measure the internal consistency reliability of a variable as Cronbach's alpha assumes all indicators or items provide an equal contribution that is used to measure that variable [102]. The CR should be greater than 0.60 to meet the requirement of internal consistency reliability as recommended by Hair, Hult [103]. Table 3 reveals lowest value of CR 0.893 and the maximum value of CR are 0.957. Therefore, the current study meets the requirement of Composite Reliability (CR).

Table 3

Composite Reliability

Latent variables	No. of items	CR	A
TSL	10	0.919	0.916
GOP	6	0.893	0.857
CM	21	0.957	0.952

Note: CR>0.60

Moreover, few researchers demonstrate that convergent validity can be computed by determining the outcomes of AVE of constructs [10, 103]. They stated that convergent validity can be computed to measure AVE, and the value of AVE must be higher than 0.50. Table 4 reveals that AVE value of all constructs is higher than the

standardized value as mentioned above. Hence, the convergent validity criterion was fulfilled.

Table 4

Convergent Validity

Latent constructs	No. of items	AVE
TSL	10	0.533
TFL	14	0.595
SRL	15	0.533
GOP	6	0.584
CM	21	0.517

Regarding discriminant validity, it was computed through traditional metrics proposed by [104, 105]. After several years, few of the researchers replace the traditional metric with a new metric i.e. heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) ratio as traditional metric not consider appropriate in a situation where loadings have small differences [14]. Moreover, researchers confirmed that HTMT value for distinct variables is 0.85 and 0.90 for identical constructs [14]. Table 5 highlights that all HTMT values are in a given range.

Table 5

Discriminant Validity (HTMT)

Variables	TRNL	GP	CSM
CM			
GOP	0.840		
TSL	0.093		

3.2 Effect Size and Predictive Relevance of the Model

The effect size (f2) finds through PLS algorithm technique. [106, 107]divided the effect size (f2) into three categories like weak effect size (0.02), moderate effect size (0.15), and strong effect size (0.35). Table 6 shows TSL has no influence on CM as f2=0.002. Besides GOP with 2.206 in that order has strong effect size.

Table 6

Effect Size

Exogenous constructs	Total Effect (f^2)
TSL	0.002
GOP	2.206

Existing studies confirm that there is a need to compute the predictive relevance of the study model (Q2) after computing the effect size values of variables. PLS-SEM is said to demonstrate the predictive relevance of construct when it accurately predicts data points of all indicators in the outer or measurement model of the endogenous construct [103]. To compute the predictive relevance of the study model, the researcher should compute the R2 value and cross-validate the redundancy value. The R2 value assists in examining the variance level of endogenous constructs that all exogenous constructs explain.

Table 7 shows that 86.7% of crisis management explained jointly by all exogenous variables. Besides, a cross-validated redundancy value is computed to know the quality of the theoretical model of the study. In SmartPLS, the blindfolding technique is used for this. The cross-validated redundancy value of all variables should be greater than zero. Moreover, that table reveals Q2 value is 0.438 which is higher than zero. Since this research meets the above-mentioned criterion of cross-validated redundancy. Thus, the current research model validates the predictive relevance criterion.

Table 7

The Predictive Relevance of the Model

Variable	R^2	Q^2
CM	0.867	0.438

3.3 Hypothesis Testing

This study used SmartPLS 3.3.3 tool to test hypotheses. For this purpose, PLS algorithm that is first step assists the researchers to generate path coefficients. The first step is to find beta values (β) of the direct relationship that followed bootstrapping technique in SmartPLS 3.3.3 to compute the t-values that are used to test the significance of the relationships. Moreover, researchers recommend that subsample must be 5, 000 to obtain improved outcomes (Hair et al., 2014). The current research runs a structural model with 5, 000 subsample.

Table 8

Outcomes

Hypotheses	Paths	Beta Value	T-values	P-values	95% Confidence Interval	Results
H_1	TSL-->CM	0.015	0.898	0.384	[-0.019, 0.032]	No
H_2	TSL*GOP→CM	-0.045	2.246	0.040	[-0.063, 0.001]	Yes

Table 8 reveals that TSL does not influence CM as (β=0.015, t=0.898) and H1 not accepted.

Testing Moderation Effect

GOP significantly decreases the association between TSL and crisis management as (β=-0.045, t=2.246) and H4a supported. Figure 2 depicts that GOP dampens association between TSL and CM.
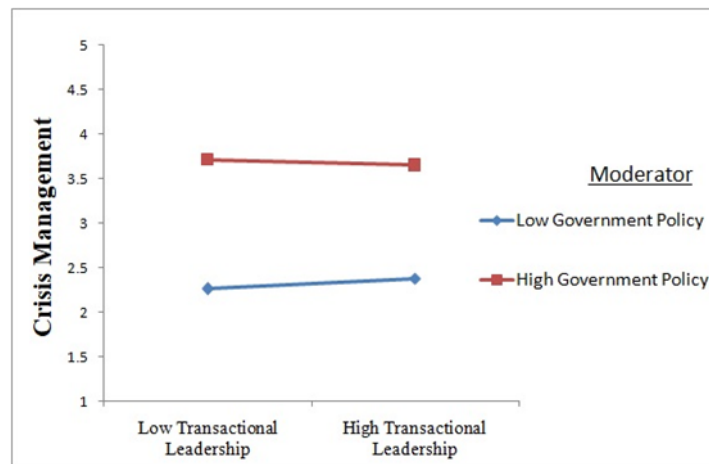

Figure :**2** GOP as a moderator

Discussion of the Results

In this section, the findings of the study is discussed whether it is significant or insignificant. These discussions are conducted in view of relevant theories and previous studies' findings. This study is carried out dependent on theoretical framework, developed according to different studies on related and this study. Therefore, the questionnaire was selected so as to understand the moderating role of government policy on the relationship between leadership styles and crisis

management. Moreover, the subheadings of discussions section are accordingly structured based on the research questions.

Relationship between Transactional Leadership and Crisis Management

So as to obtain the first research objective, a hypothesis has been raised and thus tested by using SPSS and PLS path modeling softwares. The first hypothesis of this thesis states that transactional leadership is importantly related to crisis management in the KRI public sector. Nevertheless, the PLS path modeling software results have shown contradictory relationship between these two variables with the Beta Value 0.015, T-Value 0.898 and P-Value 0.384 as indicated in Table 4.20 and Figures 4.1 and 4.2. In this context, this finding contradicts some previous studies such as [41, 108-110]. Nevertheless, the research has not suprised with the results in this regard as some past investigations have also had similar results For instance[111-113], have exhibited paralel results in their qualitative study on the significance of transformational and transactional leadership styles and crisis management.

According to [80, 114, 115] transactional leaders tend to operate in the present system and prefer not to make any risk. Such leaders are cost benefit oriented. That is, [71, 76, 116] indicate that transactional managers concentrate on rewarding efforts and ensure that the employees' behaviors are up to their expectations. Transactional leadership attitude consists of three dimensions in the Multi-Factor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ). Firstly, contingent reward that belongs to a swap agreement between the leader and the subordinate. Moreover, active and passive management by exception are other two dimensions of transactional leadership which are corrective leadership behavior. In the active management by expectation, the leader actively monitors subordinates' daily efforts and corrects occurring mistake. Meanwhile, in the management by expectation, the leader does not monitor the followers but waits for mistakes to happen and then takes action.

The findings of current study is in line with some of past studies. Concluded the criticisms of the transactional leadership styles. He illustrates that minimized this style as "short-term relationships of exchange with the leader" and this kind of relationship heads to create superficial, transient exchanges of satisfaction that can lead to animosity among participants. That is, this short-term relationship tends to make dissatisfaction between the leaders and their followers which may have negative impact on the relationship with crisis management. Nevertheless, in the KRI case wherein different crises exists, satisfaction of both participants (managers and employees) is very important to obtain effective crisis management which cannot be achieved through transactional leaders.

Additionally, transactional leadership needs financial support for rewarding the employees to enhance their performance for most of situations. Meanwhile, transactional leaders cannot reward the public sector employees in the KRI due to the critical economic situations that may not be seen in other cases. This is harmonious with the criticism of some scholars because transactional leadership uses a fixed program that fits to all leaders from around the world disregarding the situational and locational aspects of the crisis and the organization. That is, "one-size-fits-all organizational challenges".

Moreover, rewarding issue in the KRI public institutions is not unique. [90, 101, 117] affirmed the insignificant influence of transactional leaders on crisis management in the 2008 financial crisis. They outlined that due to the financial limits leaders cannot reward their followers and this negatively affects their relationships. Finally, the findings of that investigation show the negative effect of passive management by exception dimension on the employees. This may belong to employees that may not wait for issues to happen and later on taking actions as they become greater risks on the organization. Parallel to this, [118-120] have indicated that active and passive forms of management by exception do not work everywhere as the nature of cultures differ from

a country to another and may negatively affect the followers performance. Moreover, [54, 121, 122] indicate that passive management could be seen as an follower-centered version of avoidance-based leadership that is considered as a volitional and deliberate avoidance of employees that require leadership and support.

To conclude, findings of this study in the KRI public institutions illustrate that transactional leadership style has less influence on the crisis management. Transactional leaders can neither support their followers in reacting the general organizational objectives nor influence them in enhancing their behaviors in regard to obtain effective crisis management. Due to the economic crisis that affected the Kurdistan regional government, transactional leaders do not motivate their employees towards better performance since they cannot reward them due to economic crisis. Moreover, both forms of management by exception, active and passive forms, do not work as the culture of Kurdish people does not support waiting for mistakes to happen and then taking actions as they become greater risks on the organization. Therefore, the current study states that transactional leaders does not influence crisis management in the KRI public sector.

Moderating Impact of Government Policy

Government policy is defined as public reforms, regulations and/or policies as well as actions and supportive programs that aims at changing a particular status of issues for achieving a set of organizational goals. That is, governments make and use policies as the initiating spot to obtain a course of activities to tackle with an actual life fluctuations. Regarding the crises of the KRI, leaders need to have government strategies and policies to introduce the responsibilities and actions requiring them to be conscious of what and how they should conduct their duties effectively and efficientl. When leaders and their followers are feeded with sufficient information, they play their roles efficiently.

For answering the fourth question of this study, the fourth research hypothesis H4 has been formulated and tested by PLS path modeling. The current research speculated that the KRG policy positively moderates the relations between transactional style and crisis management. As conjectured, the findings detected a positive interaction effect between government policy and transactional attributes of leadership in implementing effective crisis management with the Beta Value 0.045, T-Value 2.246 and P-Value 0.040 as illustrated in Figure 4.2 and Table 4.20. That is, according to the findings of this study, government policy positively moderates the relationship between transactional leadership style and crisis management. Therefore, this study proposes that the more transactional attributes interacted with the government policy more effective the crisis management implementing on the KRI public sector.

The findings have indicated that government policy positively assists in removing responsibility ambiguities to cause better commitment among managers and the staff. [54, 121, 122] concluded that in high uncertainty situations, followers are usually following their managers to identify objectives and provide them with solutions for the occurring podromes with quick responses on their commitment. This, of course, increase staff's tendency to reduce their stress and make them capable of expressing positive ideas for achieving effective crisis management. In essence, this can be understood by the transformation of information as well as the technical attitudes which may drive to become specialized in crisis management strategies, services, according to interaction between different technologies, information, as well as internal characteristics of each organization (public institutions).

The findings of this study is consistent with previous studies, concerning the government policy. Qualitatively, [123-125] indicated that the development of entrepreneurship is influenced by the policies of governments. According to them, the government policy behavior identifies the success of the entrepreneurial activities of

organization. That is, government policy affects the commitment of frontline leaders and their followers to react in every stage of crisis management. In this regard, [123-125] argued that in high uncertainty situations, followers are waiting for their bosses to identify objectives and support them in finding solutions for coming issues.

In addition to the conceptual studies on government policy, there are some empirical studies conducted in various areas, and their status were either dependent or independent or moderator showing different results. As a moderator, examined the moderating impact of the government policy on the organizational factors, transformational leadership, and management of construction waste crisis; and the research reported that Nigerian policies are statistically significant. According to him, waste crisis reduction framework policy help the human resources, namely transformational leadership, to take control over the coming issues of the construction waste management.

The present research results determine that government policy has high influence on the crisis management through the transactional leaders. [126] stated that in the relationship between transactional leadership and risk reduction "it is reasonable to expect that legislative regulation will increase the effectiveness of a compliance system". Further, according to [124, 127] leaders of the governments should help individuals to play their roles effectively and easily. That is, in high uncertainty situations, with support of government policies, transactional leaders can help the followers feeling more confident and perceiving more support from their managers, in which it results in employees to be more cautious for taking the responsibilities of their daily duties.

In addition to the literature, the findings of this study is supported by the path goal theory of leadership [128, 129] and crisis management theory . Further, [110, 130] indicates that Path Goal Theory directs towards the moderating influence of many variables such as task structure , role clarity, job scope, organization's strategy. That is, the Path Goal has asserted that leadership attributes may affect followers` performance in different circumstances. Moreover, [110, 130] have used Path Goal Theory, supported with conceptual frameworks, suggesting that identifying responsibilities is significant for the employees to realize work requirements so as to commit to better performance. Organization's policy illustrate a framework for the followers; employees who took responsibility distribution from the top management were seen to be more pleased with their duties. Therefore, leaders can have pivotal position in clarifying regulations and procedures set by the top management; and so mitigating the size of crisis damage.

The Path Goal Theory belongs to the doctrine that true leaders light the roads indispensable for their followers to obtain the institution's objectives. Based on this theory, leaders can get that with two key ways. Firstly, leaders may participate in behaviors that support followers to facilitate implementing the goals. That is, leaders can provide information and other needed resources to achieve the organizational objectives. Secondly, in certain situations, as leaders are able to eliminate barriers that might prevent employees' endeavor of their goals such as removing organizational factors that minimize the chances of achieving goals. Path Goal Theory also indicates that the key liability of a leader should be reinforcing followers` expectations and instrumentalities.

Moreover, Crisis Management Theory entails that particular moderators and mediators may have effect on the leaders' relations with their organizations; among them is crisis policy. Achieving effective crisis management in a specific institution, public or private sector, requires tailoring programs and crisis policies for each phase of the crisis management. On the other hand, indicated that the main aim of this theory is not to display a variety of plans for all organizations; it is also to get an institution ready to think inventively towards the inconceivable so as to take the best options during crisis circumstances.

Finally, [131, 132] concluded that a constant policy for all issues and all organizations is not a rational objective. Nevertheless, a systematic, well-prepared, and collective procedure of crisis policy is the key of obtaining effective crisis management. Therefore, [131, 132] crisis management theory suggest that leaders need integrative crisis policy for each organization to achieve effective crisis management. All in all, results of the structural measurement supported the fourth hypothesis H4 that government policy moderates on the transactional leadership with crisis management in the KRI public sector. According to the findings, it can be understood that government policy has a significant influence in moderating between transactional leadership and crisis management. Therefore, institutions and leaders following the attributes of this style of leadership should focus on exercising institutional rules and policies so as to help their organizations to guarantee effective crisis management.

Implications

The current study has illustrated in memorable contributions towards the body of knowledge for academicians and practitioners (leaders). The findings of the study have indicated to significant contributions to theory on transactional leadership style, crisis management and government policy. As a result, the present study has resulted in theoretical as well as practical contributions.

Theoretical Implications

Based on prior empirical evidences as well as theoretical gaps found in the literature, this study was conducted according to the conceptual framework. Meanwhile, that conceptual framework has been supported and established upon the arena of two main theoretical perspectives which are [106, 133] Path Goal Theory and Crisis Management Theory of [132, 134]. Accordingly, the current study incorporated Government Policy as a moderating variable to comprehend the relationships between leadership (Transactional style) and Crisis Management. Furthermore, this study attempted to identify the played role by this leadership style to prevent or mitigate the disastrous outcomes of the crises using effective crisis management in the KRI public sector. As a result, the study provided some theoretical implications on the links between the mentioned variables. Moreover, the present study was conducted to clarify previous inconsistent relationship results in similar or same variables that followed the limitations and recommendations highlighted by previous scholars.

According to the findings, the present study has contributed to the public policy and crisis management in the public sector as transactional leadership style cannot play a notable role in dealing with crisis management especially in the public sector. Accordingly, government policy can positively help managers of public organizations to enhance their behaviors and attitudes. As a result, the current study is the first attempt that collected government policy with leadership styles and crisis management. Therefore, this could be measured as an important theoretical contribution in its applicability to the current KRG crises.

More importantly, this study has pursued to declaim the lack of research on the linkages for further establishing and understanding these relationships responsively. The findings and discussions of this study has addressed several contributions to theory in the research about transactional leadership style and crisis management incorporating the moderating role of government policy. That is, in contrast to previous researches, transactional leadership style is not important than other leadership styles such as (servant, charismatic, and transformational) to influence staff in the crisis time which is more suitable for the public sector. In a developing country like Yemen, transactional leadership is indicated as having more effectiveness on crisis management [45, 111, 135]. Meanwhile in this study, the transactional style has less

or no significant relation with crisis management. This may belong to the difference in the culture of these two nations and the nature of crises in these two places.

Finally, empirical results of this study has concluded that government policy can have a significant impact towards crisis management and transactional leadership style and making an important contribution in the public policy and crisis management. Findings of this research have also provided the literature in terms of concluding how crisis management could be more effective. Accordingly, this study has outlined towards a comprehensive framework that concludes the moderating influence of government policy on the relationship of transactional leadership and crisis management in the public sector of KRI.

Practical Implications

Related to practical implications, the empirical results of this study highlighted several contributions to the body of knowledge in terms of organizational behavior that might be significant, especially for the leaders to deal with the crises situations in the public institutions of the KRI. In connection to the organizational behavior, this study has proved that leadership style is extremely significant to provide an effective crisis management in the public sector. That is, based on the findings, leaders of the public sector can have notable influences on the public sector employees to work harder during crisis situations.

Moreover, the study has outlined that public sector leaders can communicate, direct, feedback, motivate, fairly control, reward, empower and train employees that leads them to enhance their efforts to deal and mitigate the crisis consequences. Purposely, the present study has focused on the public sector for understanding how transactional leaders and government policy can make positive changes to the behavior of subordinate's behavior towards effective crisis management. Thus, the empirical evidences have indicated that transactional leadership is not influential to the crisis management. This belongs to the fact that the transactional leaders in the public sector are less obliged for supporting their subordinates. As a result, transactional leaders have to pay more attention to spend more time, provide freedom and reward good efforts to foster effective crisis management in the public sector.

In institutional environments, leaders should look into several key aspects because when they explain their expectance to their followers it becomes persuading for the staff to work upon expectation. Furthermore, the findings have indicated by the underpinning Path-Goal Theory that exercising appropriate leadership practices can boost the effective crisis management. Hence, the leaders in the KRI public institutions usually show limited actions in this concern, this study suggests that leaders and human resources management professionals have to guarantee that sufficient focus is provided in this regard.

Concerning team working and leader-employee behavior, this study offers numerous orientation and training programs to promote the confidence of the leaders and foster their impact on the staff in all stages of crisis management. In essence, these programs usually assist to comprehend challenges that face the organization when a crisis happens. Moreover, such programs provide general information about employees and crisis management as well. In most emergency times, leaders free their followers to deliver service and make immediate decisions. Nonetheless, the leaders take responsibility to follow the government policies and regulations in the public sector to understand their boundaries particularly in the developing autocratic environments like the KRI.

Finally, the current study has suggested a guideline for the government to give guidelined freedom to the leaders in the public institutions in the KRI for achieving better leadership and effective crisis management that leads to overcome the crisis situation. For illustration, the public organizations must have policies to reward, serve, orient and train the leaders and their followers as well. Further, the findings of the study

referenced that policy makers can have more influence when the government implements bureaucracy and regulates routine in the public institutions. That is, the leaders require more reform policies from the governments to guarantee an effective crisis management.

According to the findings of the study, although leaders require more freedom in the crisis situation, the government legislative controls over corruption and misuse of the public rights is required to ensure the effectiveness of the applied crisis management strategy. Specifically, the present study suggests the implementation of a management system policy to assist the leaders in the emergency situation. Moreover, the study asks for control of government over issues when the signals appear in the KRI. That is, the study has referenced that government should have framework plan for the crisis management especially in the public institutions in the KRI.

To conclude, the present study has several practical implications. The findings of this study indicate that leadership has impact on the followers in the public sector and this helps to enhance performance of the staff in the organization in the emergency situations. The study findings encourage the leaders to follow key aspects in this regard such as, rewarding, communicating, serving, feed backing, motivating and fairly controlling the employees. In addition, this study urges the public institutions to provide orientations and specific training programs so as to increase the ability of leaders. Finally, the study has illustrated that the government policies should be clearer and the policy makers have to set laws and regulations to be a guideline for leaders to deal with any crisis facing the KRI.

Limitations and Scope for Further Study

In the course of conducting this study, several limitations have been found that can be beneficial for future research recommendations. First of all, based on the findings in previous literature, the research design employed in the current study was survey questionnaire in which cross-sectional research strategy has been used in this study counting the period of six months for collecting data. This belongs to the type of information deemed necessary and sufficient through the use of cross-sectional data collection method. Therefore, it was difficult to find out the causality direction for which such relationships between independent and dependent variables could not be concluded. Recommending for future, researchers are considering to target wider sample from different occupational settings to unearth the generalizable findings in relation to leadership styles and their contribution towards crisis management moderated by government policy.

Secondly, this study has been conducted mostly during the COVID-19 period. Thus, delays in contributing and collecting the questionnaire has happened in some institutions because of Movement Control Order in most of the world, especially in KRI. Nonetheless, this issue has been solved by follow up phone calls, sending special SMS, personal communications and visiting the institutions twice or thrice. Further, this study has seen all KRI crises as one package. Therefore, future studies may consider the COVID-19 crisis as a different and most important factor to conduct further research on government policy taken solely for crisis management and organizational behavior.

In addition, another limitation is generalizability. The results of this study can absolutely not be generalized on other countries and regions for the differences in culture, time, environment, respondent psyche and cultures. Moreover, the collected data of this study was restricted to a geographical region (Kurdistan Region of Iraq). Therefore, this study recommends further research on different countries, cultures and environments. Furthermore, this study was conducted on the public sector of KRI so the generalizability of the research is quite limited. As a result, this research suggests

research on the private sector along with the public sector, as the government policy and leadership styles differ for these sectors.

Because of the complexity of the nature of the crisis management process, the survey method (quantitative method) has been employed in this study. Although the response rate of this was more than 42% and this rate is considered high compared to other studies, the quantitative cannot depict the picture of what, why and how things happen. Hence, it might be beneficial for this field to conduct face-to-face personal by other researchers to achieve minute data suitable for the KRG policy regarding crisis management. Therefore, using both methods (quantitative and qualitative) may increase the response rate and motivate the respondents (both interview and survey informants) of the study to give improved and useful response in this regard.

To measure crisis management, this study has relied on one respondent, which is the managers of public institutions only. Although managers are to some extend participating in decision making, considering the employees in future research is highly recommended for obtaining better understanding of efficient crisis management. Regarding the model of measurement, this study followed [45, 111, 135] was employed which is very long and may affect the results. Therefore other conceptualizations and measurement of items are recommended in the future studies. Finally, no significance impact of transactional leadership on crisis management should be more tested through mediation influence as well.

Conclusion

The findings of this study have provided empirical clues of the moderating impact of government policy on the relationship between leadership and crisis management. In detail, the government policy moderated the relationship between transactional leadership and crisis management in the KRI public sector. Moreover, the findings have revealed that transactional leadership is not significant to the crisis management. That is, the research results have provided support for the theoretical hypotheses partially supported. It is important to conclude that this study has met the answer of all research questions raised in the beginning despite some limitations.

More importantly, the theoretical framework of the current study has supported Path-Goal Theory and Crisis Management Theory that have provided a clear understanding of the research framework. More specifically, the findings of this study have supported the explanations on Path-Goal Theory (House, 1971) as the theory argues that government policy significantly moderates and boosts the relationship between leadership styles and crisis management. According to this theory, when the policy makers identify the responsibility of the employees, they produce better outcomes. Similarly, the study also revealed that leaders have the ability to provide effective crisis management as per the assertions of crisis management theory.

Finally, apart from theoretical and practical contributions, several future research directions have been identified. The research findings have also provided recommendations to the policy makers, leaders and their followers that their appropriate reactions ensure effective crisis management in the KRI public institutions. Similarly, government policy can positively affect leaders to deal with the crisis circumstances. All in all, this research has successfully achieved research objectives and provided a valuable contribution to the body of knowledge in the related fields.

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