

**Effect of Leadership Style & Subordinate's Non-task Achievement on Leader's
Attribution of Subordinate's Poor Performance**

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Thesis Summary

An experimental study has been conducted in a field setting, using a two-factor ANOVA design, to explore whether 1) leadership style, and 2) the subordinate's achievements in non-task related fields, (e.g., social or cultural spheres), have an effect on: a) leader's attribution of causes of subordinate's poor performance; and b) his response to poor performance.

The study uses an attributional model of leadership of poor-performance subordinates (Mitchell et. al., 1981) which suggests that the leader first attempts to diagnose the causes of poor performance by "collecting" information about the subordinate's behaviour. Then based upon the causal attributions made a response to the poor performance is selected by the leader.

The hypotheses tested were broadly as follows. Leaders with different leadership styles will differ in their attribution and response to poor performance; and subordinate's high standing in non-task related fields will moderate leader's attribution and response to poor performance. Along with these new hypotheses, validity of some of the central hypotheses of the model (Mitchell et. al. 1981) were also verified.

The results indicated that managers with high-structure orientation differed significantly from managers with low-structure orientation. Between high-consideration and low consideration managers the distinction did not, however, emerge so sharply.

The subordinate's non-task related achievements did have a pronounced effect on both attribution and response of the leader. Some apparent contradiction in the results could be finally resolved within the framework of theory with the help of post hoc tests.

The results also fully supported the three central hypotheses of the model (Mitchell et. al., 1981) tested viz., 1) attribution will be positively correlated to response; 2) leaders will have a general bias to attribute the cause of failure to the subordinate; and 3) leader's response will be directed more towards the subordinate than towards changing the task, environment, or other contextual factors.