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## AN INVESTIGATION ON THE MEDITATING ROLE OF MOTIVATION IN CONNECTING TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND EMPLOYEES COMMITMENT

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### ABSTRACT

On the leadership continuum, transformational leadership is widely recognized as the best style of leadership in shaping the employees, attitude, behavior, and commitment. Likewise, the motivation is considered as the best apparatus in enhancing the employees' commitment level. In this regard, this study is an effort to investigate the facilitating role of motivation in the connection between transformational leadership style and employees' commitment in the context of higher education institutions, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. The results are supportive and helpful in providing significant information to the existing database of knowledge about transformational leadership, employees' motivation and commitment in higher educational context. In this connection, some recommendations are emerged from the results of present study to facilitate the policymakers and future researchers.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The success of every organization including higher institutions is contingent upon effective management of their human resources. In contemporary competitive era, human resources are considered as the backbone for the development of institutions as the institutional progression is directly linked with potential and capabilities of their human resources (Gordon & Whitchurch, 2007). In this regard, commitment and motivation are also considered as vital gears in shaping the attitude and behavior of the workforces (Malik et al., 2010). The committed and motivated workforces are the precious assets of institutions as the committed workforce intends to continue in institutions with prolonged manners while motivated employees are helpful for institutions due to their spirited and inspired intentions towards attainment of institutional long-term objectives (Raziq

et al., 2019). In this link, the leadership styles and effective role is vital in boosting the workforces' motivation, commitment and performance thereby focusing on vision and mission of the institutions to achieve the desired standards and objective more comprehensively (George & William, 2013).

The leadership in higher institutions are effective in chasing long-term objectives by applying different styles. Among various styles, the transformational leadership styles gained continuous momentum during the past decades due to its supportive, productive and creative landscape (Tahir et al., 2014). The transformational leaders are not only effective in inducing emotional attachment of the workforces towards the concerned institutions but also influential in improving motivation and inspiration of the workforces (Muhammad & Kuchin, 2016). The transformational leaders over inspired behavior enhancing the workforces' emotional strength and try to augment the workforces' attitude and behavior matched with the vision and mission of the institution (Ryan & Herman, 2017). Therefore, transformational leaders are more effective in enhancing workforces' motivation, commitment and performance as these aspects are considered as effective elements for the institutional credibility and success (Ndlovu et al., 2018). This study aimed to explore the relationships between transformational leadership styles and workforce commitment through facilitating role of the employees' motivation.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

The leadership literature provides an insight into various leadership styles that are effective in diverse circumstances. The effective leadership style is an amalgamation of various attributes those which are vital for institutions as well as for workforces (Martin et al., 2005). It help institutions in chasing their long-term objective on one hand, however, on another hand, it helps to augment attitude and behavior of workforces (Bolden et al., 2008). The literature revealed that transformational leadership in vital predictor of employees' motivation due to its effective attribute of inspirational motivation (Ghafoor et al., 2011). Further revealed that motivation is also significant forecaster of employees' commitment and performance (Keumala & Indra, 2014). Similarly, various researchers validated the significant and positive connection between transformational leadership and employees' commitment (Ndlovu et al., 2018). Thus, transformational leadership is popular most and effective leadership trait that gained persistent drive in connection to employees' motivation, commitment, and performance.

### **2.1 TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP**

In the contemporary era, due to increased globalization, higher institutions need effective leadership to achieve desired status and ranking of institutions. The transformational leadership is considered as effective leadership trait to inspire, encourage and influence employees to become innovative and creative to bring positive change towards success of institutions (Judge & Piccolo, 2004). These leaders are effective in promoting strong ownership sense, encouraging institutional culture, endorsing employees' autonomy at workplaces, inspiring to face unexpected eventualities, encouraging the autonomy in decision making and inspire employees to achieve the desired outcomes in suitable manners (Bass & Bass, 2008). The inspiration, mobilization, morality and conflict resolution are the effective attributes of the transformational leaders which helps them in motivating their employees towards institutional vision (Fatma & Aini, 2015). This leadership style is effective

in creating vision, inspiring change and “act as a role model for their” employees which in turn makes them motivated and committed (Ndlovu et al., 2018).

## **2.2 EMPLOYEES' MOTIVATION**

The motivation is the potential, dynamism, and determination of employees which they bring along when joining the institutions. Thus, further increase in motivation of employees in the main responsibility of concerned leadership to bring them at front while chasing institutional objectives more sophisticatedly (Bénabou & Tirole, 2003). The motivated workforces are the dire need of the institutions as it helps them in achieving their desired status. The inspired employees work through persistent involvement when the leader concerned provide them autonomy and empowerment in decision making (Buelens & Broeck, 2007). Thus, employees' motivation is vital aspect which leads to higher commitment and greater performance at the workplace (Choong et al., 2012). Thus, the motivation, on part of leaders, towards their employees, need persistent support from institutions as these institutions might be able to achieve their desired status and standards only when they have motivated and committed workforces in the institutions (Hanaysha & Majid, 2018).

## **2.3 EMPLOYEES' COMMITMENT**

The commitment is the emotional affiliation and bond of the employees with the institution which cannot be daunted in any circumstances. The motivated employees are expected to be more committed with their respective institutions thereby showing utmost determinations and potential to achieve assigned tasks (Aavoid et al., 2004). The committed employees are considered as the vital source of achieving the institutional desired objective (Ismail & Yusuf, 2009). Here, the role of leadership in making the employees committed is vital as the employees' commitment needs persistent support and encouragement from concerned leadership. Thus, committed employees intend to work with concerned institutions in prolonged manners (Johannes et al., 2012). The employees' commitment has different classifications that depend on the contextual directions and behavioral development which are highly influenced by the behavior of concerned leadership (Irfan et al., 2014). Therefore, in augmenting the workforces' commitment, leadership is playing critical role in shaping employees' attitudes and behavior (Ndlovu et al., 2018).

## **3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The study procedures comprise the research approach, “population and sample and methods for data collection and analysis”.

### **3.1 PHILOSOPHY AND APPROACH**

This work, a survey approach is used to access the population of study as it is an easier way to approach the population of the study and which is a widely used tool.

### **3.2 POPULATION AND SAMPLE**

This study has been conducted in the higher educational context, therefore, the “primary data has been collected from” the academicians of Gomal University, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. The population of the study comprises 288 teaching faculty in which a sample of 120 participants has been selected by using the standard formula for sample size determinations. Thus, primary data has been collected from 120 respondents.

### 3.3 INSTRUMENT AND MEASUREMENT

The primary data was collected through a structured questionnaire that was adapted from the existing research studies. The questionnaire comprises diverse research variables like transformational leadership, employee motivation, and employees' commitment. The questions (open-ended) in questionnaire were asked from the respondents of the study which were then coded and analyzed by using different statistical procedures.

### 3.4 DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

The secondary data (literature) was collected from different online bases containing different related research articles while "primary was collected through questionnaire". The said first-hand data was then analyzed by using different statistical tools like the correlation, simple regression and hierarchical regression to answer the research questions (hypotheses) as emerged from theoretical framework of the current research study.

### 3.5 RESEARCH CONTEXT

This study has been conducted in the "context of higher educational institutions" due to their critical role in the social-economic development of the country. For this purpose, only one institution (Gomal University) was selected which is one of the oldest and well-established universities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. The teaching faculty was the target population of study due their critical role in imparting quality education to students.

### 3.6 RELIABILITY EXAMINATION

From the Cronbach's Alpha analysis values in Table 1, the result is considered highly reliable as all values are greater than 0.7.

**Table 1** The Reliability Statistics

Research Variables	No. of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Reliability Result
Transformational Leadership	12	0.819	Highly Reliable
Employees Commitment	12	0.813	Highly Reliable
Employees Motivation	12	0.798	Highly Reliable

## 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The relationships among the research variables have been examined through the statistical procedures which have been produced in the analysis section. To analyze the data, inferential tools have been used like "correlation and regression". The correlation was used to examine the association among the research variable while regression "was used to examine cause-&-effect" and mediation relationships of research variables.

**Table 2:** Correlation Analysis (N = 120).

		Transformational Leadership	Employees Motivation
Transformational Leadership	Pearson Correlation	1	0.566**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<0.001
Employees Motivation	Pearson Correlation	0.566**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<0.001	
Employees Commitment	Pearson Correlation	<b>0.672**</b>	<b>0.598**</b>
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<0.001	<0.001

### 4.1 CORRELATION ANALYSIS

The correlation has been used to examine the "strength & direction" of relationship (association) among the research variables (transformational leadership, employees' motivation and employees' commitment) to analyze the hypothesis about the association (correlation).

This study aimed to examine association “between transformational leadership”, employees commitment and employees’ motivation which was transformed into research hypothesis #1. By applying the correlation, Table 2 result confirmed the “positive and significant” association between “transformational leadership” and employees’ commitment (0.672 & <0.001) which are in line with the previous studies results (Avoid et al., 2004; Ismail & Yusuf, 2009; Ndlovu et al., 2018). The transformational leadership is linked positive and significantly with the employees' motivation (0.566 & <0.001) which were also previously validated (Dvir et al., 2002; Ahmad et al., 2014; Aunjum et al., 2017). Similarly, employees’ commitment is significant and positive associated with employees’ commitment (0.598 & <0.001) which was also confirmed by previous studies (Mohsan et al., 2004; Aborisade & Obioha, 2009; Faisal et al., 2017).

#### 4.2 REGRESSION ANALYSIS

The regression procedure “has been used” to examine direct relation among research variables (transformational leadership & employees’ commitment) and indirect relationship among the independent “transformational leadership” and dependent “employees’ commitment” through the mediating variable (employees’ motivation) by offering different paths (a, b, c &  $\hat{c}$ ).

**Table 3:** Regression Analysis (Model Summary) (Path a)

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.566 <sup>a</sup>	.420	0.415	0.4484

**Table 3a:** Regression Analysis (ANOVA) (Path a)

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
1	Regression	6.750	1	6.750	55.630	<0.001 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	14.319	118	0.121		
	Total	21.069	119			

**Table 3b:** Regression Analysis (Coefficients) (Path a)

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.438	0.369		3.898	<0.001
	Transformational Leadership	0.625	0.084	0.566	7.459	<0.001

The study also aimed to “examine mediating” role of employees’ “motivations in the relationship between transformational leadership” and employees’ commitment by applying Barren and Kenny (1986) mediation procedures which comprise the four-step process. The results provide significant information about the mediation paths (a, c,  $\hat{c}$  & b). Likewise, in Tables 3, 3a and 3b, concerning path (a) provide result about independent (transformational leadership) and mediator (employees motivation) thereby bringing 42% variation with significant outcomes (coefficient value = 0.625 & P-value = <0.001). Tables 4, 4a and 4b, provide the results concerning the paths (c,  $\hat{c}$  & b). In model 1, (direct relationship = c), 37.5% variation in the employees commitment is due to the transformational leadership with the significant outcomes (coefficient value = 0.522 & P-value = <0.001).

**Table 4:** Regression Analysis (Model Summary) (Path c,  $\hat{c}$  & b)

Model	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	SEE	R <sup>2</sup> Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.419 <sup>a</sup>	0.375	0.368	0.43339	.175	25.086	1	118	.000
2	.421 <sup>b</sup>	0.478	0.464	0.43464	.002	.324	1	117	.000

**Table 4a:** Regression Analysis (ANOVA) (Path c,  $\hat{c}$  & b)

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	4.712	1	4.712	25.086	<0.001 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	22.164	118	0.188		
	Total	26.876	119			
2	Regression	4.773	2	2.387	12.633	<0.001 <sup>c</sup>
	Residual	22.103	117	0.189		
	Total	26.876	119			

**Table 4b:** Regression Analysis (Coefficients) (Path c,  $\hat{c}$  & b)

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.250	0.459		4.903	<0.001
	Transformational Leadership	0.522	0.104	0.419	5.009	<0.001
2	(Constant)	2.156	0.489		4.409	<0.001
	Transformational Leadership	0.482	0.227	0.386	3.795	<0.001
	Employees Motivation	0.365	0.115	0.058	3.659	0.020

The model 2 provides results about the path ( $\hat{c}$  & b) with the inclusion of mediators (employees' motivation). The results shows 47.8% variation in the employees commitment is due to the transformational leadership and employees motivation with the significant outcomes likewise transformational leadership and commitment (coefficient value = 0.482 & P-value = <0.001) and employees motivation and commitment (coefficient value = 0.365 & P-value = 0.020). Therefore, due the increase in R<sup>2</sup> (from 42% to 47.8%) and decrease in coefficient values of transformational leadership after inclusion of employees motivation (from 0.522 to 0.482), confirmed that employees motivation partially mediate "relationship between transformational leadership" and employees commitment. These results are in line with previous studies results (Hayward et al., 2004; Limsila & Ogunlana, 2007; Rudy & Maria, 2009; Rima & Chowdhury, 2014; Saqib et al., 2017).

## 5. CONCLUSION

The study was "aimed to examine" facilitating the role of the motivation in connection between "transformational leadership and employees' commitment" by collecting the primary data from the academicians hailing from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. The motivation was expected to play facilitating role, as per hints from existing literature, in connection "between transformational leadership style and employees' commitment". Therefore, this study also provides significant results through statistical procedures about the relationships among research variables under study which can be concluded in the following decision points.

- The association among research variables has been confirmed over correlation procedure which provides significant information thereby confirming the positive and the significant association among research variables (transformational leadership, employees' commitment, and employees' motivation).
- The cause-&-effect relationship between the predictor "transformational leadership" and criterion variables "employees' commitment" is confirmed over the regression procedure by

confirming the direct relationship between research variables (transformational leadership and employees' commitment).

- The mediating role of motivation has been confirmed over remaining paths of mediation procedures which confirmed the partial mediation through statistical values like an increase in  $R^2$  and decrease in coefficient values after inclusions of employees' motivation as mediator in relationship between variables.

Transformational leadership has been considered and validated as the best leadership style for improving employees' motivation, "commitment and performance". The main reason behind is the artistic attributes of the transformational leaders likewise the individualized considerations, "intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, and idealized influence". The transformational leadership through these attribute always encourage their employees towards vision and mission of the concerned institutions. Therefore, institutional management is required to promote transformational behavior in institutions. Similarly, the motivated employees are considered as the precious assets of the institutions, therefore, the management of the higher institutions are direly needed for the arrangement of training and courses to augment the attitude and behavior of their employees. The committed employees are fundamental needs of every organization including the higher institutions, therefore, the institutional management is required to put their emphasis on employees' commitment from every dimension to make their employees more committed to their respective institutions.

## 6. AVAILABILITY OF DATA AND MATERIAL

Information relevant to this study is already presented in this article.

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