

LEADERSHIP STYLES AND EMPLOYEES COMMITMENT IN THE CONTEXT OF HIGHER EDUCATION. THE MEDIATING ROLE OF MOTIVATION

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ABSTRACT

The leadership styles, employees' commitment and motivation are considered as vital components for the success of each and every organization including the higher education institutions (HEIs). In this regard, the current study aims to explore the influence of transactional and transformational leadership styles on employees' commitment working in HEIs. In the same line, the present study also explored the mediating role of motivation in the link between leadership styles and employees' commitment. For this purpose, data was collected from academicians which was analyzed by using different statistical tools to find out the answers of research questions that were extracted from the theoretical framework of current study. The correlation analysis shows that all research variables are positively correlated with each other. The regression analysis shows significant impact of predicting variables on criterion variable. Similarly, mediation analysis (two mediation models) provide confirmations that motivation (mediator) partially mediate linkage between independent and dependent variables in both the mediation models. The conclusions were drawn in the light of the finding preceded by certain recommendations.

Keywords: *Motivation, Leadership Styles, Employees' Commitment & HEIs*

INTRODUCTION

The leadership styles (transformational and transactional) have been widely researched by different researchers in different contexts. The crux of their researches revealed that both the styles are vital and applicable in each and every organization including higher educational institutions. Similarly, in the contemporary era, the commitment on the part of employees and leadership is widely debated during the last decade. These researcher revealed that leadership styles are the significant predictors towards the employees' commitment. Both the leaders (transformational and transactional) always tries to inspire their employees towards the achievement of pre-fined objectives. Here, the role of motivation nurtures as both the leaders always focused upon the notion of motivational behaviors. In this regard, the motivation becomes an important phenomenon which should be discussed on priority basis while making the employees more committed towards their assigned tasks and the organization as a whole. For this purpose, the current study is an attempt to explore the mediating role of motivation in relationship between leadership styles (transformational and transactional) and employees' commitment in the context of higher education institutions.

Motivation is vital for the enhancement of individuals' direction, passion and efforts in order to achieve the concerned objective (Ryan & Deci, 2000a). Motivation properly regulates employee's work behavior and intrinsic motivation improves the inner self of employee such as his interest and pleasure while extrinsic motivation develop the outer domain of an employee regarding his all deeds in life (Ryan & Deci, 2000b). Only motivated employees are able to compete in institutions, if employees of any institution are not properly motivated then they cannot perform their duties in order to achieve the pre-determined goals. Towards the successful business, prosperity and winning competition of employees are quite possible when they well motivated for their jobs' performance and concerned activities (Bénabou & Tirole, 2003). It is essential for every leader to understand all requirements, expectations and needs of his employee so as to generate proper work environment for his employee's motivation (Steers, Mowday & Shapiro, 2004). Employees can be fully motivated if their needs, responsibilities, working environment, efforts and supervision are given special priorities (Hennessey & Amabile, 2005). It's out for every leader and manager to establish friendly atmosphere, work environment and respectful feelings (Dongho, 2006).

Motivating employees is one of the key managerial functions due to which every employee enhance and develop his standard of performance in order to achieve the mark (Nohria, Groysberg & Lee, 2008). According to early leaders who are expert in study of personality, motivation has a key role in job seeking, goal setting and performance, creativity and competence are some attributes which are observed in individuals with high self-actualization motives (Herman & Broeck, 2009). The leaders of any institution or organization may fully motivate their employees for their commitment, efforts, practice, engagement and persistence to achieve objectives (Laurie & Wilmington, 2010). The leaders' bond with employees is influential element of employee motivation as it creates positive, specialized and respectful attitude and employees fully adopt their peers and enjoy work (Andersen & Pedersen, 2012). The leadership style is an important determinant of motivation and reactions of employees to their leaders usually depend on employees' and leaders' characteristics (Abdul & Fatimah, 2015). It is very necessary to motivate people for the enhancement of their level of commitment because motivation is the powerful force in determining the output; therefore, managers may ponder importance of values and attitude in the journey of their leadership that's why multifarious leadership styles affect motivation (Maina, 2015).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Andersen and Pedersen (2012) found that motivation is associated with the goal achievement, occupation success and productivity. Maina (2015) asserted that motivation and commitment are key elements to create striving workforces and establish productive employees through investment, credentials, reciprocity and alternative employment options, human resources pedals organization factors that merit promotion, loyalty and pay through HRM policies and the other factors that influence employee motivation are career opportunities, esteem, growth, climate, health benefit, autonomy and leadership. Bennell and Akyeampong (2007) explained that motivating employees

at HEIs level are perceived vital for getting academic success and developing learning environment (Bennell & Akyeampong, 2007) pointed out that universities are merely places where academicians can play vital role in ensuring standard and quality education in order to prepare students for reformation of the whole world and this can only be possible through motivation. The motivation is effective for academicians in order to improve and develop their performance and commitment so that standard of their institution may highly enhance and leaders must rely on the performance of their faculty members by positively motivating them for their concerned duties (Inam, Din & Hussain, 2008).

Max and William (2009) described that motivational theory may highly be effective for higher education leaders to know and predict the performance of their faculty members' success and academicians may show better performance and students' can develop in their specialized field due to leaders' positive motivation. Rasheed, Hassan and Shakeel (2010) asserted that motivated teachers play a very significant role in educational reformation at HEIs level. Qayyum and Siddique (2003) investigated that faculty members (teachers) are the pillars of the nation and educational system, therefore, it is essential to motivate them so that they may fruitfully build their students' personalities and improve the quality of educational institutions. Ronit and Dina (2007) asserted that universities are important institutions of the society where socialization of youth takes place; therefore, university teachers may be highly motivated so that reformation in the society as well as well in the higher educational institutions may easily occur. Ahmed (2009) explained that higher education commission of Pakistan is putting its efforts in polishing universities performance in Pakistan and taken various initiatives in order to improve teachers' learning and development for higher education progress in the country.

These initiatives include national and international eruditions, increasing salary packages, teachers' training and revising teaching reward programs. Imran, Hassan and Shakeel (2013) described that motivation of higher education teachers is quite challenging for the government in Pakistan as it is difficult to compete with the private sector universities in compensation hence they must have to give attention to non-monetary factors such as recognition, feedback and opportunities for career development to retain their high quality teachers. Mansour and Almansour (2012) found that transformational leadership accounts for high performance through its inspirational motivation behavior unlike transactional leadership. George and William (2013) asserted that the leaders who adopt transformational leadership style, successfully motivate their employees to expend extra effort in carry out their duties thereby ensuring the success of organization. Gopal and Chowdhury (2014) described that Motivational leadership's core principles explain that the leader must first have in place strong ethics, clear vision, authentic communication and be genuinely motivated to promote collaboration and positive energy throughout the institution which is further supported (Rizwan, Nazar, Nadeem & Abbas, 2016).

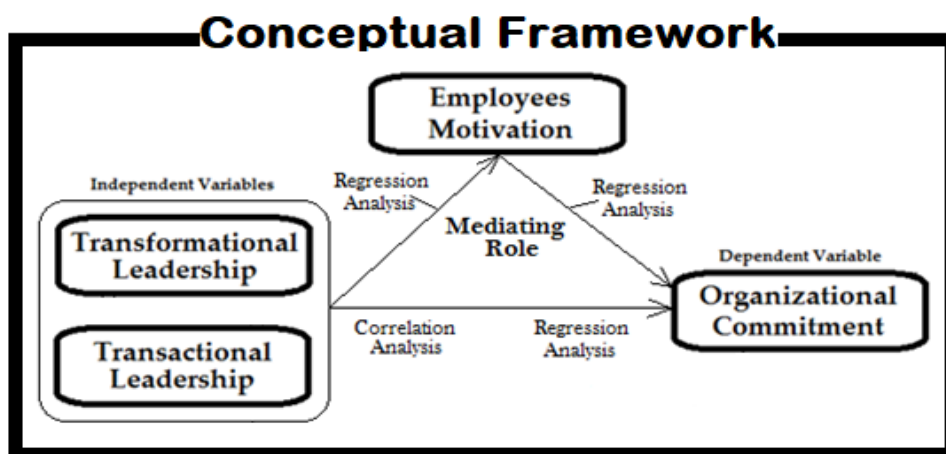
Problem Statement

The leadership is the only phenomenon which can increase or decrease the levels of commitment and performance in the institutions. To what extent, the relationship between the leadership styles and the employees commitment is mediated by the motivation in the context of higher education institutions is the main them of the current study.

Research Hypothesis

There is significant relationship between independent, mediator and the dependent variables.	Correlation	H ₁
The independent variable and mediators have significant impact upon the dependent variable (employees' commitment).	Regression	H ₂
The transformational leadership and the employees commitment relationship is mediated by motivation.	Hayes Process	H ₃
The transactional leadership and the employees' commitment relationship is mediated by motivation.	Hayes Process	H ₄

Figure 1 Theoretical Framework



RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study was descriptive in nature. The population of the study consisted of the faculty members of different universities in KP, Pakistan. Similarly, sampling is a typical practice utilized by the researchers to make inferences around an extensive gathering of population on the premise of a sample or little portion. The total numbers of respondents taken as samples from selected faculties in different universities comprises faculty of social and natural sciences were (n = 200). In the same line, the data collection is very important activity in research. All successive steps depend upon logical, precise and valid data. In order to achieve concerned objectives, the researcher personally visited each faculty member of social and natural sciences faculties for the purpose of data

collection from them. The data was collected through adapted version questionnaire. In this regard, the leadership questionnaire was adapted from Bass and Avoid (1990), the employees' commitment questionnaire was adapted from Mayer and Allen (1990) while the motivation questionnaire was adapted from Edward and Richard (2001). The collected data was analyzed by using the tools of correlation, regression and Hayes Process for mediation analysis.

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

The collected data was then analyzed by using different statistical tools to find out the answers of the research questions (hypotheses) and to reach the conclusion more comprehensively.

H₁: There is significant relationship among Research Variables

Table 2 The Table of Correlation (Association)

		Transformational	Transactional	Motivation
Transactional Leadership	Pearson Correlation	.495**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		
	n	200	200	
Motivation	Pearson Correlation	.347**	.663**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	n	200	200	200
Organizational Commitment	Pearson Correlation	.688**	.642**	.583**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000
	n	200	200	200

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

To explore the correlation between research variables, the Pearson Correlation tools was applied. The table above shows that both independent and mediator are significantly associates (correlated) with criterion variable. It further shows that the highest correlation is amid the transformational leadership style (independent variable) and the employees commitment (dependent variable) which is ($R=.688$ while $P\text{-value}=.000$). In the same line, the second highest correlation is between the transactional leadership style and the employees commitment ($R=.642$ & $P\text{-value}=.000$). Similarly, third correlation is between mediating variable (motivation) and dependent variable (employees commitment) ($R=.583$ & $P\text{-value}=.000$). The results shows that the transformational leadership style is more affective as it is highly correlated with employees' commitment. The same was also expected from the hints of the previous studies that transformational leadership has high correlation with the employees' commitment. Therefore, it is concluded that hypothesis about correlation is accepted. These results are in line with the previous studies results (Limsila & Ogunlana, 2007; Feizi, Ebrahimi & Beheshti, 2014; Gopal & Chowdhury, 2014; and Saqib, Siraj & Khan, 2016).

H₂: The Predictors have significant Impact on Criterion

Table 3 The Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	F	Sig.
1	.795 ^a	.633	.630	.43837	269.423	.000 ^b

a. Predictors: (Constant): Transformational, Transactional & Motivation

b. Dependent Variable: Organizational Commitment

Table 3a The Coefficients of Regression

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-.244	.189		-1.293	.197
	Transformational	.522	.035	.484	15.021	.000
	Transactional	.249	.044	.226	5.607	.031
	Motivation	.268	.038	.265	7.101	.016

To explore the relationship of cause-&-effect amid predictors (Transformational, Transactional & Motivation) and criterion variable (organizational commitment), the regression procedure was run. In model summary, the table (3), the R-square indicated the 63% variation/change in the dependent variable (employees commitment) is due to the independent (transformational, transactional & motivation) variables. Similarly, coefficients of regression table (3a) shows that all the predictors shows their prediction powers in bring change in the criterion variable. In this regard, the analysis shows that transformational leadership styles shows greater significance and tougher predictor of employees commitment (P= .000) as equated to the transactional style (P= .031). Correspondingly, results of regression (cause-&-effect) also validate and support results of correlation wherever association amid transformational style and commitment stronger (R=.688 while P-value =.000) than transactional style and organizational commitment (R=.642 & P-value =.000). Thus, from given statistics, it is decided that hypothesis # 2 is validated. These results are in line with the previous studies results (Rai & Sinha, 2005; Chipunza, Samuel & Mariri, 2011; Ngirande, 2014; and Saqib, Siraj & Khan, 2016).

The Mediation Analysis

H₃: Role of Motivation in-between Transformational & Commitment

Table 4 The Mediation Model (First)

Criterion	Predictors	R	R-Square	Coefficient	P-Value
Model 1					
Commitment	Constant	.6880	.4733	1.2271	0.000
	Transformational			.7426	0.000
Model 2					

Motivation	Constant	.3472	.1206	3.3390	0.000
	Transformational			.3709	0.000
Model 3-4					
Commitment	Constant	.7799	.6082	-.0945	.6239
	Motivation			.3958	0.000
	Transformational			.5958	0.000

In hypothesis third, motivation was used as a mediator in the connection amid the transformational style and commitment. To check the mediation effect, the Hayes Process (2007) procedure was used. The mediation process consists of four steps including the path a, b, c and c' . In table above, the first model (path c) (direct effect) shows 47% variation in the dependent variable (employees' commitment) is in line for predicting variable (transformational style). The transformational leadership style shows the positive and significant impact with (β - 0.74 while p- .000). Also, second mediation step (path a) shows 12% variation/change in dependent variable (motivation) due to transformational leadership. The transformational leadership style shows positive and significant on motivation with (β - 0.37 while p- .000). Likewise, the third & fourth steps of mediation offers path (b & c') by showing 61% change/variation in criterion variable (employees' commitment) due to the predictors (motivation & transformational). Also, it shows the impact (statistically significant) of motivation on employees' commitment (β - 0.40 with p- .000) and transformational leadership on organizational commitment (β - 0.60 with p- .000). The same results were also expected from hints of the previous research findings of different studies.

Commonly, the scholars used the p-value significance for deciding the mediation about all the four paths. But as all the paths are significant in current model of mediation, so the mediation decision will be taken on value of coefficient. It is noted that association amid transformational style and commitment is partially mediates by motivation. As the coefficient value decreases and connection remains significant amid transformational style (.74) and employees' commitment after arriving the mediator (motivation) (0.60). Thus, it is decided that first mediation model is Partial Mediation. Therefore, first model of mediation confirms that the mediator (motivation) play significant intermediary role in the connection amid transformational style and commitment. Thus, hypothesis # 3 is accepted as true and substantiated. These results are in line with the previous studies results (Hayward, Goss & Tolmay, 2004; Chipunza, Samuel & Mariri, 2011 and Khan, Siraj & Khan, 2016).

H₄: Role of Motivation in-between Transactional & Commitment

Table 5 The Mediation Model (Second)

Criterion	Predictors	R	R-Square	Coefficient	P-Value
Model 1					
Commitment	Constant	.6415	.4115	1.6605	0.000
	Transactional			.7234	0.000
Model 2					

Motivation	Constant	.6627	.4391	1.7780	0.000
	Transactional			.7213	0.000
Model 3-4					
Commitment	Constant	.6754	.4562	1.1536	0.000
	Motivation			.2851	0.000
	Transactional			.5001	0.000

In forth hypothesis, motivation was used mediator in connection amid transactional leadership and organizational commitment. In table above, fist model (path c) (direct effect) shows 41% variation in dependent variable (employees commitment) due to the predictor (transactional style). The transactional leadership style shows positive and significant impact with (β - 0.72 while p- .000). Likewise, the mediation second step (path a) shows 44% variation/change in dependent variable (motivation) due to transactional leadership. The transactional leadership style shows positive and significant on motivation with (β - 0.72 while p- .000). Likewise, third & fourth steps of mediation provides path (b & c) showing 46% variation in criterion variable (employees commitment) is due predictors (motivation & transactional style). Also, it shows the impact (statistically significant) of motivation on organizational commitment (β - 0.29 with p- .000) and transactional leadership on organizational commitment (β - 0.50 with p- .000).

It is noted that association amid transactional style and commitment is partially mediate by motivation. As coefficient value declines and connection remains significant amid transactional style (.72) and commitment after arriving motivation as mediator (0.50). So, it is decided that first mediation model is Partial Mediation. Therefore, the first model of mediation confirms that the mediator (motivation) play significant intermediary role in connection amid transactional style and employees commitment. The results of the first mediation model in the current study confirm the existing research findings where motivation showed its significance in between transactional leadership and employees' commitment. Thus, hypothesis # 4 is accepted as true and verified. These results are in line with the previous studies results (Wahyuni, Christiananta & Eliyana, 2014; Khan, Siraj & Khan, 2016; and Chieh Tsai & Shih, 2016).

CONCLUSION

Keeping in view findings and results, it was investigated that motivation played a vital role in the loyalty to institution and success to work. Motivated employees sought for the tools and processes which might be advantageous. It was also found that leadership always promoted motivation opportunities in the higher educational institutions. Employees showed high levels of performance and commitment on the basis of their leaders' motivation. In present study, first hypothesis was about association (relationship) between the leadership styles (transactional and transformational) and employees' commitment of academicians. With respect to the correlation, from the suggestion of the related literature, it was expected that transformational leadership will be highly correlated with employees' commitment as compared to transactional leadership style. In this regard, the

same was the result of the correlation in current study as it valeted the previous research findings which shows strong correlation amid transformational leadership and employees' commitment.

In the same line, second hypothesis was regarding the calculation of cause-n-effect (regression) relationship amid the leadership styles (transactional and transformational) and the employees' commitment. In this regard, the current study reveals that both the leadership styles (independent variables) have significantly explained the variation/change in the dependent variable. By this way, the regression analysis shows the transformational leadership style is more powerful in predicting the employees commitment (coefficient value: .522 & significant-values: .000) as compared to the transactional leadership style and the employees commitment (coefficient value: .249 & significant-values: .031). With respect to mediation, it is the process of ordering the independent variables regarding its role in carrying change/variation in the dependent variable.

- The first model shows that in the direct relationship between transformational leadership an employee's commitment, the Beta weight is 1.2271 while in addition of motivation as mediator in relationships between transformational leadership style and employees commitment, it provides the Beta weight .5958. The first model of mediation shows the Partial mediation as the beta weight decreases from 1.2271 to .5958.
- The second model also shows that in direct relationship between transactional leadership and "employees commitment", Beta weight is 1.6605 while in addition of motivation as mediator in relationships between the transactional leadership style and the employees commitment, it provides the Beta weight .5001. The second model of mediation shows the Partial mediation as the beta weight decreases from 1.6605 to .5001.

Recommendations

- As per the directions of the previous researchers and the findings of the current research from the correlation, it is suggested the researchers and the academia may be focused more upon certain qualities and attributes of transformational leadership. As this leadership style has occurred as more effective and widely researched leadership style.
- In line with above recommendation, the regression analysis also confirms the presence of solid relationship (cause-n-effect) amid organizational commitment and transformational leadership on the part of academicians with beta value of (0. 52). Besides, beta value of transactional leadership is quite low (0. 25). Therefore, the same also endorse popularity and effectiveness of transformational leadership, so institutional authorities are required to emphasis on support of this style of leadership.
- The mediation models shows that the motivation play significant role in the association between organizational commitment and leadership styles. However, the role of motivation is stronger with transactional leadership. The reason behind is that the transformational leadership is himself stronger forecaster of organizational commitment without the support of mediator (motivation). In this regard, the institutional authorities may focus upon the motivational factors instead of leadership styles.

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