

## **Impact of Leadership Styles on Organizational Commitment**

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### **Abstract**

Organizational Commitment (OC) emerged as a prominent area in research in the recent past decades. OC is having very vital implications in relation to employee performance and organizational performance, because of it, has attracted a large attention of researchers. This study is an effort to examine the impact of leadership styles on organizational commitment in the context of insurance sector in Punjab. Two types of leadership styles, namely transformational and transactional leadership styles have been chosen as focus of research to investigate the impact on organizational commitment. This is imperative in order to ensure the successful management of employees and also to improve productivity and achievements of an organization. An attempt has been made to conduct a quantitative research by focussing in insurance sector in Punjab. To collect the required data, two hundred and fifty questionnaires were distributed to the respondents on the basis of judgemental sampling technique. Out of the questionnaires distributed, 247 sets of questionnaires were found fit for analysis where the other three were not included in the analysis because of lack of correct information. After the analysis of the data, the results have indicated that employees preferred effective commitment comparative to normative and continuance commitment; and transformational leadership styles than transactional leadership style. The impact of transformational leadership style is stronger on organizational commitment. The findings suggest that the insurance sector concerns need to establish an environment where managers can utilize their talent to the maximum.

### **Key Words**

Transformational Leadership Style, Transactional Leadership Style, Affective Commitment, Normative Commitment, Continuance Commitment

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## INTRODUCTION

Work organizations have been confronted with progressively more competitive global business climate. This forces organizations to develop policies to enhance workplace commitment on the one hand, and leads managers to develop their skills on effective leadership styles on the other. The workforce of the organization is additionally alert, learned and knowledgeable, and employers also want to enhance their utilization to get maximum benefits. If the workforce is not committed, then lack of security about job, reduced level of trust, increase in stress level and uncertainty will raise in the organization, which in turn, will lower the performance of the organization (Panayiotic *et al.*, 2011). Those who are more committed to their organizations are assumed to be more productive persons and behave with a higher sense of responsibility and loyalty (Ulrich, 1998). Leadership and its effectiveness is the main focus of profit organizations to achieve its ultimate objectives and to create employees' commitment toward their organization. Their leadership styles encouraged organizational commitment for the successful implementation of business strategies to achieve ultimately the organizational goals (Swanepoel *et al.*, 2000). The quality of efficient leader is like a channel that transforms a prospective to certainty. Leadership is the process which provides track, refreshing other and obtaining their intentional dedication to the leaders' vision. Blake and Mouton (1969) discussed leadership styles in terms of managerial grid, which recognize the importance of task and people-oriented leadership styles: a dictatorial leader greatly job-oriented with slight concern about people working in the organization while democratic is both job-oriented and people-oriented. Organizational commitment is one of the most examined variables in organizational research and widely elaborated in the management and behavioural sciences as a key factor in the relationship between individuals and organizations. Therefore, the manager's leadership style is able to affect the organizational commitment level of their subordinates and organizational commitment relates to a person's service manner, enthusiasm and readiness to perform the duty. Thus, the purpose of this study is to measure the impact of leadership styles on organizational commitment.

### Leadership Styles

In any work environment, it is considered that leadership is always an interesting subject. In reality, it is an indistinguishable part of human behaviour. It gives a positive direction to the use of human resources and brings out best in a man. It is one of these concepts which can be seen widely in people and the

organizations. Yahchouchi (2009) defined leadership as a process through which individuals influence the others in the organization to achieve their individual and organizational goals. Bohn and Grafton (2002) defined leadership in a new way that it creates a new vision; increase the self-confidence in employees through coordination and communication. In the world of global economy, people are becoming more eloquent and more educated; they require an environment of participation and more involvement in decisions. There are different styles of leadership ranging from autocratic, charismatic, participative, situational, bureaucratic, democratic and laissez faire (Mosadeghard, 2004). But new findings suggest two categories of leadership styles in the field of organizational leadership, namely transactional leadership (TL) and transformational leadership (TFL) which largely used in the studies (Rukmani K., Ramesh M., Jayakrishnan J, 2010). The model of transnational – Transformational Leadership was applied by Bass (1985) and operated by Bass and Avolio (1994) which was originally introduced for the first time in 1978 by Burns.

### **Transformational Leadership**

The model of Transformational Leadership (TFL) was originally recommended by leadership specialist and presidential dramatist James Macgregor Burns. According to Burns, TFL can be seen when "leaders and followers make each other advance to a higher level of moral and motivation". Avolio and Bass (1988, 1994) classified the leadership skills into 4 I's including idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration, which are related to behaviours précised in the theories of charismatic leadership (Conger and Kanungo, 1998). Idealized influence is honour, magnificence, absolute respect, and faithfulness to a leader who conveys idealized sense. Intellectual stimulation: the leaders give their best to motivate and stimulate, modernization and creativeness in the team members and their supporters by inquiring assumptions and exempling old situations in new tactics (Nicholoso 2007). Inspirational motivation includes the actions or behaviours of the leaders that motivate the team members to view the upcoming future brightly, pressure at team spirit and communicate a vision that is attainable and reachable (Antonakis *et al.*, 2003). Individual consideration is the attention to individual differences, having contracted with all of them, provoking the followers to be experienced through transferring responsibility (Hatter and Bass, 1988).

### **Transactional Leadership**

The other type of leadership which has been mostly used in organizational

studies is transactional leadership (TL) style. It also resulted that transactional leaders follow standards, assignments and task-based goals. They just extremely consider on duty achievement, benefits and penalty systems in the organizations to pressurize the employees for accomplishing the overall organizational objectives. Bass and Avolio (1994) and Antonakis *et al.* (2003) characterized the transactional leadership further into, specifically, contingent rewards, management by exception (active) and management by exception (passive). Contingent rewards refer to the leader clarifying the tasks that must need to be attained and utilize rewards to satisfy achieve outcome (Nicholson, 2007). On the other side of the coin, management-by-exception is that the leader assures that subordinates must accomplish the predefined principles. Management by exception (passive) deals like as to leaders who intervene like only when problems occurs or arise whereas management by exception (active) refers to such leaders who actively appraise and monitor the work of subordinates and followers and make it sure that predefined standards are met (Antonakis *et al.*, 2003).

### **Organizational Commitment**

Commitment is related to loyalty to the organization and its success that is reflected in the attitude of employees. Organizational commitment has become a highly researched job attitude in recent years, including several meta-analyses (Cooper-Hakim and Visweswaran, 2005; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990) of commitment constructs. All of these factors affect the commitment of employees in the organization and ultimately the performance of employees and their role in the success of the organization (Nortcraft & Neale, 1996). The most important, concrete and popular definition of organizational commitment is multi-dimensional approach of (Yiing Lee Huey *et al.*, 2009) defined Organizational Commitment as based on three facets: (1) affective commitment as "an employee's emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement within the organization", (2) continuance commitment as "commitment based on the cost level of leaving the organization", and (3) normative commitment as "an employee's feelings and sense of obligation to stay and remain within the organization." Therefore, the rate of retention of the employees goes up in the organization and on the whole, the performance of the organization also positively trends with the retie of retention.

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

A comprehensive review of literature on the relationship between leadership styles and organizational commitment was done in order to understand clearly the idea about the research concepts. The relationship between leadership styles and

organizational commitment brought to light the importance of having strong managers and the need to examine their roles in enhancing organizational commitment.

Mathebula (2004) examined the relationship between organizational factors such as human resource management practices, leadership, trust and the various dimensions of organizational commitment within an academic environment. A sample of 246 employees from eleven South African institutions of higher learning was used in the study. The results showed significant inter-correlation was found between trust and organizational commitment; leadership style and trust; organizational commitment and leadership styles.

Raja and Palanichamy (2006) investigated the most preferred leadership behaviors and its impact on employees' organizational commitment in Bharat Heavy Electrical Limited. For this study, 158 sample respondents had been drawn out from among the senior engineers and the trainee engineers group. Anova, Correlation and Regression were used to find out the relationship between leadership styles and organizational commitment. The results of the study concluded that senior managers perceived their leadership styles as more transformational than transactional and organizational commitment did not seem to make a difference among the sample respondents.

Hussein and Costa (2008) explored the relationship between teachers' organizational commitment and principal's leadership styles in an Islamic school located in a large urban center. Data was gathered using individual semi-structured interviews with teachers and the principal of the school. The findings from this study suggested a high level of teachers' overall organizational commitment existed in the study location and both transformational and transactional leadership styles seemed to have an influential impact on teachers' organizational commitment; however, the most prominent leadership style of school principals was transformational.

Sandhu and Kaur (2009) examined the relationship of leadership behavior of Indian bank managers and organizational commitment of the subordinates. The data was collected from a sample of 660 employees working in public and private sector banks in northern India. Exploratory factor analysis and hierarchical multiple regression analysis were used for analysis. Results revealed that transformational leadership behavior of supervisor significantly augment the affective and normative commitment of their subordinates.

Yahchouchi (2009) investigated the perceptions of employees regarding the prevalent leadership style in Lebanon and its influence on the commitment of employees. The primary information was gathered from 158 respondents selected

from employees functioning and residing in two diverse higher educational institutions in two different segments in Lebanon. The consequences of the study showed that Lebanese leaders tend to be more transformational than transactional. There is an affirmative and considerable connection present between transformational leadership and organizational commitment.

Devenport (2010) demonstrated the effects of leadership style on organizational commitment. The study was based on primary data which includes 113 respondents from social media networks. The study concluded that there is no correlation between initiating structure and organizational commitment. However, there is a positive and significant correlation to supervisor consideration and organizational commitment. The data showed a negative but non-significant correlation between initiating structure and supervisor consideration.

Abdullah (2011) examined the construct validity and internal reliability of Allen and Meyer's organizational commitment scale amongst the banking sector of Pakistan. The data was collected and analyzed by using the 215 responses from major cities of Pakistan. The research study discovered that the three measures of organizational commitment, i.e. affective, continuance and normative were different from each other. This suggests that Allen and Meyer's organizational commitment measures can be applied in Pakistani culture also.

Rehman *et al.* (2012) opined the employees' realization about the managerial style of their leaders and its relationship with organizational commitment in the learning division of Pakistan. The data was collected from 101 employees, including educational and admin staff who engaged willingly in this study. The consequences of the study demonstrated that both the transactional and transformational leadership has a positive relationship with organizational commitment, but transformational leadership has a somewhat stronger association as well as force on organizational commitment.

Aghashahi (2013) investigated the relationship between different leadership styles and the three components of organizational commitment. A cross-sectional survey was conducted among 300 employees in a contact centre in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. This research supported the positive effects of transformational leadership style on two components of organizational commitment, namely affective and normative, in the context of service industry.

Keskes (2014) studied the relationship between styles of leadership and dimensions of organizational commitment. An extensive literature research has been done in order to increase the understanding of leadership and organizational commitment as well as the relationship between these two concepts, and related literature was taken from various national and international publications. The

results of the study emphasized that transformational leadership was positively associated with organizational commitment in a variety of organizational settings and cultures.

### **NEED OF THE STUDY**

The organizations of India, that are regenerating their work environment, are facing various problems such as retaining the employees, work pressure and absent employees at workplace. It can be due to that the employees change the organizations because they get certain additional benefits, improved work surroundings, effective supervision and efficient leadership styles. The same problem is faced by insurance sector concerns in India. The negative impact can only be neutralized when organizations, particularly insurance concerns, provide their employees with satisfactory workplace, fair treatment, effective conflict and grievance handling procedure and supportive supervision within the organization. If workforce feels that they are being fairly treated within the organization, then they are more committed towards their organization. It is vital to study the variables that affect the commitment of employees towards their organization and work. Most important variable under consideration for this study is leadership styles of managers. It will enable the managers and executives of insurance sector to create an atmosphere which makes the subordinates more committed and loyal not only towards their job but towards achieving organization's goals.

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **Research Objectives**

The objective of this study is to examine the relationship of leadership styles with organizational commitment. Besides the general purpose of the research, the following specific objectives have been formulated for the research :

1. To study the impact of leadership styles on organizational commitment.
2. To study the level/type of organizational commitment.
3. To study the difference regarding organizational commitment in male and female.
4. To study the opinion of employees about the types of leadership styles existing in the organization.
5. To study the differences regarding the choice/liking of male and female employees towards various leadership styles prevailing in the organization.

## **Research Design, Sample and Procedure**

To attain the research aim of this study, a descriptive research design was administered with perceived organizational commitment as dependent variable and leadership styles as independent variable. For the purpose of sample selection, the public and private sector insurance companies were selected from Punjab as the total sampling frame. The sample was selected by applying judgemental sampling technique and data was collected from 250 managers and executive of insurance sector concerns. The reliability of the data was checked by Cronbach's Alpha Test and its value comes out to be as desired. Therefore, the scale is suitable for the sampling unit and sample size that has been selected for this study. This study is based on both primary as well as secondary data. The secondary data was collected through various websites, books, journals, magazines and newspapers. The primary information was composed through standardized scales. Managers and executives were asked to respond to the questions about their choice regarding organizational commitment and leadership styles in their organization.

## **Instruments**

For this study, a standardized Organizational Commitment Scale (OCS) of 18 items, 6 items each for affective, continuance and normative commitment developed by Meyer and Allen (1993) was used to assess the organizational commitment of managers and executives of insurance companies. For measurement of leadership styles of managers and executives, multifactor leadership questionnaire developed by Bass and Avolio (1995) was used. The participants were asked to reveal their opinions about their commitment to the organization and leadership styles on a 5-point Likert type scale (1= Strongly Disagree and 5 = Strongly Agree).

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Impact of Leadership Styles on Organizational Commitment**

A Linear Regression Analysis was employed to fulfil the foremost objective of this study, which is to assess the impact of leadership styles on organizational commitment. Results are reported in Table 1.

- (a) Predictors : (Constant), Transformational Leadership, Transactional Leadership
- (b) Dependent Variable : Organizational Commitment



**Table 1**  
**Results of Regression Analysis to Measure Impact of Leadership Styles on Organizational Commitment**

Model	Standardized Coefficients Beta	T	Sig.	
(Constant)		8.086	.000	R square .392
Transformational Leadership	.307	5.000	.000	Adjusted R square .385
Transactional Leadership	-.028	-.464	.643	F 12.546
				Sig. F .000 <sup>a</sup>

The results in Table 1 indicated that organizational commitment is predicted through transformational leadership styles which can be concluded from the regression coefficient ( $\beta = 0.307$  and  $p < 0.05$ ). The impact of transactional leadership style ( $\beta = -0.028$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ) on organizational commitment is not significant. The results signified that the managers who follow transformational leadership style (concern for people) in their work environment, their employees tend to be more committed.

**Relationship of Gender to Organizational Commitment and Leadership Styles**

To determine the possible differences in the levels/types of organizational commitment and choice of leadership of male and female managers and executives, various descriptive statistics and a t-test technique was performed.

**Table 2**  
**Results of Descriptive Statistics to Measure the Levels of Organizational Commitment**

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Organizational Commitment	247	2.94	0.64
Affective Commitment	247	3.04	1.06
Continuance Commitment	247	2.98	0.81
Normative Commitment	247	2.80	0.99

This second objective of the present study is to evaluate the style of organizational commitment of managers and executives of insurance companies. For the fulfilment of this objective, various descriptive measures like arithmetic mean and standard deviation were applied. The results in Table 2 show that employees are more affectively committed ( $M = 3.04$ ) than continuance ( $M = 2.98$ ) and normative

(M = 2.80) commitment. The mean value for organizational commitment is 2.94, which shows that it is near about the three levels of OC; but very close to continuance commitment.

**Table 3**

**T-Test Results on Differences in Levels of Organizational Commitments of Male and Female Managers**

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	T-value	P-value
Organizational Commitment	Male	220	2.95	0.53	4.01	0.001
	Female	27	2.83	0.55		
Affective Commitment	Male	220	3.06	1.06	4.20	0.002
	Female	27	2.85	0.99		
Continuance Commitment	Male	220	2.98	0.695	1.12	0.125
	Female	27	2.90	0.771		
Normative Commitment	Male	220	2.82	0.88	0.33	0.317
	Female	27	2.75	0.83		

The third objective of this research work is to measure the differences regarding organizational commitment of male and female managers and executives of insurance sector concerns. To fulfil this particular objective of this study a one tale t-test of two sample unequal variance was implied. As may be seen from Table 3, t-test analysis indicated that opinions of male and female managers and executives concerning overall OC is significant which can be seen from ( $t = 4.01$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ) value; and the levels of organizational commitment to their particular organization were statistically differentiated with regard to commitment characterized by affective commitment ( $t = 4.20$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ). The mean score of the male managers and executives is significantly higher ( $M = 2.82$ ) than that of the female managers

**Table 4**

**Results of Descriptive Statistics to Measure the Choice/Liking of Leadership Styles of Managers and Executives**

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Leadership Styles	247	2.97	0.78
Transformational Leadership	247	2.98	0.49
Transactional Leadership	247	2.93	0.51

and executives (M = 2.75). These findings showed that the male managers and executives are more likely to experience commitment based on affection than female managers and executives.

To measure the fourth objective i.e. the choice/liking of leadership styles of managers and executives of insurance sector concerns, various descriptive statistics like arithmetic mean and standard deviation were used. The Table 4 provides an overview of the descriptive statistics which shows that leadership styles have a mean value of 2.97 which is near about the mean value of transformational leadership (2.98); moreover, from the mean it can be concluded that employees prefer more transformational (M = 2.98) as compared to transactional (M = 2.93) leadership style.

**Table 5**  
**T-Test Results on Differences in Choice of Leadership Styles of Male and Female Managers**

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	T-value	P-value
Organizational Commitment	Male	220	2.98	0.39	3.33	0.002
	Female	27	2.96	0.32		
Affective Commitment	Male	220	2.99	0.49	3.21	0.003
	Female	27	2.86	0.39		
Continuance Commitment	Male	220	2.99	0.49	3.21	0.003
	Female	27	2.90	0.771		
Normative Commitment	Male	220	2.91	0.51	1.23	0.111
	Female	27	3.04	0.50		

The last objective of this study is to measure the differences between male and female managers and executives regarding the choice/liking towards various leadership styles prevailing in that particular organization. For this purpose, again a t-test measure was applied. As Table 5 indicated that the opinions of male and female managers and executives concerning their leadership styles and it statistically differentiated with regard only to transformational leadership styles (t = 3.21, p > .005). The male managers and executives were more likely to experience transformational leadership style than their female counterparts, based on the higher mean (M = 2.99) of the male managers and executives, compared to mean (M = 2.86) of the female managers and executives. On the other hand, female

managers were more likely to be transactional style than the male employees, based on the criteria of higher mean ( $M=3.04$ ). As far as the overall leadership style is concerned, there is not much difference in the choice of male and female employees.

## CONCLUSION

The primary purpose of the present research is to assess the impact of leadership styles of managers and executives on the level of organizational commitment. The analysis in this study has incorporated two underlying goals and several implications. The first objective was to study the impact of leadership styles on organizational commitment; the results showed that the transformational leadership has a significant impact on organizational commitment. The second goal was to examine the possible differences in the levels of organizational commitment and leadership styles of male and female managers and executives. Results pointed out that the male managers and executives were more likely to experience commitment based on affective commitment than female managers and executives and the opinions of male and female managers and executives concerning their leadership styles were statistically differentiated with regard only to transformational leadership style as underlined by Omidifar (2013) and Marmaya *et al.* (2013). Hence, the insurance companies need to create an environment where managers can optimize their potential and add value to the service sector aims. In this way, the managers and executives play a very important role in creating and maintaining the present scenario of competition. The study focussed mainly on the insurance sector of Punjab state, for future research the other parts of the country as well as other industries can also be taken for more generalized research findings. Moreover, the sample size is limited; it can also be increased so that more correct results could be found. One practical implication that could be gained from this study was that managers need to develop effective leadership strategies that would benefit the organization by reducing employee turnover while increasing the loyalty towards the organization.

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