

**Bridging the relationship of Transformational Leadership and Turnover intentions with
mediating effect of Employee engagement[×]**

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Abstract

Today in driving organizations, the crucial part in accomplishing the objectives of the organizations is through effectual leadership. Considering the ultimate goal to stimulate employees, managers and leaders adopt a transformational leadership style. The employee turnover ratio in the organization depends on the behavior of supervisory personnel. If there is a gap between the supervisory staff and the employees of the organization, there is a greater risk of a higher rate of employee turnover. Based upon deep down concepts of transformational leadership and turnover intention, this study is employing mediation analysis to investigate the causal relationship amongst transformational leadership, employee engagement and turnover intentions of academic staff of business schools of Private Universities. In this study, responses of 345 academic staff have been used based upon convenience sampling technique. Research findings of this study demonstrates the partial mediation between transformational leadership and turnover intentions through employee engagement. The study was cross-sectional in nature. A questionnaire was used to accumulate data from Business schools of 5 private sector universities through self-administered practice. The data was investigated by utilizing SPSS (Statistical package for social sciences) 22.0. Pearson correlation, descriptive statistics and mediation (through Andrew

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F.Hayes) were used to analyze data. Outcome generated revealed the significant negative relationship between dependent (turnover intention) and independent variables (transformational leadership) and employee engagement partially mediates the relationship between the variables.

Keywords: *Transformational Leadership, Employee engagement, Turnover Intention.*

JEL Code: *M10.*

Introduction

Today in leading organizations, the vital role in achieving the organization's goals is through effective leadership. The primary purpose of the study is to assess the transformational leadership style adopted by the leaders and their impact on the turnover intentions mediated by employee engagement.

Leaders who have transformational leadership qualities always involves in engaging behaviors, foster enthusiasm among their followers and treat followers with individualized consideration. In this way, the followers are transformed by the behavior of their leader and help them to produce a useful output and improve the goodwill of the organization. The core intent of the transformational leader is to give importance to the growth of the follower. In addition, these leaders evaluate the talent of all followers regarding their abilities to fulfill their current obligations and responsibilities. It is also evident that leadership feature is also very effectual in reducing employee's turnover intention. The connection between leader and human resources plays a crucial role in reducing employees' turnover intention. Transformational leaders follow high ethical standard and leads that's why the followers tend to show fewer turnover intentions (Gill, Mathur, Sharma, & Bhutani, 2011). Lack of job satisfaction and poor leadership are among the key motives for why employees left their jobs (Christina Yu- Ping, Mei-Huei, Hyde, & Hsieh, 2010).

Worker's turnover intention is becoming one of the most significant issues in today's competitive circumstances. Mulki et al., (2007) investigated that the essential focus is to comprehend the leadership efficacy on employees intend to leave the organization; outcome demonstrates that leadership efficacy negatively affects the turnover intentions of the employees; in this way, if leadership is authentic employees will be less intended to leave the organization.

Private universities play a very significant role in the overall progression of the country. Though, university education in private universities in Pakistan must be modernized to make it more

accessible and more pertinent to the varying circumstances. Private universities get much attractiveness among students who cannot get admittance in universities of the public sector. Many private universities in Pakistan are offering different programs; several are very popular, such as business schools offer a variety of courses in the field of business. The leadership among these institutions plays a vital role for the growth and progression of higher education which is impossible without the engagement of academic staff working there.

Horn-Turpin (2009) indicated that there is strong evidence that transformational leadership behavior show a significant relationship with the psychological state of teachers, such as teaching effectiveness, job satisfaction, and the level of engagement to their organization. Different investigations give solid proof that there is a noteworthy connection between transformational leadership and worker fulfillment with their work, particularly in the field of teaching. Each of these practices was impacted by individualized consideration and intellectual stimulation, which are two essential measurements in the model for transformational leadership.

Moreover, employee engagement symbolize participation, fulfillment and perception for work. Engaged employees exhibit greater efficiency, benefit, security and are more averse to quit.

Research Objectives

The study aimed to accomplish the following objectives;

- To find out whether the transformational leadership style has an influence on employee turnover intentions.
- To study the influence of transformational effectiveness on turnover intention.
- Inquiring the influence of employee engagement on turnover intentions.
- To find out the combined impact of transformational leadership, employee engagement on turnover intentions of academic staff of business schools of private sector universities.

Research Questions

- Does transformational leadership decrease turnover intentions among academic staff in business schools?
- Does employee engagement play the role of a mediator to reduce turnover intention?

Research Hypothesis

- **H1:** There is a significantly positive impact of Transformational Leadership on Employee Engagement.
- **H2:** Employee engagement has a significantly negative effect on Turnover intention.
- **H3:** Transformational Leadership has a significantly negative effect on Turnover intention
- **H4:** Transformational Leadership has a significantly negative effect of on Turnover intention through Employee Engagement.

Literature Review

Transformational leadership is considered as an encouraging trait of personality, and the leaders with this style and qualities are more morally attractive and are esteemed by their subordinates. Meihami and Varmaghani (2013) consider that followers' reliance on their leaders is an imperative factor that assumes an intervening part between the transformational administration relationship and worker conduct.

Krishnans (2008) instigate the concept that the collective well-being of team under a leader is valued more by transformational leaders. In addition, such leaders have always remained focused in meetings; have broader standards of impartiality and introducing diversity standards for their employees. Ibraheem et al., (2011) examined that transformational leadership is different from other leadership styles and is based on development, progress, motivation and strategic thinking. Transformational leaders support change more effectively, never discriminates and support organizational goals and objectives. In this leadership style there is a high rate of productivity, low turnover and a high level of job satisfaction. These leaders involve their subordinates in making decisions to share a common vision. They always think of organizational rather than self-interest to efficiently meet organizational objectives. Leaders who practice this type of

leadership are more dedicated and satisfied than any other leadership style. Moynihan and Wright (2011) enlighten that the leadership effects in the implementation of management reforms and examines how performance reformation are implemented through transformational leadership behavior using empirical evidence-based theory.

Nowadays in rapidly growing economy firms are confronting numerous difficulties in decreasing turnover intention of their skilled workers. Previously, many researches on the relationship of employee and employer management have concluded that the best leading firms realize that the talented workforce is composed of determined workers and try to retain that talented workforce. The renowned firms concentrate on keeping the talented workforce and keep on finding new and skilled workers.

Managing workers and lessening turnover goal beneath the objective is one of the primary issues that most of the organizations are confronting these days (Phillips & Connell, 2003). Employee turnover is considered an important issue within an organization that is why it is considered as the focus (Chabbra & Mishra, 2008). According to recent studies, each organization has different turnover rate where private sector has a high turnover rate in comparison to public sector (Bajwa, Yousaf & Rizwan, 2014). Many leading and competitive organizations face several challenges regarding employee turnover.

Organizations hire employees to achieve its goals and employees work to earn something in return of their services. Without valuable employees, an organization cannot generate profit and prosper. Employees are not committed to the organizations if they are not satisfied (Hom & Kinicki, 2001). It is necessary for the organizations to make its employees satisfied so that the employees may prove helpful in getting the organization's goals and targets (Hancock et al., 2013).

If the active performers renounce, then it's difficult for the organization to revive them back. The organization will experience with a loss when employees leave their jobs once they are trained. The employee who is working for a longer period is well aware of the rules and regulations of the organization, so he/she can adjust easily. So, retention of trained and experienced staff is obligatory for the best performance of an organization (Dane & Brummel, 2013). According to the research done by Amar (2004) demonstrates that the most significant task of the employers today is to keep the most dynamic employees motivated and satisfied. If the management keeps the staff motivated and satisfied, they will stay with the organization. Ultimately, the success of the organizations is

dependent upon the satisfied and happy employees. Hiring top-quality and experienced employees is an important task no doubt, but to maintain any employer's constant progression is a critical strategy to reduce turnover intention. In fact, hiring the candidate doesn't mean that candidate will stay for a longer time.

Well-planned policies and beneficial initiatives should be taken seriously along with the constant nurturing of employees so that employees will have the reasons to stay with the organization. An employer should follow a well-developed strategy for lowering the turnover rate. Obviously, organizations cannot cling to all its excellent staff, but can surely reduce the turnover level. Reducing turnover intention of a valuable employee is essential for any organization (Coşar, Guner & Tybout, 2016). The employee turnover can cause significant hindrance in the advancement of the organization if it would be unable to retain its employees for the long term (Steel, 2002). It has been found out through research that companies which are able to retain employees for the long run are more successful and are able to become more efficient. Faithful employees work harder and are sincere to the organization; therefore, they take care of the organization and its operations. This gives their work a more personal touch which can help the organization become more efficient and productive (Jensen, 2013). The leadership feature is very effectual in plummeting employee's turnover intention. However, the connection between leader and human resources plays a crucial role in reducing employees' turnover intention. Silbert (2005) has shown in his research work that well organized, having full expertise in their field and artistic employees can easily hunt good jobs and can adjust to any workplace by recognizing their skills. However, the most effective and efficient way of reducing turnover intention of the employees is to develop strong, friendly working environment and leaders should promote their support for their followers.

At the point when workers feel esteemed and regarded will take a dynamic part in firm's objectives to depict positive behavior, give profitable results which ultimately diminish absenteeism and turnover rates. Workers do react to respect, consolation and support from their leaders. Organizations need to brush up their managers to support the employees and construct such a job environment where workers desire to work. Moreover, Tuzun (2007) discussed that there should be a clear understanding between the leader and its employees; in other words, withdrawal behaviors are also known as turnover intention.

Mulki et al., (2009) explored that the primary focus is to understand the leadership efficacy on employee's plan to leave the firm; results show that leadership efficacy has a negative impact on the turnover intentions of the employees; in this way if leadership is transformational employees will be less intended to quit the organization. Past research recommended that stress is the key factor of turnover intention; on the other hand, the important factor that plays a role in reducing the turnover intention of employees is leadership support. The connection linking between the leaders and its followers is powerful which makes the environment of the organization pleasant and result in less turnover intention.

Many researchers elaborate the definition of employee engagement in different ways (Harter & Schmidt, 2008; Macey & Schneider, 2008). Macey and Schneider (2008) stated that employee engagement is individual feelings, individual traits and behavior in the workplace.

Employee engagement is depicted in particular “high levels of individual speculation into the task assignments executed on a job” (Christian et al., 2011) that results in intellectual, physical and emotive connectedness with the work. Engagement refers to a “positive, fulfilling, work related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication and absorption” by (Schaufeli & Bakker ,2004). Work engagement is a dynamic, satisfying and positive job-related position that is portrayed by sentiments of power, devotion and assimilation (Vecina et al., 2012). He kept up that work engagement has been identified with work fulfillment, authoritative responsibility, individual activity, pro-social conduct, inspiration to learn and life fulfillment.

Over the years, organizations are more centered on worker advancement and their performance (Heger, 2007). Organizations must push toward expanding the level of employee engagement (Batista-Taran et al., 2013) for better results.

Perfect leaders who assemble a culture of engagement maintain workers trust, drive perfect levels of benefit, satisfaction, maintenance and can position the association for progress. An essential segment in building confidence, awakening execution, and growing worker engagement is having people at the best that move trust in the organization's future (Wiley, 2010).

Research Design and Methodology

This research was conducted to determine the influence of transformational leadership on turnover intention among the teaching staff working in the private universities of Lahore by mediating the employee engagement. The type of research design selected for the study was cross-sectional and quantitative in nature. The present study was based on a deductive approach in which the different theories and literature are reviewed to determine the phenomena of research under study. This was a casual study because the basic intent of this research is to determine the connection between transformational leadership and employee turnover intention. The target audience for this study was the faculty of business schools at private universities in Lahore, Pakistan. To carry out the survey, the questionnaires were administered personally. The total number of questionnaires that were collected was 345. To obtain a complete response from respondents, a likert scale with five points was used in this study. The sampling technique used in this research study was convenience and non-probability sampling. Academic staff working in the universities of the private sector of Lahore was taken as sample size. The questionnaire for transformational leadership, employee engagement and turnover intentions were adapted from the work of Podsakoff, Mackenzie and Bommer (1996), Schaufeli, Gonzalez-Roma and Bakker (2002) and Yucel (2012) respectively.

Reliability Analysis of Instrument

The reliability of the data means consistency of data, if similar research is frequently done with same variables as well as their dimensions in some other circumstances and it would give the similar outcomes that are called as reliable variables. Reliability of the data tells that the variables under study give the errors free results as well as provide similar outcome if research is conducted in some different settings. The overall reliability of the data was 0.61.

Table 1. Reliability Analysis

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha
Transformational Leadership	.922
Employee engagement	.836
Turnover Intention	.882

Overall Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.61	20

Analysis and Interpretation

Data Coding

Before executing the analysis, the coding of variables was carried out in order to obtain a significant view of the data trends. The questionnaire was isolated into two primary sections. To begin with first section, it contains the general data (Demographics) of members including age, sexual orientation, qualification, marital status, designation and experience. In the second section questions with respect to the primary factors (Transformational Leadership, Employee engagement and Turnover intentions) have been inquired from the participants.

Demographic Analysis

Statistic data incorporates the members' insights regarding sexual orientation, marital status, designation, age, and aggregate experience in the Universities. The investigation has been directed in business schools of private Universities of Lahore. Questionnaires were distributed among the respondents out of which 345 questionnaires received were fit for the analysis purpose.

The proportion of females i.e. 59% (n=204) was greater than male (41%, n=141) due to the reason that the data were mostly collected from Women universities. The age of majority of employees (69%) falls in the range of 26-40(n=337) while 20%(70) of the employees were having age in the range of less than 25, 10%(34) were in the age group from (41-55) and only 1% (n=4) of the employees were of an age greater than 55. The table shows that 49.3 % of respondents are married whereas 50.4% are single and 0.3% is fall in the category of others.

Qualification details disclose that majority of the respondents (75.4%, n=260) had M.Phil./Equivalence while 13.3 %(n=46), 10.4% (n=36) and 0.9% (n=3) had PhD and Post -Doc respectively. Following table values display the different designations i.e. Lecturer have 67% where n= 231. Assistant professors 14.2% (n=49) which fill the questionnaire, Associate professors have 3.5 % where n=12, Professors have 3.2% where n=11 and others have 12.2 % where n=42.Others category includes Teaching assistants, visiting faculty and adjunct faculty members. The experience of the employees was 81% (n=280) falls in the category of 1-5 years,15% (n= 52) in 6-10 years,3% (n= 10) were in 11-15 years and 1% (1) falls in 16-20 years of experience.

Table 2. Demographic characteristic of the respondents (n = 345)

DEMOGRAPHICS		FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Gender	Male	141	40.9
	Female	204	59.1
	Total	345	100
Status	Single	174	50.4
	Married	170	49.3
	Others	1	0.3
	Total	345	100
Age	Less than 25	70	20.3
	26-40	337	68.7
	41-55	34	9.9
	Above than 55	4	1.2
	Total	345	100
Qualification	Masters/ Equivalence	46	13.3

	M.Phil/ Equivalence	260	75.4
	PhD	36	10.4
	Post-Doc Fellow	3	0.9
	Total	345	100

Designation	Lecturer	231	67.0
	Asst. Professor	49	14.2
	Associate Prof.	12	3.5
	Professor	11	3.2
	Others	42	12.2
	Total	345	100

Experience	1-5 years	280	81.1
	6-10 years	52	15.1
	11-15 years	10	2.9
	16-20 years	3	.9
	Total	345	100

Descriptive Statistics

Variables with their all mean values are provided in the table given above. The mean statistic values and corresponding standard deviations of Transformational Leadership, employee engagement and turnover intentions are provided (M= 18.7362, 40.6290, and 15.3855) with (standard deviations values as well are given as 4.46726, 9.03104 and 6.05347). High standard deviation represents a broad stretch of scores from mean and high variance.

Table 3. Descriptive Analysis

	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Std. Deviation	N
Transformational Leadership	18.7362	5.00	18.7362	4.46726	345
Employee Engagement	40.6290	2.00	40.6290	9.03104	345
Turnover Intention	15.3855	6.00	15.3855	6.05347	345
Valid N					345

Correlation Matrix

According to Sekaran and Bougie (2009), to find out the correlation among the variables, the correlation coefficient is a solitary number that represents the "level of relationship" between the variables. The commonly used tool is the Pearson correlation coefficient (Triola, 2008) to evaluate the relationship between the variables.

Table 4. Correlational Analysis

Correlations

		Transformational Leadership	Employee Engagement	Turnover Intention
Transformational Leadership	Pearson Correlation	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)			
	N	345		
Employee Engagement	Pearson Correlation	.254**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		
	N	345	345	
Turnover Intention	Pearson Correlation	-.378**	-.473**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	345	345	345

** Correlation is significant at 0.01 level.

As indicated by the table given, a significant relationship exists between turnover intention, transformational leadership, and employee engagement. At 0.01 levels (2-tailed) correlation of all variables is significant.

Pearson Correlation (r) shows Transformational Leadership have significant negative relationship (r= -.378, n= 345, p-value < 0.01). Similarly, the Pearson correlation coefficient (r) for employee engagement have significant negative relationship (r= -.473, n= 345, p-value < 0.01), whereas transformational leadership has a significant positive effect on Employee engagement (r=.254, n=345, p-value<0.01).

Interpretation of the Analysis

The result lists all the variables in the analysis, indicating what is considered as a dependent variable (Y = turnover intention), that an independent variable (X = transformational leadership) and what mediator (M = Employee participation). The total sample size is also shown, that is (n = 345). Then a series of regression models is adjusted to find out the relationship among dependent, independent and mediating variables.

Table 5. Analysis of proposed mediating variable

	IV	DV	R	R square	b	P-value
H1	TL	EE	.2544	.0647	.5142	0.000
H2	TL	TI	.3776	.1426	-.5117	0.000
H3	TL & EE	TI	.5426	.2944	-.2700 -.3729	0.000

Note: T L= Transformational leadership, EE=employee engagement, TI=turnover intentions.

In above case, the independent variable (Transformational Leadership) was significantly associated for both the dependent (Turnover intention) and the intervening variable (employee engagement), it also proves to be significant in the presence of the mediator variable (employee engagement); prove the partial mediation effect. The indirect effect of X on Y is also depicted in the regression models. In this study, the effect size was (-.1388) at $\alpha = .05$ and with a 95% confidence.

In **Step1** in mediation model, the regression of Transformational Leadership with turnover intentions, neglecting the mediator, was significant, $b = -.5117, t(343) = -7.553, p < .001$.

Step2 demonstrate that the regression of the Transformational leadership with employee engagement, was also significant, $b = .5142, t(343) = 4.8712, p < .001$.

Step3 in the mediation procedure demonstrate that the mediator (employee engagement), by controlling Transformational leadership was significant, $b = -.2700$, $t(342) = -8.5762$, $p < .001$. **Step 4** the results revealed that, by controlling the mediator (employee engagement), transformational leadership was also significant i.e. $b = -.3729$, $t(342) = -5.8585$, $p < .001$. A Sobel test was employed and proved a **partial mediation** in the model ($z = -4.2141$, $p = .000$). It was discovered that employee engagement has partial mediation between transformational leadership and the turnover intention.

Table 6. Direct and Indirect effect

	Effect	P
Direct	-3.729	0.000
Indirect	-1.388	0.000
Z	-4.2141	0.000

The total affect is the sum of direct and indirect affect. The value of direct effect is $-.3729$ is significant, $p = 0.000$. The value of indirect effect is $-.1388$. This shows that value has been decreased between independent and dependent variable through the introduction of mediating variable. A Sobel test was employed and partial intervention in the model shows (Z value is -4.2141)

Conclusion

The rationale of the current research was to explore the association between transformational leadership, employee engagement and turnover intentions among the university staff of Business schools. Findings indicate significant negative relationship between dependent (turnover intention) and independent variables (transformational leadership). Employee engagement intervene the relationship between the variables. The first hypothesis, that transformational leadership has a positive impact on employee engagement was supported. The second hypothesis that employee engagement has a negative effect on turnover intention and third hypothesis that transformational leadership has a negative effect on turnover intention was also supported. The fourth hypothesis

that transformational leadership has positive and significant relationship on turnover intention through employee engagement also supported. In this case it was found that staff member's engagement **partially mediates** the relationship between the transformational leadership and the turnover intention. To summarize the findings, the relationships assumed between the transformational leadership, employee engagement, and turnover intentions are all compatible by significant correlations, which is similar with prior findings (Sahu, Pathardikar & Kumar, 2018; Vincent-Höper, Muser & Janneck ,2012).

It is considered that engaged employees are totally focused and well absorbed while doing their work (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Although, those employees who are not engaged in their jobs and were not steered by transformational leaders find it difficult to stay in the organization. Through transformational leadership, leaders create a vision of the future that attracts subordinates and makes them an important part of the organization (Piccolo & Colquitt, 2006). This will be minimizing the turnover intentions and make them committed to their organizations.

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Andrew F.Hayes Procedure

***** PROCESS Procedure for SPSS Release 2.12.1 *****

Written by Andrew F. Hayes, Ph.D. www.afhayes.com
Documentation available in Hayes (2013). www.guilford.com/p/hayes3

Model = 4
Y = Turnover
X = Leadersh
M = Employee

Sample size
345

Outcome: Employee

Model Summary

R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
.2544	.0647	76.5048	23.7290	1.0000	343.0000	.0000

Model

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	30.9941	2.0332	15.2441	.0000	26.9950	34.9932
Leadersh	.5142	.1056	4.8712	.0000	.3066	.7219

Outcome: Turnover

Model Summary

R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
.5426	.2944	26.0091	71.3334	2.0000	342.0000	.0000

Model	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	33.3416	1.5354	21.7150	.0000	30.3216	36.3617
Employee	-.2700	.0315	-8.5762	.0000	-.3319	-.2081
Leadersh	-.3729	.0636	-5.8585	.0000	-.4981	-.2477

***** TOTAL EFFECT MODEL *****

Outcome: Turnover

Model Summary

R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
.3776	.1426	31.5105	57.0479	1.0000	343.0000	.0000

Model

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	24.9731	1.3049	19.1386	.0000	22.4066	27.5396
Leadersh	-.5117	.0677	-7.5530	.0000	-.6450	-.3785

***** TOTAL, DIRECT, AND INDIRECT EFFECTS *****

Total effect of X on Y

Effect	SE	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
-.5117	.0677	-7.5530	.0000	-.6450	-.3785

Direct effect of X on Y

Effect	SE	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
-.3729	.0636	-5.8585	.0000	-.4981	-.2477

Indirect effect of X on Y

Effect	Boot SE	BootLLCI	BootULCI	
Employee	-.1388	.0377	-.2278	-.0742

Normal theory tests for indirect effect

Effect	se	Z	p
-.1388	.0329	-4.2141	.0000

***** ANALYSIS NOTES AND WARNINGS *****

Number of bootstrap samples for bias corrected bootstrap confidence intervals:

1000

Level of confidence for all confidence intervals in output:

95.00

----- END MATRIX -----