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Mediating Role of Employee Commitment in the Relationship between Transformational Leadership and Organisational Performance among Academic Staff at Federal Polytechnic, Mubi

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Abstract

The study examined the mediating Role of Employee Commitment in the relationship between Transformational Leadership and Organisational Performance among Academic Staff at Federal Polytechnic, Mubi. The Mediator (Employee Commitment) was measured as a multiple mediation Model. Four hypotheses were formulated and tested: to ascertain the mediating effect of affective, Continuance and Normative Commitment on the relationship between Transformational Leadership and Organisational Performance and to examine the effect of Transformational Leadership on Organisational Performance. The population of the study was 724 which consist of the total number of academic staff at Federal Polytechnic, Mubi and the Sample size was 254 using Krejcie and Morgan's table for Sample size determination. Questionnaires were used as a method for data collection and was analysed using Hayes Process Macro via IBM SPSS version 27. The result revealed that Continuance and Normative Commitment significantly and positively mediates the relationship between Transformational Leadership and Organisational Performance while Affective Commitment negatively and significantly mediate the relationship. It also revealed that Transformational Leadership significantly predicts Organisational Performance both directly and through mediators. The study recommends that future research be conducted across wider scope for generalizability and to confirm the existence of a negative relationship between Affective Commitment and Organisational Performance.

Keywords: Transformational Leadership, Employees' Commitment and Organisational Performance

Introduction

In today's ever more competitive global environment, organisations are facing numerous obstacles in accomplishing their goals; as a result, there is a growing anticipation for leaders to take responsibility for enhancing organisational performance by meeting their job demands (Torlak & Kuzey, 2019). This study focuses on the mediating effect of Employee Commitment in the relationship between Transformational Leadership and Organisational Performance among academic staff at Federal Polytechnic,

Mubi. Organizational Performance serves as a critical benchmark for the overall health and success of any entity, reflecting its ability to achieve strategic objectives and fulfill stakeholder expectations. Organisational Performance encapsulates various dimensions, including financial profitability, operational efficiency, market competitiveness, innovation, and employee satisfaction. Effective Organizational Performance not only ensures survival in today's dynamic business environment, but also positions the organization for long-term growth and sustainability. Thus, understanding, monitoring, and continuously improving Organizational

Performance is paramount for achieving strategic goals, maintaining competitiveness, and ensuring organizational longevity and its success.

On the other hand, Transformational Leadership has been applauded for its ability to inspire and motivate individuals in order to enhance Organizational Performance and Effectiveness (Noor Azizah et al., 2020). Research spanning over two decades has consistently highlighted the positive impact of Transformational Leadership on fostering strong relationships, commitment, and motivation among employees and contributing to enhanced Organizational Performance (Long et al., 2014; Masa'deh et al., 2016). Transformational Leadership includes charismatic attributes, intellectual stimulation, and the capacity to motivate employees, nurturing communication, trust, and the exchange of knowledge (Senge, 1990; Bass and Avolio, 2000).

Despite ample evidence indicating the positive impact of Transformational Leadership on Performance, the precise mechanisms through which this influence occurs have garnered considerable interest (García-Morales et al., 2008). Scholars like García-Morales et al. (2008) advocate for investigating additional mediators to fully understand the potential role of Transformational Leadership in enhancing organizational performance. While Transformational leaders are adept at nurturing commitment and empowering their teams for future challenges (Bastari et al., 2020), the precise mechanisms through which employee commitment influences organizational performance remain to be fully elucidated. Therefore, exploring the mediating role of employee commitment in the relationship between

transformational leadership and organizational performance is paramount for gaining deeper insights into the dynamics of effective leadership and its impact on organizational success (Manurung, 2020).

Organizational commitment consists of three elements: continuance commitment, normative commitment, and affective commitment (Meyer et al., 1990). Affective commitment involves a strong willingness to exert effort for the organization and a deep sense of belonging (Lee, & Steers, 2017). Continuance commitment, similar to affective commitment, focuses on individuals remaining in their job due to factors like limited alternative job prospects, financial considerations, or fear of losing benefits. Normative commitment, on the other hand, involves a sense of obligation or duty towards the organization, driven by a belief in the moral or ethical principles underlying organizational membership (Mufadhal and Farea, 2020).

Previous studies have stressed the influence of Transformational Leadership on Employee Performance (Arif (2018 & Thamrin, 2012). Nevertheless, Vipraprastha et al. (2018), indicate a negative direct effect of transformational leadership on Employees Performance. Moreover, it is still unclear how commitment functions as a mediator in this relationship. While Almari and Wahab (2023) and Almutairi (2016) suggest that commitment partially mediates the relationship between Transformational Leadership and Employee Performance in different contexts, Rua and Aroujo (2016) found that commitment does not mediate the relationship between Transformational Leadership and Organizational Trust. Wandani and Sunaryo (2022) emphasize

the role of Affective commitment as a mediator between Organizational Citizenship Behavior and Transformational Leadership, suggesting a possible mechanism by which Transformational Leadership affects performance-related outcomes.

Therefore, based on the above premise, the study intends to ascertain the relationship between Transformational Leadership and Organisational Performance in the presence of Affective, Continuance and Normative Commitment as mediators.

Hypotheses

The study hypothesised that Affective, Continuance and Normative Commitment does not mediate the effect Transformational Leadership on Organisational Performance. Furthermore, it was also hypothesised that Transformational Leadership does not influence Organisational Performance among academic staff at Federal Polytechnic, Mubi.

Literature Review

Transformational Leadership Style

The main focus of Transformational Leadership Style is to help employees overcome their negative attitudes, build a carrier and achieve overall organisational efficiency and effectiveness (Bass, 1985; Yokl, 1999). Nguon (2022) defines Transformational Leadership as a leader's ability to modify strategic plans and successfully complete a task to determine whether followers think the leader is genuinely devoted to the success of the organization. According to Odumeru & Ifeanyi (2013), this style of leadership entails leaders inspiring and encouraging their followers to put in more

effort in the pursuit of common goals. Transformational Leadership is majorly concerned with raising employees and encouraging them to progress in their carrier as well as enhancing the overall Organisational Performance through investing in human resource.

Employee Commitment

Organizations have long been concerned about Employee Commitment because it plays an important role in increasing effectiveness and efficiency in accomplishing organizational goals. According to Mowday et al. (1982), Employee Commitment is the conduct that creates a bond between employees and the organization. It shows an employee's level of commitment to their organization (Mueller, Wallace, & Price, 1992; Price, 1997). Employee Commitment may also be defined as the degree to which an individual adopts and identifies with the organizational values and goals while carrying out their job duties (Tanriverdi 2008). Existing literature identifies a variety of elements that influence Employee Commitment, including both individual and managerial aspects such as career aspiration, job satisfaction, personal values and beliefs, work life balance, equity, and leadership style etc (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Mowday et al, 1979; Meyer & Allen, 1997). They further state that Employee Commitment can be measured in three dimensions: Affective, Continuance and Normative Commitment. These measures were adopted as multiple mediators in this study.

Organisational Performance

According to Mansor (2023), scholars have conceptualized organizational Performance in several

ways. Robianto et al. (2020) refer to Organizational Performance as an organization's total efficiency and achievement in meeting its goals and objectives. According to Rolstadas (1998), an Organization's Performance is a complex relationship made up of seven (7) performance indicators, including effectiveness, efficiency, and productivity, work quality, and innovation. Performance is intimately associated with the achievement of the above-mentioned metrics, often known as performance targets.

According to Neely (2002), performance is a measure of the efficiency and effectiveness of operations that can be assessed qualitatively as well as statistically. Kane (1996) defined performance as an individual's or organisational level perception of achieved results. According to Hartle (1995), it is a hybrid approach of performance management that includes skill level and attainment assessments, as well as goal formulation and results analysis. Argyris (1964) claimed that Organizational Performance is determined by individuals' experience and dedication; consequently, the more dedicated employees are to their jobs, the better the Organisation's Performance.

Transformational Leadership and Organisational Performance

According to Peng et al (2019) Transformational Leadership significantly affects Affective Commitment via Perceived Work Impact as a mediator. On the other hand, Mufadhal and Farea (2020) state that 'Transformational leadership does not directly influences Organisational Performance but it does through commitment as a mediator. Meanwhile, the study was carried out during a period of war in Yemen; therefore, there is need

to replicate same study in different context and war free zone. Given that some studies were conducted in specific contexts, such as during a period of war in Yemen, there is a recognized need to replicate the study in diverse settings, including those in peaceful environments, to assess the generalizability of findings and deepen our understanding of the relationship between Transformational Leadership, Employee Commitment, and Organizational Performance. Rua and Araujo identified a significant relationship between Transformational Leadership and Organisational Trust, but Commitment failed to mediate the relationship. On the contrary, a study by Mahfouz et al (2022) revealed that Employee Commitment fully mediate the relationship between Transformational Leadership and Employee Performance but Transformational Leadership failed to influence Employee Performance directly.

Transformational Leadership and Employee Commitment

The effects of different approaches to leadership on workers' Organizational Commitment vary. If employees are more at ease with the leadership styles of their leaders, then employee commitment to the organization is probably going to rise. Since transformational leadership enables followers and their leaders to have a shared vision and values, mutual respect, and trust, it is more creative, productive, effective, and satisfying to employees (Lo et al., 2010). Understanding the needs of their followers, encouraging critical and creative thinking, and working to alter the core attitudes, values, and beliefs of their followers is imperative for transformational leaders to improve Organizational Performance (Bass & Avolio, 1993; Gozukara & Simsek, 2015).

Moyo (2019) asserts that transformational leadership significantly influences Organizational Commitment. Also, studies indicate that the leadership styles that employees encounter have a significant influence on their organizational commitment, with Transformational Leadership often producing higher levels of commitment (Odumeru & Ifeanyi 2013; Avolio et al 1991).

Employee Commitment and Organisational Performance

Several studies have explored the relationship between Employee Commitment and Organizational Performance across diverse contexts: Ezeanolue et al (2021) revealed that there is a significant positive effect between Employee Commitment and Organisational Performance. Similarly, Kelvin (2020) highlighted a strong correlation between Employee Commitment and Organizational Performance. According to Darius and Isaac (2020) Affective and Continuance Commitments significantly influences Organisational Performance. Simon, Josephine, and Ugwu (2019) identified Employee Commitment as pivotal for success at Innoson Technical and Industrial Company Ltd, Nigeria. Zafar (2015) asserted Employee Commitment as a predictor of organizational development; recognizing the importance of committed employees. Meanwhile, there is inconsistency as to whether commitment is an effective mediator in this relation. Ausat et al, (2022) affirmed that commitment does not mediate the relationship between Transformational Leadership and Organisational Performance while Rua and Arujojo, 2016; Almari and Wahab, 2023; Almutairi, 2016; Wandani and Sunaryo, 2022 found out the contrary. This controversial finding

informed the development of hypothesis one above. Ivancevich (2010) asserts a direct link between the performance of an organization and the level of commitment demonstrated by its employees.

Chen et al. (2006), as cited in Timoti (2020), studied the association between Organizational Commitment and Job Performance, revealing a positive correlation between Organizational Commitment and Work Performance. According to Pratama and Mujiati (2019) there is a significant relationship between Employee Commitment and Organizational Performance. In the same vein, Senjaya and Anindita (2020) also stated that Commitment is a significant predictor of Organisational Performance. Andrew (2017) examined the correlation between affective, continuance, and normative commitments with Organizational Performance. The study revealed a strong positive relationship between these commitments and Organizational Performance. Similarly, Khan (2010) explored the impact of affective, continuance, and normative commitments on employee job performance which also revealed a significant relationship between Employee Commitment and Job Performance.

Theoretical Framework

Social Exchange Theory

Social exchange theory, authored by sociologist George Homans in the 1950s and further developed by Peter Blau in the 1960s, posits that social behavior is the result of an exchange process. The theory suggests that individuals engage in relationships with others based on the assumption that the benefits of the relationship will outweigh the costs. According to social exchange theory,

individuals weigh the potential rewards and costs of a relationship or interaction. Rewards might include companionship, support, or resources, while costs could include time, effort, or emotional strain. This leads to Employee Commitment or greater dedication and effort invested in organizational goals. This will translate increased Organisational Performance. Therefore, social exchange theory provides a theoretical foundation of the interaction between Transformational leadership Style, Employee Commitment and organisational Performance.

Research Design

The study employed a descriptive survey design, utilizing structured questionnaires for data collection. The

sample consisted of 254 respondents selected from a population of 724 academic staff members at Federal Polytechnic, Mubi. Instruments for measuring Transformational Leadership was adopted from Rafferty and Griffin (2004), Employee Commitment adopted from Ying et al (2024) and Organizational Performance was adopted from Al_dalahmeh et al (2018). The reliability of instruments was measured using Cronbach Alpha methods and the reliability coefficients lies between 0.77 and 0.88. Data Normality was confirmed using Histogram and Scatter plot (see appendix I). The data analysis was performed via Hayes Process Macro in IBM SPSS version 27.0.

Result and Discussion

Table 1.1: Result

RELATIONSHIP	EFFECT	CONFIDENCE INTERVAL		T-STATISTICS	P VALUE
		LLCI	ULCI		
Total Effect	0.5373	0.4447	0.6299	11.4441	0.0000
TL-AC-OP	-0.0445	-0.0855	-0.0114	-2.3670	-
TL-CC-OP	0.2783	0.1981	0.3637	6.5023	-
TL-NC-OP	0.1705	0.0838	0.2650	3.6970	-
TL-OP	0.1327	0.0410	0.2244	2.8538	0.0048

Source: Hayes Process in SPSS, 2024

The table above summarizes the direct and indirect effects of Transformational Leadership on Organizational Performance through Affective, Continuance and Normative Commitment. The total effect of Transformational Leadership on Organizational Performance is significant (effect = 0.5373, P-value = 0.0000), with a confidence interval of 0.4447 to 0.6299. The indirect effect of Transformational Leadership on Organizational Performance through Affective Commitment is negative and significant

(effect = -0.0445, t = -2.3670), indicating a detrimental mediation path. Conversely, the indirect effects through Continuance Commitment (effect = 0.2783, t = 6.5023) and Normative Commitment (effect = 0.1705, t = 3.6970) are positive and significantly influencing Organisational Performance. The direct effect of Transformational Leadership on Organizational Performance remains significant even when accounting for the mediators (effect = 0.1327, p = 0.0048), suggesting that Transformational Leadership enhances Organizational

Performance both directly and indirectly through these mediators; therefore, the status of the mediation is partial.

Hypothesis 1: Affective Commitment as a Mediator

Hypothesis H1 posits that Affective Commitment does not significantly mediate the relationship between Transformational Leadership and Organisational Performance among academic staff at Federal Polytechnic, Mubi. The finding revealed that Affective Commitment significantly and negatively mediates the relationships between Transformational Leadership style and Organisational Performance (effect = -0.0445 and CI = -0.0855, -0.0114). Meanwhile, Transformational Leadership influences Affective Commitment positively (effect = 0.3128); Affective Commitment negatively influenced organisational Performance (effect = -0.1421). According to Cohen (1998), effect of 0.2 is considered Small while effect of 0.5 and 0.8 is considered moderate and high respectively. Therefore, although hypothesis one is rejected with contrary findings of a significant negative outcome, effect is way less than 0.2 which can be considered very small and negligible unless it is proven otherwise by further study. Despite the fact that this finding contradicts numerous literatures, it is similar to the findings of Ausat et al, (2022).

Hypothesis 2: Continuance Commitment as a Mediator

Hypothesis 2 suggests that Continuance Commitment does not significantly mediate the relationship between TL and OP; however, the result revealed that Continuance Commitment positively and significantly mediates the relationship between Transformational

Leadership and Organisational Performance (Effect = 0.2783 and CI = 0.1981, 0.3637). in this case, Transformational Leadership Style significantly and positively influences Continuance Commitment with a strong effect of 0.5102; while Continuance Commitment also significantly and positively influences Organisational Performance with effect of 0.5455. therefore, hypothesis two is rejected in favour of the alternate hypothesis. This finding is consistent with previous studies by numerous scholars (Rua and Arujo, 2016; Almari and Wahab, 2023; Almutairi, 2016; Wandani and Sunaryo, 2022).

Hypothesis 3: Normative Commitment as a Mediator

Hypothesis 3 states that Normative Commitment does not significantly mediate the relationship between TL and OP. In the same manner, it was revealed that Normative Commitment significantly and positively mediated the relationship between Transformational Leadership Style and Organisational Performance (Effect = 0.1708 and CI = 0.0838, 0.2650). Transformational significantly influenced Normative Commitment with effect of 0.5240 and Normative Commitment was also confirmed to be a significant predictor of Organisational Performance with effect of 0.3259. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected in favour of the alternate. Also, this aligns with previous studies (Rua and Arujo, 2016; Almari and Wahab, 2023; Almutairi, 2016; Wandani and Sunaryo, 2022).

Hypothesis 4: Direct Effect of Transformation Leadership on Organisational Performance

Hypothesis 4 posits that there is no significant direct effect of Transformation Leadership on

Organisational Performance among academic staff at Federal Polytechnic, Mubi. The finding showed that there is a positive and significant direct effect of Transformation Leadership on Organisational Performance (Effect = 0.1327, $p = 0.0048$). Thus, H4 is rejected. This significant direct effect demonstrates that Transformation Leadership directly enhances Organisational Performance. This finding indicates the importance of Transformational Leadership in directly improving the performance of academic staff, beyond the indirect effects through various forms of commitment.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the hypotheses testing reveals that Transformational Leadership not only has a direct positive effect on Organizational Performance but also exerts significant indirect effects through Continuance and Normative commitment. Interestingly, the mediation through Affective commitment is significant but negative, suggesting a complex dynamic that could be further explored to understand how emotional attachment to the organization might differently influence performance in the context of Transformational Leadership. Overall, these findings emphasize the multifaceted ways in which leadership styles impact organizational outcomes through various employee commitment forms.

Suggestion for future study

The study suggests that similar study be conducted in a different sector using larger sample size to fully understand the inconsistency in the literature.

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Appendix I

