



THE WAY FOLLOWERS FATHOM: EXPLORING THE NEXUS AMONG WOMEN LEADERSHIP STYLES, JOB SATISFACTION AND ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This research aimed at exploring the gender diversity in leadership styles, and therefore the impact of women's transformational and transactional leadership styles on organization commitment was empirically tested. The mediating role of job satisfaction was also examined for both leadership styles. Design/Methodology/Approach: With the quantitative approach, the survey method was used, and the data was collected from 302 followers of women academicians at different institutions. Structural equation modelling was applied to check the direct and indirect impacts of women's leadership styles on organizational outcomes. Findings: Results revealed there was no direct impact of women's transformational leadership on the organizational commitment, however, job satisfaction played a full mediating role here. Moreover, there was no direct or indirect impact of women's transactional leadership on the organizational commitment, as job satisfaction had no mediating role here. Theoretical Implication: Adding to the theoretical development in gender diversity and leadership, this study explained the behaviour of employees under female leaders. This reinforced the previous empirical findings. Practical Implication: In Pakistan, women are breaking the stereotypes and emerging on leading positions, this study has been indispensable for present and potential women leaders as to furnish them empirical evidence of how they can stir job satisfaction and organizational commitment in their followers. Originality: Gender diversity in the contextual leadership has been a top notch dimension to be explained, and this study would pave the way for further exploration of women leadership in organizational settings.

Keywords: Women; Transformational Leadership; Job satisfaction; Organizational Behavior; Leadership

INTRODUCTION

Enhancing the ability to be a more effective executive or leader is attentive to every business manager, but how to attain this skill? Can these be learnt, or people bring them with their birth? And how people attain this greatness? (Kaplan, 2007). These have been the questions which have haunted the researchers to explore and investigate. Leadership has been one of the oldest of the phenomena in human history. Early researchers were of the view that leadership is something which comes with birth, better known as the great man theory (Cawthon, 1996). But later researchers differed and this paved the way for multiple theories (Pervin, 1994). Trait theorists identified peculiar characteristics among people which make them leaders (Zaccaro, 2007). Many lists were made depicting different leadership traits. Behavioural perspectives mainly identified two different types of leaders, task-oriented and relationship oriented (Derue,

et al., 2011). Although the idea of open management was academically discussed in the works of Chester Barnard and Peter Drucker yet this was actively researched as a contingency/situational theory in management in the 1970s, which engulfed almost every management concept including leadership with the criticism on fixed approaches in previous literature (Kerr et al., 1974). The primary reason for developing a situational approach towards leadership was the failure to develop any universal trait or behavior that can be applied to the leader everywhere. There have been many studies conducted on different aspects and styles of leadership. For example, Haider et al. (2018) investigated the effect of destructive leadership behaviors on turnover intentions and deviant behavior through the mediation of job stress of leaders in pharmaceutical companies. According to one review paper, transformational leadership has dominated the tendency of leadership researchers, and shared leadership has been the second point of focus for researchers while collective leadership has been at the third place (Tal & Gordon, 2016).

Women are yet underrepresented in the leadership role in every sphere from the political sector to institutions (Chin, 2011). Women have been regarded as the communal attribute that concerns for the others; whereas, men have been regarded as possessing the characteristics of rationality and agentic that implied dominance, self-reliance and self-confidence (Eckes & Hannas, 2000). This view was also in agreement with the researches conducted on the impact of human and social capital in developing women entrepreneurial leaders where it was highlighted that women always display communal characteristics corresponding with warmth, sensitivity and concern for others in becoming successful leaders specifically in women-dominated corporations but requiring to be more agentic in personality as well for the outside environment (Eagly, 2007; McGowan et al., 2015). These features used to define an effective leader have been similar to men being perceived as a better fit with the leadership role in comparison with women (Koenig et al., 2011). Some preliminary research was adapted to identify the impact of gender-based expectation on women in exercising their leadership role where it was highlighted that women often experience social identity contingencies such as stereotypes, restrictions, judgements, and opportunities, which are linked to one's communal identity in a required setting, which further cause women to confront stereotype threat (Steele, Spencer, & Aronson, 2002). Hence, these stereotype based threats cause women leaders to be shorter across different profession from law to academic medicine (Burgess et al., 2012) and further decreased leadership aspiration and performance over time, leaving few women in the world to assume leadership position (Hoyt & Murphy, 2016). Prior explanatory studies demonstrated that women possess more transformational leadership styles that are referred to as interactive leadership rather than adopting the positional power (Chandler, 2011). Coupled with, this evidence was also observed in Nigeria (Lincoln, 2012), where females appeared to be transformational and democratic in leadership practices and were seen to lead their employees toward vision and mission of the firm. In addition, there has been strong evidence that women adopt more democratic, collaborated and cooperative leadership styles than men who display directive, autocratic and competitive styles (Chin, 2011).

In the above context, the present study strived to find out what impact a woman's leadership style, particularly transformational and transactional, would have on the organizational commitment and job satisfaction.



Research objectives

- To investigate the impact of women's transformational leadership style on their employees' job satisfaction
- To investigate the impact of women's transactional leadership style on their employees' job satisfaction.
- To identify the role of women's leadership styles in the organizational commitment of the followers.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The concept of leadership has been the one on which researchers always try to dig out new facts and new theories, and a number of studies have been done on the phenomenon of leadership (Bruce J. Avolio, Reichard, Hannah, Walumbwa, & Chan, 2009). The phenomenon of leadership has been there for ages, but the scientific study on leadership started when it became the topic of interest for research. Considering the scientific study of leadership, it can be divided into a number of major events. The current study focused on transformational and transactional sides of leadership theory which has caught the substantial attention of researchers for decades (Judge & Piccol, 2004).

Transformational and Transactional Leadership

The primary distinction and key aspect of transformational and transactional leadership depend on the procedure by which leaders persuade followers, or how leaders plead to the followers' esteem and emotions (Burns, 1978). Managers can expand firms' level of understanding, making, sharing and exploiting by utilizing a suitable mix of transactional and transformational leadership styles (Bryant, 2003). The employees' outcome, profitability, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment have been observed to be statistically correlated to the managers' leadership practices (Chiok Foong Loke, 2001).

Transformational leadership and organizational commitment

With the help of past investigations, a positive relationship between transformational leadership and organizational commitment has been found (Dvir, Eden, & Avolio, 2002; Howell & Hall-Merenda, 1999; Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1996; Fred Ochieng Walumbwa & Lawler, 2003). Transformational leadership at the secondary senior level had a more positive association with workers' level of organizational commitment when contrasted with the connection amongst responsibility and evaluation of transformational leadership of the supporters' immediate manager (B J Avolio, Zhu, Koh, & Bhatia, 2004). However, the idea of organizational leadership and its outcome can provide modest different measurements of organizations (Zaccaro & Klimoski, 1996). Different working environment consequences, such as performance and withdrawal practices, have a linkage with the attitudinal issue of organizational commitment and job satisfaction (Fred O. Walumbwa, Wang, Lawler, & Shi, 2004; Fred Ochieng Walumbwa & Lawler, 2003). Leaders who show transformational leadership practices have been powerful as well as ready to start and construct powerful affection of diversity by increasing followers' perception regarding other members' commitment and by stressing on the worth of selflessness for the benefit of the organization (Bass, Avolio, Jung, & Berson, 2003). To create significant outcomes, transformational leadership can be utilized as a key managerial leadership development tool (Collins & Holton, 2004; Fred Ochieng Walumbwa & Lawler, 2003).



Transformational leadership and job satisfaction

Job satisfaction is an extent of positive emotions and attitudes that people hold towards their job (Asri & Ali Asghari, 2017). Organizational commitment and job satisfaction have received huge attention in the investigations of the workplace. This has been because of the general acknowledgement that these factors can be significant determinants of organizational performance (Angle & Perry, 1981; Riketta, 2002). Surveying the effect of transformational leadership on organizational commitment and job satisfaction has been a helpful method for looking at the potential effects of transformational leadership in two different lifestyles (Fred O Walumbwa, Orwa, Wang, & Lawler, 2005). There has been a relationship between job satisfaction and transactional leadership (Mung, May-Chiun, Kwang Sing, & Ayob, 2011). In both the private and public sectors, transformational leadership has progressively turned out to be predominant (Collins & Holton, 2004; Judge & Bono, 2000; Lowe & Gardner, 2000). Therefore, the firms which desire to embrace job satisfaction must resource their enterprise and expand the abilities that ought to be given genuine consideration by organizational planning to accommodate leadership styles accordingly (Mung et al., 2011).

Transactional leadership and organizational commitment

Transactional leaders through elucidating performance desire and direct the workers' role inside the organization, and encourage the employees' procedure of self-classification, and figure out how to make some association between the individual and the organizational group. Transactional leadership was found to have a more grounded beneficial outcome on the identification in the case of employees with associated self-composition (McCleskey, 2014; Sadeghi & Pihie, 2012). Individuals who have an associated perspective of the self tend to think and carry on in ways that highlight their relationship to others and their unity with the organization even in the existence of leadership that stresses on task performance and does not effectively seek after to make a profound association between the employees and the organization (Epitropaki & Martin, 2005).

Transactional leadership and job satisfaction

Organizations with learning orientations have had a remarkably positive outcome in job satisfaction. Employees have exhibited less satisfaction with pay rates, benefits, work conditions, advancement and communication as satisfier components, and more satisfaction with elements like nature of the activity, coworkers and supervision sort of factors (Mohammad Mosadegh Rad & Hossein Yarmohammadian, 2006). Therefore, there has been a strong connection between leadership styles and the employees' job satisfaction (Madlock, 2008).

With all this academic journey of leadership, it is yet to be researched and found out that what if the transformational or transactional leader happens to be a woman? What would be its impact on the followers' job satisfaction and organizational commitment?

METHOD

This study had its foundation in positivist philosophy (Collis & Hussey, 2014), as basic research, it was conducted as cross-sectional on time horizon. Its approach was deductive in which the survey strategy was used, and the quantitative choice was taken. Since the topic insisted to find out the impact of women's leadership styles on their followers' job satisfaction and organizational commitment, so a close-ended questionnaire-based survey method was used (Piko, 2006).



The population for this study consisted of all the employees who have worked under female leaders for at least one year. The reason for setting this criterion was that those followers would have spent enough time under that leadership to evaluate its impact on them. Since the sampling frame in this study was difficult to be made available, a non-probability sampling technique (Battaglia, 2011) was used. The data was obtained from 302 respondents.

For the questionnaire, the following instruments were adopted:

- **Transformational Leadership Measurement:** Seven items instrument on the Likert scale has been adopted (Carless, Wearing, & Mann, 2000).
- **Transactional Leadership Measurement:** Nine items instrument on the Likert scale has been adopted (Hartog, Muijen, & Koopman, 1997).
- **Job Satisfaction Measurement:** Four items instrument on the Likert scale has been adopted (Thompson & Phua, 2012).
- **Organizational Commitment:** Four items instrument on the Likert scale has been adopted (Ferris & Aranya, 1983).

Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 shows the conceptual framework of the study.

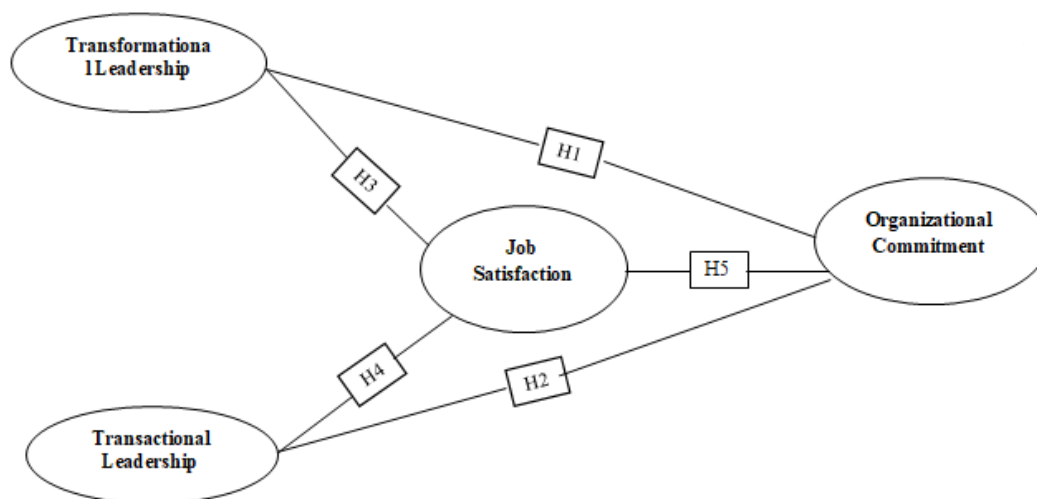


Figure 1. The Conceptual Framework of the Study

Hypothesis

1. There was a positive direct impact of women's transformational leadership styles on the followers' organizational job commitment.
2. There was a positive impact of women's transformational leadership style on the followers' job satisfaction.
3. There was a partial mediation of job satisfaction between the transformational leadership styles and organizational commitment.
4. There was no direct impact of women's transactional leadership styles on the followers' organizational commitment.
5. There was no impact of women's transactional leadership on job satisfaction.
6. Job satisfaction did not play a mediating role between transactional leadership and organizational commitment.



Data Analysis:

Confirmatory factor analysis of the individual construct was taken, and the fitness indices were ascertained. The mediating impact was checked using the process suggested by (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2006).

RESULTS

Demographics

The total sample of 302 respondents was collected which comprised of 170 males and 132 females, as depicted in *Table 1*, constituting a percentage amount of 56.3 and 43.7; respectively.

Table 1: Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	170	56.3
Female	132	43.7
Total	302	100

Out of these 302 respondents, 159 respondents were found to be working in public sectors, as shown in *Table 2*, whereas 143 were employed in private sectors. Thus, the majority of the respondents were working in public sectors constituting about 52.6 percent.

Table 2: Sector-wise classification

Sector	Frequency	Percentage
Public	159	52.6
Private	143	47.4
Total	302	100

The data based on these 302 respondents explained that people, highlighted in *Table 3*, whose age was ranging from 25 to 30 were found 73 in number making 24.2 percent, 62 people belonged to the age bracket between 31 and 35 constituting about 20.5 percent, 64 people belonged to the age bracket ranging from 36 to 40 years constituting about 21.2 percent of the total sample, 39 respondents belonged to the age bracket ranging from 41 to 45 years contributing 12.9 percent 25 respondents were found to be aged between 51 and 55 years thus contributing 8.3 percent of the total sample.

Table 3: Age wise classification

Age	Frequency	Percentage
25-30	73	24.2
31-35	62	20.5
36-40	64	21.2
41-45	39	12.9
46-50	39	12.9
51-55	25	8.3
Total	302	100

Finally, considering the respondents' job experience perspective, the majority of the people had the work experience ranging from 4 to 6 years which comprised of 101 in number thus making 33.4 percent of the total sample. Secondly, the sample was populated by the respondents who were having the work experience ranging from 1 to 3 years with the count of 86 making 28.5 percent of the total sample. 70 respondents belonged to the group having an experience range of 7 to 9 years. Lastly, the least populated portion of the sample was comprised of the people who had 10 and more years of work experience. Statistically, this small portion consisted of 45 people thus completing a sample by adding 14.9 percent to it.

- **Descriptive Information**

The mean values for TFL, TSL, JS, and OC were calculated to be 24.12, shown in *Table 4*, with the standard deviation of 7.88, 30.37 with the standard deviation of 7.99, 12.98 with the standard deviation 4.62 and 11.97, with the standard deviation of 4.12; respectively.

Table 4: Descriptive Stats

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation
TFL	24.12	7.88
TSL	30.37	7.99
JS	12.98	4.62
OC	11.97	4.12

Reliability

The internal consistency, *Table 5*, (Cronbach Alpha) for all the adopted constructs was found to be well above the required level, the Good standard for the alpha coefficient was between 0.8 to 0.9 (Sharma, 2016).

Table 5. Reliability Analysis

Construct	Number of Items	Cronbach Alpha
Transformational Leadership	07	0.86
Transactional Leadership	09	0.88
Job Satisfaction	04	0.82
Organizational Commitment	04	0.83

The hypothesized model was tested using the technique of structural equation modelling, with Amos Software. Although all the four latent variables along with their indicators were fully adopted from previous literature, yet Conformity Factor Analysis (CFA) of each variable was ascertained. *Table 6*, displays that result.

Conformity Factor Analysis

All the constructs fetched, mentioned in *Table 7*, required numbers in their respective model fit indices.

Table 6. CFA of the Individual construct

Categories	Absolute	Relative			Parsimonious		Absolute	
Fit Indices	χ^2/df	CFI	NFI	IFI	PNFI	PCFI	GFI	AGFI
Criteria	< 5.0	> 9.0	> 0.9	> 0.95	> 0.50	> 0.50	> 0.90	> 0.90
TFL	5.32	0.96	0.95	0.96	0.64	0.64	0.93	0.86
TSL	8.6	0.87	0.85	0.87	0.61	0.62	0.86	0.75
JS	3.25	0.99	0.99	0.99	0.33	0.33	0.98	0.94



OC	0.96		1.00	0.99	1.00	0.33	0.33	0.99	0.98

Structural Equational Model

The model consisted of two exogenous variables, *Figure 2*, Transformational Leadership and Transactional Leadership, where the former was gauged by seven indicators whereas the latter by nine indicators. There was one endogenous variable, Organizational Commitment, which had four indicators. There was one mediating variable, Job Satisfaction.

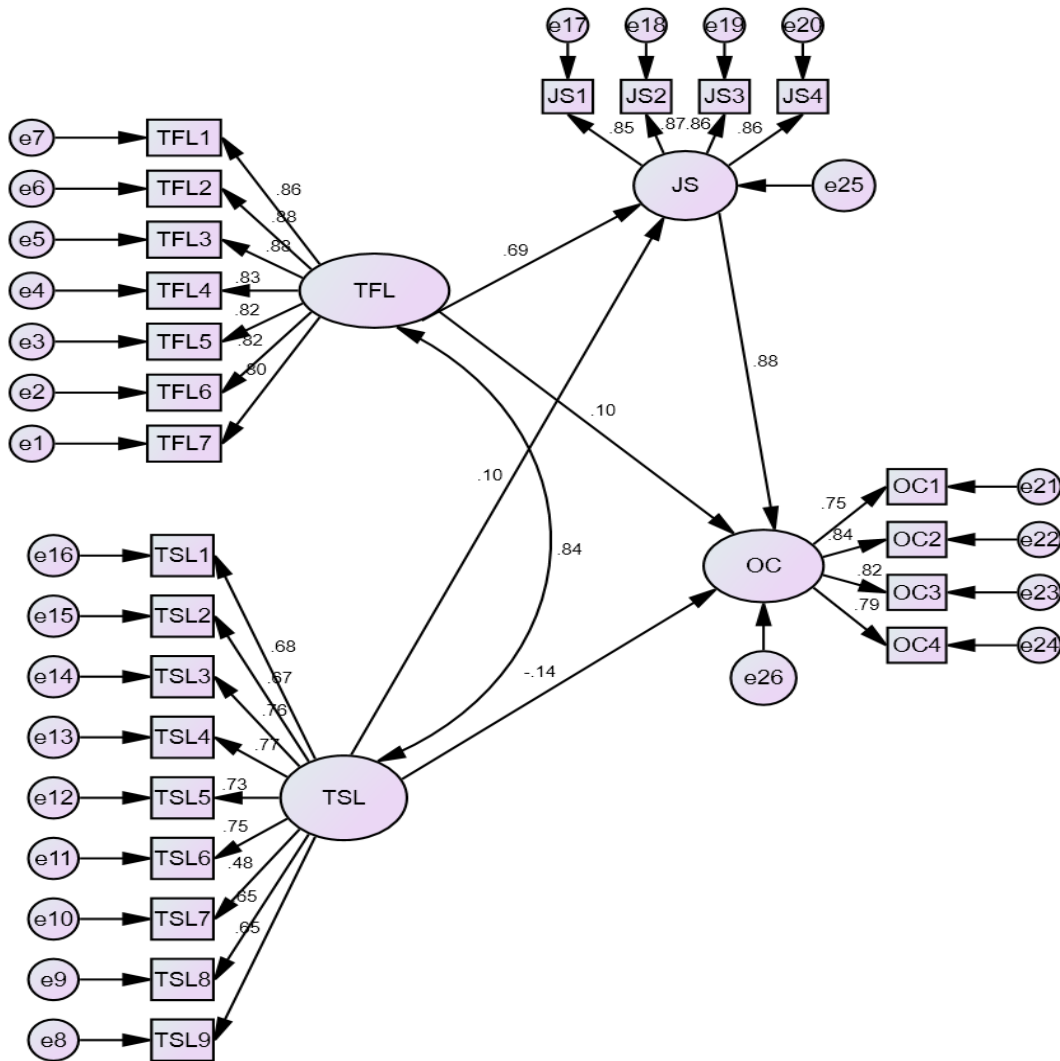


Figure 2

Model Fitness

Model fitness summary, *Table 7*, indicated that the model exceeded relative criteria that CFI, NFI, and IFI were all above 0.9. It also superseded parsimonious criteria of fitness, that PNFI and PCFI were well above 0.50. Whereas it was near to absolute criteria, that GFI and AGFI were 0.86 and 0.83; respectively.

Table 7. Model fitness Summary

Categories	Absolute		Relative			Parsimonious		Absolute	
	χ^2/df		CFI	NFI	IFI	PNFI	PCFI	GFI	AGFI
Criteria	< 5.0		> 9.0	> 0.9	> 0.95	> 0.50	> 0.50	> 0.90	> 0.90
	2.26		0.94	0.90	0.94	0.80	0.84	0.86	0.83

Hypothesized Relationships

The results showed, in *Table 8*, that when tested without a mediator, there was a positive effect of women's transformational leadership on the organizational commitment, as its P value was 0.000, way below the significant level. The standardized regression weight of 0.28 showed that the organizational commitment would surge by 28% with 1% increase in TFL, this was with a standard error of 0.32 and CR value of 5.231.

Table 8. Effects without mediator

Path Coefficients		SRW*	SE	CR	P
Women Transformational Leadership	—————→ Organizational Commitment	0.28	0.23	5.231	0.000
Women Transactional Leadership	—————→ Organizational Commitment	-0.147	0.092	-1.586	0.113

*Standardized regression weight

There was also no direct effect when tested without a mediator, of Women's Transactional leadership on the organizational commitment as its P value was 0.88, which was above the significant level. For this relationship, the standardized regression weight was -0.004.

The results in *Table 9* show the mediating effects. When tested with the mediator job satisfaction, the results revealed that there was a full mediation of job satisfaction between the impact of women's transformational leadership on organizational commitment. The total effect was found to be 0.288 in which the direct effect was -0.02 with the insignificant P value of 0.71, however, the indirect impact was 0.30 with the significant P value of 0.000. This showed that the entire impact of women's transformational leadership was because of the mediators' job satisfaction.

Table 9. Mediating Effects

Path Coefficients		SRW*	SE	CR	P
Women Transformational Leadership	—————→ Organizational Commitment	-0.02	0.109	6.936	0.71
Women Transformational Leadership	→ Job Satisfaction → Organizational Commitment	0.301	0.125	1.041	0.***

*Standardized regression weight

DISCUSSION***Women Transformational Leadership***

There was no direct impact of transformational leadership on the organizational commitment, however, if job satisfaction emerged in the result of transformational leadership, then it ultimately resulted in the organizational commitment. This showed that when women took up the position of leadership and if they adopted the transformational leadership, they first could



strive to create job satisfaction in their followership only then they would be in a position to emboss the organizational commitment in the orientation of their followers. There was a variety of previous literature on these relationships, as it has been tested that the transformational leadership impacted on the organizational commitment directly (Fred O Walumbwa et al., 2005). Transformational leadership not only became a direct source of the surge in the productivity of the followers' performance but, with other mediators, it also fetched the organizational commitment (Bass et al., 2003). In conformity with the results of this study, previous research also suggested that there was a mediating role of job satisfaction between the transformational leadership and organizational commitment (Nguni, Slegers, & Denessen, 2006). This research, however, proved that the full mediation of job satisfaction and the point of focus here was the women leaders and their followers. It has also been seen that there was an indirect impact of the transformational leadership on the job satisfaction with the other variables playing as mediating role such as work environment (Boamah, Spence Laschinger, Wong, & Clarke, 2018), and perceived organizational politics (Saleem, 2015). As this study found a positive impact of transformational leadership on job satisfaction, it conceded completely with the previous findings (Hanaysha et al., 2012; Mung et al., 2011).

Women Transactional Leadership

Women's transactional leadership did not have a direct impact on organizational commitment. It also did not have a significant impact on job satisfaction which culminated that women's transactional leadership failed to have an indirect impact on the organizational commitment. Women leaders, when displayed and practised rewards and punishment-based leadership styles, they failed to stir job satisfaction or organizational commitment among the followers. Contrary to this finding, a study from Pakistan showed that in fact, transactional leadership yielded a more positive impact on job satisfaction than that by transformational leadership (Javed, Jaffari, & Rahim, 2014). The difference, however, was because of gender diversity in leadership. There have been however other positive constructs which were positively impacted more by transactional leadership than by transformational leadership, such as knowledge sharing (Masa'deh, Obeidat, & Tarhini, 2016), and job success (Riaz, A., Haider, 2010).

CONCLUSION

The journey of the leadership phenomenon has been full of a myriad of trait, behaviour, and situational theories, it has also been engulfed with different approaches and styles. Transformational and transactional leadership styles have probably been the most researched styles so far. Leaders either go with reward and punishment-based approach to lead or they transform a positive change in the followers. The impact of these two styles has been tested on many organizational indicators, such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment. The research indicated that there has always been more impact of the transformational leadership on job satisfaction and organizational commitment as compared to the impact of transactional leadership. There have been few research endeavours which have strived to include gender diversity aspect in these tests. Therefore, this study was conducted on women academicians of Pakistan, considering them as leaders, and the data was collected from those followers who have worked under women leaders. The results revealed that there was no significant impact of the transformational leadership on the organizational commitment, however, the indirect impact between these two did exist, the job satisfaction played a mediating role between the transformational leadership and organizational commitment. The results also depicted that



there was no direct or indirect impact of transactional leadership on organizational commitment, as even job satisfaction did not play a mediating role between these two.

IMPLICATION

There were indispensable implications of this study, as it was yet another attempt to explain the leadership relations with the organizational indicators purely from gender diversity aspect, so apart from adding to the existing knowledge, it would provide a base to test other variables with women's leadership styles. This would help directly to the present and potential women leaders, especially in Pakistan, to understand their followers. As if they wished to stir job satisfaction and organizational commitment among their followers, they would have to show the transformational leading style. And those leading women who assessed themselves as being transactional leaders must think, at least according to this study, as it would be extremely difficult for them to stir job satisfaction or organizational commitment. This study would also facilitate the local scientific findings on women leadership to organizations and leadership trainers who can groom women in their leadership styles according to the results of this study. Moreover, academicians throughout the world have been considered as the beacon of creativity, when these academicians were led by women, their commitment towards their institute and their satisfaction with their field would depend on how they were led by women, so this study, in this way, provided, a clear and specific guideline to women academicians of Pakistan.

LIMITATION AND FUTURE RECOMMENDATIONS

This study was limited to the education sector and academicians in that sector, so the same conceptual model should be tested with gender diversity aspect on other industries. As the mediating role was confined to job satisfaction in this study, future research can be conducted to test other mediating variables such as knowledge sharing, job success, and objective performance.

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