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THE IMPACT OF TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND WORKPLACE RELATIONSHIPS ON EMPLOYEE BURNOUT AND THEIR CORRELATION TO TURNOVER INTENTION AND ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

Teni Davoudian

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THE IMPACT OF TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND WORKPLACE

RELATIONSHIPS ON EMPLOYEE BURNOUT AND THEIR CORRELATION TO

TURNOVER INTENTION AND ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

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A Thesis

Presented to the

Faculty of

California State University,

San Bernardino

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In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Science

in

Industrial and Organizational Psychology

_____

by

Teni Davoudian

May 2023

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Approved by:

Dr. Ismael Diaz, Committee Chair, Psychology

Dr. Janet Kottke, Committee Member

Dr. Mark Agars, Committee Member

ABSTRACT

Organizations are built through the contributions of their employees, which is why when employees leave, organizations suffer a significant loss. This can be foreseen by an employee's level of organizational commitment and burnout which contribute to turnover intention. Measures can be taken to reduce burnout through nurturing leadership and the development of healthy workplace relationships. The purpose of this study is to examine the respective relationship between transformational leadership and workplace relationships on turnover intention and organizational commitment with an interest in the mediating role of employee burnout. Leadership has a strong influence on individuals and organizations. It largely contributes to an employee's well-being. Workplace relationships formed in the organizational environment along with transformational leadership style carry the potential to diminish the effects of employee burnout. A self-assessment survey reported from 334 participants was collected throughout a four-week period. A reliability analysis followed by a zero-order correlation was conducted to compare the level of significance between all variables. A path analysis examined the extent to which the effects of transformational leadership, reduced employee burnout, and greater workplace relationships mediate the effects of this impact on turnover intentions and organizational commitment. Results support behaviors of transformational leadership significantly reduce the effects of employee burnout, and turnover

intention while increasing organizational commitment. However, the evidence

does not support this outcome as an effect of workplace relationships.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The role of an immediate supervisor is critical in the workforce, good leadership is necessary for the success of employees. Therefore, it comes as no surprise to learn that leadership is linked to reducing stress and burnout (Moriano et al., 2021). Leadership plays a large role in the employees' level of commitment within an organization and aids in the development of self-growth. The Transformational leadership framework entails the interconnectivity of leaders and followers who encourage each other to increase internal motivation and ethical practices (Burns, 1978, p. 20). This paper aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the literature on the influence of transformational leadership and workplace relationships within an organization on turnover intention and organizational commitment through the mediating role of employee burnout.

Burnout is a psychological response to high levels of long-term work-related stress explained through the dimensions of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and lack of personal accomplishment (Tafvelin et al., 2019). Burnout can have detrimental effects on an organization as it is depleting its most essential resource, its employees. Individuals wake up every day drawing from their resources such as energy, time, and motivation to carry. When these resources begin running low or are lost altogether, they rely on the other

resource to power through and reach their goals. Transformational leadership aids in the restoration of those resources by guiding followers and providing them with the tools needed to succeed. According to Liu et al. (2019), transformational leadership leads to a reduced risk of burnout by encouraging employees' psychological empowerment. This review will outline the literature on the transformational theory of leadership, workplace relationships, employee burnout, turnover intention, and organizational commitment. Furthermore, this study will test the relationship between transformational leadership and workplace relationships and how they relate to employee burnout. The second goal of this study is to test burnout and its impact on turnover intention and organizational commitment.

Below is a review of all the study variables (transformational leadership, workplace relationships, employee burnout, turnover intention, and organizational commitment). Following that, I will discuss the theoretical framework and how these variables relate to each other. the goal of this project is to establish how transformational leadership and positive workplace relationships will result in beneficial outcomes for employees.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Transformational Leadership

Leadership entails assisting, motivating, and inspiring employees to reach organizational goals (Moriano et al., 2021). Leaders strategically urge employees to strive and achieve organizational objectives, greatly influencing them in their daily tasks and behaviors. Effective leaders influence their followers in such a way that employees voluntarily contribute to organizational outcomes. Leaders play a vital role in preventing occupational hazards that may place employees at risk (Moriano et al., 2021). This is critical as managers and supervisors advocate for policies and procedures that protect employees while also aligning with organizational needs.

Leadership can be defined as a process of regulation that impacts and drives others to work toward a common goal (Courtright et al., 2014). Transformational leadership (TL) was originally defined by Burns (1978, p. 20) to be the interaction between leaders and followers, to "raise one another to higher levels of morality and motivation". TL essentially allows leaders and followers to thrive together through the leader's emphasis on personal and professional development, to increase their motivation and integrity. Transformational leaders utilize their charisma and attentiveness to play a significant role in their followers' opportunities for personal growth (Bass, 1985). TL is commonly linked with large amounts of personal assets (Arnold et al., 2015). TL is seen as a valuable

personal motivational resource for individuals. In a universe where effort, time, and control are limited, collecting resources is essential for success. Individuals commonly lead highly demanding lives; it is vital to have resources at their disposal to ensure operations run smoothly. The benefits of TL entail an increase in employee well-being, happiness, psychological welfare, and physical health (Hildenbrand & Sacramento, 2018). TL improves the organizational environment by promoting employee welfare reinstalling their trust in leadership and providing a sense of meaning to work.

Transformational leadership (TL) is an approach in which leaders transform their followers by strengthening their skills. Leaders establish a bond with their followers to inspire, support, and aid in the development of their groundbreaking ideas (Khan et al., 2020). Employees that let themselves benefit from TL by further developing their skills and abilities are increasingly more motivated to excel. Therefore, these employees are perceived to have exceptional performance measures (Breevaart & Bakker, 2018). Transformational leaders are seen as mentors that their followers can rely on and learn from. These types of leaders affect employees by aligning their followers' self-concept (goals, values, abilities, and beliefs) with the organization's goals. In turn, this may cause an alteration in the followers' values to motivate the respect and commitment a follower has for their leader (Tipu et al., 2012).

Transformational leaders motivate employees to excel (Arnold et al., 2015). In terms of organizational outcomes, TL improves employee motivation,

creativity, satisfaction, and productivity (Tipu et al., 2012). TL strengthens employee performance beyond organizational expectations by encouraging their skills and abilities through intrinsic motivation (Khan et al., 2020). TL supports employees by giving them the freedom to be innovative without the fear of failure, gaining an optimistic vision of what is yet to come (Bass, 1985). Due to TL cultivating employee development and growth, it is commonly linked to an increase in effort, skills, and competencies (Hildenbrand & Sacramento, 2018). This success in personal growth allows for a constant and linear progression in the collection of competencies and skills.

Dimensions of Transformational Leadership

Transformational Leadership (TL) has four key components: idealized influence; inspirational motivation; intellectual stimulation; and individualized consideration. Later studies of transformational leadership divided idealized influence into dimensions of behavior and attitudinal concepts. Collectively, the components of TL highlight the development of followers to surpass expectations and thrive at higher levels of performance (Tipu et al., 2012). Many of these components are linked with emotional displays sharing positive emotions (Arnold et al., 2015). The behaviors embedded in these components support the effects of higher job satisfaction, work motivation, and work performance that followers experience (Breevaart & Bakker, 2018). These components link employees to the impact of their work and motivate their task engagement (Kelly & Hearld, 2020).

Idealized influence refers to the feelings of reliance, admiration, respect, and allegiance that are accredited by followers to a leader (Tipu et al., 2012). The leader is seen as more of a role model that encourages high-efficiency performance expectations (Tafvelin et al., 2019; Breevaart & Bakker, 2018). Idealized influence highlights a communal goal and mission (Courtright et al., 2014). TL carry mutual respect for their followers and aim to make a positive impact on their careers. This behavior is displayed when a leader properly assesses the preparations for organizational objectives by accurately envisioning them (Khan et al., 2020).

Transformational leaders use inspirational motivation to foster employee motivation and self-efficacy beliefs (Tipu et al., 2012). Inspirational motivation is displayed as an objective and appealing goal for followers to look forward to achieving (Tafvelin et al., 2019). Essentially, keeping followers optimistic about the future that lies ahead (Courtright et al., 2014). Inspirational motivation is an attitude addressing employee emotional traits, building employee confidence for prior performance, and effectively communicating by delivering feedback (Khan et al., 2020). Essentially, through communication, a leader focuses on the value of the task, the employee, and themselves.

Intellectual stimulation refers to a creative and innovative culture, employees feel empowered by utilizing their critical thinking skills and initiating problem-solving techniques (Tipu et al., 2012). Intellectual stimulation takes place when followers are challenged to ponder within themselves for engaging

ideas (Tafvelin et al., 2019). Naturally, leaders urge the creativity of their

employees (Breevaart & Bakker, 2018). This level of autonomy allows employees

the confidence needed to think outside the box and come up with clever

solutions. Intellectual stimulation speaks about the encouragement and effort a

leader provides to their followers to be more adaptive toward situational factors

(Khan et al., 2020).

Individualized consideration pertains to the leader's ability to provide

attention to the needs of their follower, aiding in the achievement of self-

actualization and growth (Bass, 1985). Transformational leaders are genuinely

invested and attentive to the needs, strengths, and aspirations of their followers

(Breevaart & Bakker, 2018; Tafvelin et al., 2019). This is displayed through the

support of the leader expressed through training, performance supervision, and

the delegation of tasks (Khan et al., 2020). By actively developing and

strengthening an employee's skills, the organization is at a further advantage.

Leaders do not display TL behaviors day in and day out, they often change in

degree day to day. However, they are genuinely invested and attentive to the

needs of their followers (Breevaart & Bakker, 2018). TL behavior requires

numerous personal resources, and a lot of effort, and may not always be

consistent. This absorption of resources ultimately contributes to burnout.

Employee Burnout

Burnout is the manifestation of long-term work stress, resulting in

extensive individual and organizational consequences. On an individual level,

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burnout is seen through decreasing health conditions, on an organizational level this can be displayed as declining job performance, increased turnover rates, and increased costs (Hildenbrand & Sacramento, 2018). These long-term effects can interfere with goal outcomes and lead to poor performance, resulting in career failure (Nunn & Isaacs, 2019). This can also be seen because of extensive employee involvement in work, identified by exhaustion and detachment. In this case, exhaustion can be described as an outcome of intense physical, affective, and cognitive pressure. Additionally, disengagement from the job commonly predicts emotional, cognitive, and behavioral abandonment of work (Hildenbrand & Sacramento, 2018).

Given that many individuals acknowledge burnout to be a result of long-term unresolved stress, they typically associate the term with older men. However, young women are more at risk of being affected by burnout as they are highly driven and committed to their goals while trying to balance all other aspects of life (Nunn & Isaacs, 2019). Individuals with poor health are also more likely to be impacted, environmental stress and exhaustion from working long hours contribute to burnout. Factors like having a busy or stressful role at home with lots of responsibilities can also contribute to the stressors and challenges brought on by the work environment.

Work-related stress can be experienced when resources are threatened, lost, or in short supply. Burnout is often a reaction to the deletion of resources without the replacement of others (Hildenbrand & Sacramento, 2018). Recourses

in this aspect refers to concepts such as an individual's energy, time, and attention they can dedicate to a certain task. When resources are lost it is common for individuals to feel pressured and for situations to intensify. Occupational demands such as emotional presence and role conflict increase the likelihood of employee burnout (Hildenbrand & Sacramento, 2018). However, there is no overnight solution, burnout takes time to overcome, and it decreases with age (Nunn & Isaacs, 2019).

Dimensions of Employee Burnout

Burnout is a psychological reaction to chronic stressors characterized by the dimensions of emotional exhaustion, cynicism, and a lack of personal achievement. Emotional exhaustion is often the first display of burnout, caused by the depletion of physical and emotional resources brought on by long-term chronic and prolonged exposure to stress (Kelly & Hearld, 2020). Emotional exhaustion refers to the feeling of drainage, resulting in not being able to provide for others on an emotional level (Chiara et al., 2018). Detachment or cynicism is the negative reaction to the work environment, often causing depersonalization toward the recipients of the organization's services (Moriano et al., 2021). Detachment is typically displayed when employees begin treating others like objects rather than clients, patients, or consumers (Tafvelin et al., 2019).

Organizational detachment can physically be seen through individuals neglecting work responsibilities; calling in sick, not answering emails, or attending meetings. Mentally, it is experienced through emotional withdrawal

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from conversations or no longer contributing thoughts or ideas. Following emotional exhaustion and detachment, employees begin feeling a lack of personal achievement at work, resulting in feelings of incompetence (Kelly & Hearld, 2020), ineffectiveness, and unfulfillment (Tafvelin et al., 2019). Feeling unproductive and sluggish, performance is subconsciously altered and declines, leading deeper into self-sabotage and further contributing to incomplete goals.

The elimination of these emotional resources from an individual's inventory can cause employees to feel the inability to perform (Tafvelin et al., 2019). Employees distressed by their work and home environment, have a difficult time applying additional effort. If their exhaustion is neglected for a long period of time, the compilation of past-due responsibilities can lead to feelings of exhaustion, and ultimately burnout. Burnout affects employees physically and mentally, resulting in organizations being left with employees lacking motivation and expected performance (Moriano et al., 2021). This can cause organizations to experience reduced efficiency and commitment, with an increase in turnover and absenteeism (Tafvelin et al., 2019). Employee burnout can impact those around them in the work environment. It is critical to address it early on as it may quickly affect the organizational culture.

Transformational Leadership, Employee Burnout, and The COR Theory

The Conservation of Resources (COR) framework can be used to explain burnout processes (Hildenbrand & Sacramento, 2018). The theory states that individuals generally try to collect and maintain their resources, so the threat of

losing them can be stressful. It is suggested that the resources do not operate in isolation but rather, simultaneously, and that individuals go to great lengths to protect their resources (Tafvelin et al., 2019). People invest in multiple resources and aim to replace ones that may be diminishing or lost. Individuals complete tasks using multiple resources like time, and cognitive and physical energy, to maintain them, they take breaks to relax and avoid stress. When resources become limited people become defensive and lunge into survival mode trying to save what they have left (Arnold et al., 2015). The COR theory emphasizes the importance of managing the demands of work and reducing job-related stressors. It draws special attention to the context of the job and resources like job control, feedback, and task significance (Hildenbrand & Sacramento, 2018). The replenishment of these resources can be seen through the contribution of transformational leaders. Therefore, transformational leadership (TL) is believed to reduce levels of burnout because of its positive effects on employees thriving at work.

Studies show TL has a significant impact on decreasing employee burnout (Arnold et al., 2015; Moriano et al., 2021; Breevaart & Bakker, 2018; Tafvelin et al., 2019; Kelly & Hearld, 2020; Liu et al., 2019). TL replenishes resources and promotes employee development by assisting in the formation of competencies to better prepare for job demands, preventing burnout. It provides employees with emotional regulation strategies, and resources to effectively balance work-life and ensures their well-being to reduce stress and burnout (Arnold et al.,

2015). Moriano et al. (2021) express that the security provided by leadership is considered a resource in the prevention of employee burnout and that good leadership protects the well-being of employees. Similarly, Breevaart and Bakker (2018) argue that TL as a resource assist in the challenges of job demands, work engagement, and interferes with hindrance demands. This is a direct result of TL behaviors inspiring and motivating followers through intrinsic motivation brought on by their leaders showing genuine regard for their health and welfare. Tafvelin et al. (2019) state that TL provides personal and contextual resources preventing employees from burnout, adding that perceptions of social support from peers play a large role. Given the previous relationship between TL and its buffering effects on burnout, I also predict a similar relationship. I make this prediction because of the moderating effects and resources that TL provides employees.

Hypothesis 1: Transformational leadership (TL) will negatively predict employee burnout. High levels of transformational leadership will result in low levels of employee burnout. The hypothesized model is depicted in Figure 1.

Workplace Relationships

Workplace relationships can be characterized as the strength between employees' relationships and their supervisors and peers (Hoelscher & Ravert, 2021). Tran et al. (2018) describe workplace relationships in terms of exchange of information that occurs between groups and individuals who aim to accomplish their goals. It may also define the quality of relationships with colleagues that

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may improve, satisfy, be amicable, and inspire trust among employees. These relationships also provide coworkers and supervisors the motivation to perform the duties of their role, advantageous for psychological functioning (Fernet et al., 2010). Essentially, relationships in the work environment improve the well-being of employees by instilling trust and motivation. This is important as it creates a nurturing environment for employees to feel as though they socially express themselves. As a result, this encourages personal development, increases morale, and improves collaboration.

On a managerial level, having a high-quality relationship with followers allows employees to see things from a supervisory perspective, assist in decision-making, and encourage all employees to take initiative (Fernet et al., 2010). By way of explanation, having a high-quality relationship with members of management encourages employees to feel comfortable bringing up ideas, be of service in problem-solving, and seek things from another viewpoint. This communication and collaboration may be especially helpful to employees as a boost in their careers. Results found that employees who experience a high-quality relationship with upper-level staff had increased physical and psychological well-being, as well as significantly greater job satisfaction (Fernet et al., 2010).

Employees are differently committed to organizations for a variety of different work-related reasons. One of them is affective commitment, emotionally attached to work-related targets that are contributed daily (Morin et al., 2009).

Furthermore, it is an attitude in which an employee links their identity to that of

the organization (Mercurio, 2015). Affective commitment can influence an

individual's workplace experience, as well as personal and structural

characteristics through workplace relationships (Kumari & Afroz, 2013). Affective

commitment is a strong corollary of feeling supported through high-quality

workplace relationships. The Least Preferred Coworker (LPC) scale is a common

approach for determining the intensity of interpersonal relationships. The LPC

scale represents a person's esteem of their least preferred coworker, the

individual may be anyone the respondent has ever worked with (Fox et al.,

1973). The responses determine the respondent's capability of differentiating an

individual as a person (e.g., friendly, caring) or a coworker (e.g. reliable, efficient)

assessing dimensional discrimination (Evans & Dermer, 1974).

Workplace Relationships and Burnout

As employees make up the greater part of any organization, it is critical to

understand the effect of relationships among one another. The motivation

provided by the relationships between colleagues and supervisors acts as a

hindrance to employee burnout (Fernet et al., 2010). Otherwise stating that

through workplace relationships, motivation is gained, which in turn decreases

the effects of burnout. Motivation provides individuals with a drive to excel and

reach their goals. Often achievement alone is enough to reverse many effects of

burnout. Tran et al. (2018) found that employees are better influenced and

motivated to power through duties and goals through a transformational

leadership style. Through the empowerment of leadership resources and the decrease in job stress, emotional exhaustion significantly decreased. Additionally, engaging in high-quality workplace relationships was found to significantly lower levels of emotional exhaustion in employees because of motivation gained from colleagues (Fernet et al., 2010). The motivation gained from relationships not only provides social validation of how employees are feeling but aid in their emotional exhaustion.

Drawing from self-determination theory (SDT), Fernet et al. (2010) assert that individuals take part in interpersonal relationships to fulfill basic psychological needs including autonomy, competency, and kindship. Additionally mentioning how high-quality relationships nourish the psychological state of employees when their trust and confidence are established. Hoelscher and Ravert (2021) state that workplace social support ensures fewer work-related conflicts among coworkers and aids in the likelihood of employees leaning on one another in times of need. Otherwise, vocalizing relationships that share trust and support ensures the psychological well-being of employees. This is critical as faith in the organization allows for a more pleasant work environment. However, low-quality workplace relationships lead to maladaptive work behaviors and ultimately lead to burnout (Fernet et al., 2010). Low-quality relationships tend to create a hostile environment where individuals may not feel comfortable having a free exchange of ideas. This lack of conversation may derail innovative thinking and create a stress-filled workplace, leaving employees feeling burned out.

Fernet et al. (2010) found that the higher the quality of workplace relationships, the happier employees were, thus decreasing their levels of burnout. This linkage is brought on by motivation promoting the relationship between the social connectivity of employees and the effects of burnout. This implies that the promotion of employee welfare may be gained and strengthened through social relationships in the workplace by developing motivation. By having a confident relationship among employees, everyone is more content and more likely to thrive in their workplace environment. Fernet et al. (2010) argue that employees experiencing low levels of self-determination and work motivation will have more to gain from workplace relationships of high-quality and good standing.

Hoelscher and Ravert (2021) found that burnout is decreased by having a high-quality relationship with a direct supervisor and peers. They also found that high-quality workplace support decreases the effects of burnout and turnover intention. Tran et al. (2018) state that healthy supportive workplace relationships and transformational leadership increase employee performance. This is significant because healthy quality workplace relationships promote employee health while increasing productivity and performance. These employees reported high levels of social impact to reduce their job stress and increase OC.

There are many studies demonstrating the positive influence of high-quality workplace relationships on employee burnout (Tran et al, 2018; Hoelscher & Ravert, 2021; Fernet et al, 2010). Specifically, Tran et al. (2018) argued that

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the positive effects of high-quality workplace relationships include lower levels of job stress and higher organizational commitment. Hoelscher and Ravert (2021), prove supervisory support along with establishing and maintaining strong relationships with associates is critical to decreasing the effects of burnout. Similarly, Fernet et al. (2010) also supported their findings by establishing that high-quality relationships with colleagues have a positive influence on recovering from emotional exhaustion. They explained how high-quality relationships support the functions of employees. Meanwhile, low-quality workplace relationships lead to counterproductive consequences of burnout. Ultimately, establishing a pattern that high-quality workplace relationships decrease or eliminate the effects of burnout. Given the previous connection between workplace relationships and employee burnout, I also predict that there they are correlated. This prediction is made given the idea that workplace relationships, like transformational leadership, are a resource acting as a buffer from burnout.

> **Hypothesis 2:** High-quality workplace relationships will negatively affect employee burnout. High-quality workplace relationships result in low levels of employee burnout. The hypothesized model is depicted in Figure 1.

Transformational Leadership and Work Engagement

Breevaart and Bakker (2018) examined the role of Transformational Leadership (TL) in the relationship between daily job demands and the employee work environment. They applied the job demands-resources (JD-R) theory to the stressor-hindrance stressor framework to evaluate the relationship between daily

occurrences of TL behavior and employee work engagement. JD-R theory implies that job demands can potentially contribute to health impairment, caused by having an extreme workload. The theory also implies that the work environment affects the energy, enthusiasm, and concentration of employees. It emphasizes two job characteristics, one of which is job resources referring to components of work that revive the self-growth, achievement, and motivation process. The second characteristic is job demands which commence an energy consumption process predicting an increase in strain and declining health (Breevaart & Bakker, 2018).

Research by Breevaart & Bakker (2018) indicates that the daily challenge demands teachers encounter have a positive correlation with the work environment on the workdays that they experienced high levels of TL. Daily hindrance demands (e.g., role conflict) showed a negative correlation with work engagement on the workdays that transformational leadership was low. Therefore, TL behavior is expected to decrease the harmful implications of hindrance demands such as role conflict and role ambiguity that lead to employee exhaustion or burnout. However, it is important to note that the daily behaviors of TL do not look the same every day and alter based on the job demand (Breevaart & Bakker, 2018).

The collection of resources gained through TL is used to enhance the linkage between work engagement and job demands such as demanding workload and cognitive pressure. These same resources can be placed into

effect to serve as a barrier between work engagement and hindrance demands such as role conflict and family-to-work conflict (Breevaart & Bakker, 2018). TL is expected to be in higher demand when work becomes more stressful and meaningful (Khan et al., 2020). When the workload becomes too challenging, it is important to utilize the support from leadership as a valuable resource. As all work demands deplete resources like energy, personal growth, and achievement become particularly critical to aid in learning and perseverance. Failure to rely on resources during challenging times can lead to a drastic loss in motivation and performance (Breevaart & Bakker, 2018).

Courtright et al. (2014) explain how developmental challenges such as difficult work assignments impact the behaviors of leaders. Surveys found a positive correlation between development challenges, transformational leadership, and leadership engagement. Results indicate when leadership self-efficacy is low, there is an increased chance of experiencing the effects of emotional exhaustion and the negative effects of developmental challenges. It was found that the stress resulting from challenges led to an increase in anxiety and counterproductive work behaviors, leading to emotional exhaustion. Therefore, leaders are expected to have large amounts of emotional, mental, and physical resources (Courtright et al., 2014).

Turnover Intention

Turnover intention (TI) refers to the deliberate willingness to depart from an organization (Oosthuizen et al., 2016). TI pertains to the likelihood of an

individual leaving their employer due to a lack of satisfaction with working

conditions, categorized by voluntary and involuntary turnover. Voluntary turnover

occurs because of poor compensation, working conditions, relocation, illness, or

death, creating rehiring costs and placing undue pressure on other staff.

Involuntary turnover is a ruling made by management to compel the employee to

depart from the organization (Belete, 2018). Losing highly skilled employees

reduces organizational functions and product delivery while increasing costs to

recruit, select, and train employees (Oosthuizen et al., 2016).

TI is related to age, years of employment, education level, workload, and

self-esteem. Age is especially critical because as it increases, TI decreases

(Oosthuizen et al., 2016). This is due to feeling more committed to an

organization as time goes on and the inability to market new skills within a

younger demographic of applicants. Additionally, job satisfaction, organizational

commitment, and perception of organizational culture are all key predictors of TI

(Oosthuizen et al., 2016). Belete (2018) found that organizational commitment is

the most powerful predicting factor that may foresee an employee's intention to

leave. The act of officially departing from an organization is the last of many

steps that employees engage in before leaving (Elçi et al., 2018). Employees

engage in physical (i.e., absenteeism, lateness, leaving early, and job transfers)

and psychological (i.e., little to no effort, loss of interest) withdrawal behaviors

before their departure. TI tremendously affects remaining employees (i.e., loss of

motivation, additional workload) and organizations by decreasing productivity,

quality of service, and profitability (Belete, 2018). Therefore, identifying predictors of employee turnover is critical for developing strategies to reduce departures. Oosthuizen et al. (2016) confirm the significant relationship between high levels of job satisfaction and lower levels of turnover intention (TI). They state that organizations that fail to strategize for the promotion of job satisfaction suffer significant levels of employee departure.

Scanlan & Still (2019) found that negative perceptions of management, lower levels of managerial and collegial support, and high emotional demands lead to higher levels of TI. Belete (2018) links the positive effects of transformational leadership TL leading to a decrease in TI. Elçi et al. (2018) establish that supervisory support significantly decreases levels of burnout and turnover intention. Similarly, Steffens et al. (2018) found evidence of leadership styles reducing levels of burnout and the likelihood of TI. Elçi et al. (2018) state that burnout positively affects turnover intention by way of the Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory. The COR theory highlights that motivation allows individuals to maintain resources (i.e., transformational leadership) while gaining additional ones.

Scanlan & Still (2019) found that there is a positive association between burnout and turnover intention, and both have a negative correlation with job satisfaction. Job satisfaction may be increased by achieving a work-life balance (Oosthuizen et al., 2016). By reaching appropriate levels of work-life balance, job satisfaction is proven to increase which in turn decreases levels of turnover

intention. This is important because as employees are content and find a balance, they bring positivity into the work environment. This positively contributes to a better work culture, making employees want to stay. This is additionally supported by Elçi et al. (2018), which state that high levels of emotional exhaustion and low levels of job satisfaction are connected to employees with high intentions to leave an organization.

Scanlan and Still (2019) found that the emotional demands occupations impose on employee mental health increases the risk of burnout, directly leading to an increase in TI. Burnout is found to be one of the most important conductors of turnover intention (Elçi et al., 2018). Oosthuizen et al. (2016) found that achieving a work-life balance that alludes to reduced levels of burnout results in decreased levels of TI. High levels of TI correspond with high levels of emotional demands, negative perceptions of leadership, little support from colleagues, supervisors, and low levels of autonomy (Scanlan & Still, 2019). Leaders have a great influence on the well-being of employees. They decrease employees' level of burnout through greater work engagement, reducing the intention to leave. Factors such as burnout and work engagement have been identified to play a key role in TI (Steffens et al., 2018). Through the protection that great leadership provides employees, they are less likely to burn out which in turn supports their stay with the organization. This is important because it promotes the well-being of employees and allows them to develop their skills and abilities while reaching organizational goals.

Hypothesis 3: Employee burnout will positively predict turnover intention

(TI). High levels of employee burnout result in increased rates of turnover

intention. The hypothesized model is depicted in Figure 1.

Organizational Commitment

Organizational commitment (OC) is a multidimensional concept defined as

an employee's bond to an organization and allegiance to its goals. OC refers to a

psychological linkage that reduces an employee's intention to voluntarily depart

from their organization (Sarisik et al., 2019). Belete (2018) refers to OC as a

willful belief in an organization's goals, values, and desire to contribute to

obtaining said goals. By aligning an employee's ambitions to those of an

organization, their effort to progress and improve benefits both them and the

entity. Job satisfaction and organizational trust are found to be critical predictors

of OC (Sarisik et al., 2019). Employees satisfied with working conditions and fair

treatment within an organization are more committed to the organization. Having

high levels of OC improves citizenship, attitudinal behaviors, and work

performance while decreasing absenteeism and turnover intention (Sarisik et al.,

2019).

Dimensions of Organizational Commitment

Organizational commitment consists of three dimensions; affective,

normative, and continuance commitment. Affective commitment is a person's

emotional attachment to the organization (Sarisik et al., 2019). Affective

commitment also refers to an employee's involvement in or identification with an

organization or entity (Kumari & Afroz, 2013). This is directed toward how an employee feels that their values, beliefs, and goals are aligned with the organization's purpose, and feeling emotionally welcome. Affective commitment also has the greatest influence, compared to normative and continuance, on positive individual and organizational outcomes.

Normative commitment is an individual's perception of the obligation that they feel toward the organization (Sarisik et al., 2019). Employees feel that they are connected to the organization through a sense of duty or responsibility. They may feel that they are in debt to their employer. This feeling is often brought on by the ideology of the company investing in their personal development. Continuance commitment refers to the assessed cost associated with leaving the organization (Sarisik et al., 2019). This essentially leads to an employee's feelings of loss, and the loss of profiting from an organization is greater than what can be gained by joining another.

Affective Commitment and Workplace Relationships

Employees with high levels of psychological attachment are more competent and likely to achieve high levels of success and satisfaction in their work and personal lives (Kumari & Afroz, 2013). The emotional well-being of employees because of organizational attachment is critical for their job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Alluding to an employee's emotional attachment to their supervisors, coworkers, customers, job, duties, and career (Morin et al., 2009). Typically, individuals who are not able to create workplace

relationships within the first week are at an increased likelihood to depart, increasing turnover rates (Mercurio, 2015). Low levels of affective commitment are correlated to absenteeism, withdrawal cognitions, and turnover intention (Schmidt, 2007).

Organizational Commitment and Employee Burnout

Organizational commitment (OC) is seen to drastically decrease among employees experiencing burnout, predicting an increase in turnover and absenteeism, and a decrease in work performance (Sarisik et al., 2019). As burnout can lead to hazardous repercussions in the workplace, high levels of it are directly linked to decreasing OC. Research shows that emotional exhaustion and personal accomplishment can independently foresee levels of OC. The first two levels of burnout can separately predict an employee's level of commitment to their employer. High-performing employees who are emotionally intelligent excel to higher ranks and are more committed to staying. Due to diminished personal accomplishment, it is extremely difficult for burned-out individuals to commit, engage or dedicate themselves to projects or interactions. These employees withdraw to minimize stress and improve their well-being.

Hypothesis 4: Employee burnout will negatively affect organizational commitment (OC). High levels of employee burnout will result in less organizational commitment. The hypothesized model is depicted in Figure 1.
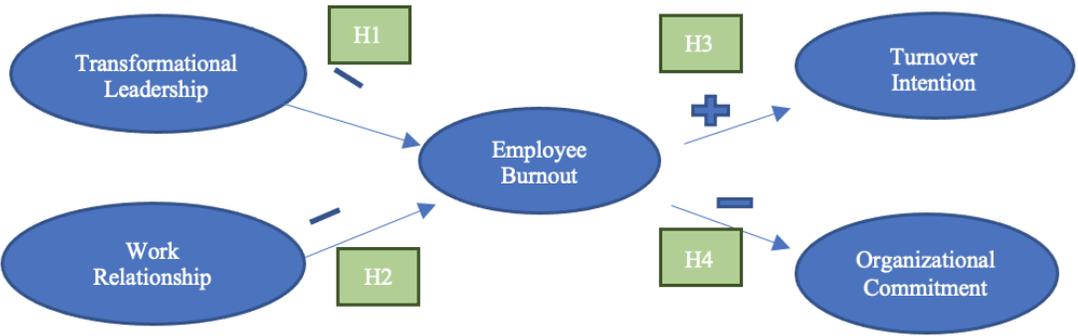
Figure 1. Hypothesized Theoretical Model.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODS

Participants and Procedures

Participants were given a self-reported questionnaire through Qualtrics

Survey Software. Participants were gathered using convenience sampling, the

survey link was provided via text message and social media platforms including

but not limited to Discord, Reddit, and Facebook. Following the exhaustion of

responses from friends, family, and social media platforms, additional responses

were retrieved from SurveySwap and SurveyCircle. The goal was to randomly

sample part-time or full-time employees who work more than 30 hours per week.

This was to be representative of the general population who are 18 years of age

or older, with no preference for any group or specific demographic. Participants

must also have a direct supervisor.

Survey respondents were asked to answer 11 demographic questions as

well as 52 scaled questions. The scaled questions consisted of items from the

following scales: Turnover Intention Scale (TIS-6), Organizational Commitment

Questionnaire (OCQ), Burnout Measure, Short Version (BMS), Least Preferred

Coworker Scale (LPC), and Transformational Leadership Scale. The survey was

published and accessible for four weeks, and 334 responses were collected. As

five constructs being measured, using the 40 per indicator rule this study requires

200 responses to be valid. To account for impartial responses or statistical

errors, we aimed to collect 300 responses which are also consistent with similar studies of this nature.

Measures

Leader Behavior Scale, Transformational Leadership Subscale,
Short Version (TLS)

A short version of a Leader Behavior Scale developed by Pearce and Sims (2002) was used to measure leadership behaviors. The original scale consists of measuring transformational, directive, transactional, aversive, and empowering behaviors. For this study, the scale has been reduced to only measure transformational leadership behaviors. Item selection is based on reported factor loadings by Pearce and Sims (2002). The shortened measure is still representative of the four dimensions of transformational leadership. The original scale from the transformational behavior section of the combined leadership behavior scale, had 20-items. Through factor loading, 10-Items have been selected to represent transformational leadership in this study. Participants responses were on a 5-point scale with the upcoming responses: 1 (definitely not true), 2 (not true), 3 (neither true nor untrue), 4 (true), and 5 (definitely true).

Pearce and Sims (2002) compiled existing items representative of transformational leadership behaviors and refined them to develop a new scale. The combined scale is confirmed to be reliable with a Cronbach's alpha of .92, .92, and .85 for the dimensions of internal customer, marginal, and team self-ratings (Pearce & Sims, 2002). In this study, the combined scale is confirmed to

be reliable with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.91 for the transformational leadership measurement.

<u>Least Preferred Coworker Scale (LPC)</u>

To assess workplace relationships in this study, the Least Preferred Coworker Scale (LPC) was used. The Least Preferred Coworker scale was developed by Fiedler and Chemers in 1974 to measure the relationship between two coworkers. The scale differentiates an individual's characteristics from personal traits or work-related traits. In this study, the scale was utilized to establish the respondent's preference of whether they prefer to work alongside task-oriented or relationship-oriented relationships. The measure has a pair of bipolar adjectives on each end of an 8-point scale, with 18-items. It was scored by adding up all the numbers selected from one through eight on all 18-items. Scores may range from 18 to 144, 64 or below indicates the individual to be task motivated, 73 or above indicates the individual to be relationship oriented. If the score falls in between the two brackets, then it is up to the respondent to determine the orientation which the individual is driven.

Arjanto et al. (2022) confirms the reliability of the scale based on a sample size of respondents from Indonesia with a Cronbach's alpha of .75. Researchers state that the scale is valid and reliable to use as an instrument to measure the relationship between two employees. In the present study, the Least Preferred Coworker scale is confirmed to have a Cronbach's alpha of 0.96. This indicates the internal consistency of the workplace relationship measure is reliable.

Burnout Measure, Short Version (BMS)

To measure employee burnout, a shortened version of the Burnout Measure (BM) scale was used, known as the BSM. The original 21-item scale was developed by Pines and Aronson in 1988, on a 7-point scale to measure the three dimensions of burnout: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment. Soon after, a shorter version of it was adapted which consists of 10-items, also on a 7-point scale: 1 (never), 2 (almost never), 3 (rarely), 4 (sometimes), 5 (often), 6 (very often), 7 (everyday). The shortened version of the scale is referred to as Burnout Measure Short Version (BSM) which has been confirmed valid by Malach-Pines in 2005. To avoid survey fatigue, in this study, we used the BSM to measure a respondent's level of burnout (Lourel et al., 2008).

The scale has been proven to have good reliability as Malach-Pines assessed the internal consistency of the Burnout Measure Short Version (BMS) scale. By using a multimethod and multi-trait analysis, the scale is established to have a Cronbach's alpha of .86 (Lourel et al., 2008). In this study, the combined scale is confirmed to be reliable with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.94 for the Burnout Measurement Scale.

Turnover Intention Scale (TIS-6)

Turnover intention in the study was measured using 6-item Turnover Intention Scale (TIS-6) by Gert Roodt and that has been adapted from the original 15-item Turnover Intention Scale Roodt developed in 2004. The scale

was to measure an employee's intention to voluntarily leave their job with their current employer. The scale includes 6-items on a 5-point scale (1 = never/ highly unlikely - 5 = always/ highly likely). For scoring, the scores were adjusted for reverse coded items, then respondents mean scores from all six items are averaged (Bothma & Roodt, 2013).

Bothma and Roodt conducted an exploratory factor analysis in 2013 assessing the validation of the turnover scale. Utilizing a consensus-based sample of individuals who left the company compared to those who stayed, they found that the TIS-6 was a reliable measure of turnover intention with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.80. Additionally, they confirmed its criterion-predictive validity through the significant differentiation between those who left and those who stayed (Bothma & Roodt, 2013). In this study, the combined scale is confirmed to be reliable with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.82 for the Turnover Intention Scale.

Organizational Commitment Questionnaire, Short Version (OCQ)

To measure organizational commitment, a shortened version of the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) was used. The questionnaire was developed by Allen and Meyer in 1990. The questionnaire was developed to determine an employee's level of organizational commitment. The original 24-item scale uses a 7-point Likert response scale 1 (strongly disagree), 2 (moderately disagree), 3 (slightly disagree), 4 (neither disagree nor agree), 5 (slightly agree), 6 (moderately agree), 7 (strongly agree). In the interest of

creating a more precise study, the scale is reduced to 8-items to avoid survey fatigue. This was done by reviewing the factor loadings from Allen and Meyer (1990). From the subscales of affective and continuance commitment, four questions were selected from each subscale. For scoring, the scores were adjusted for reverse coded items. In this study, the internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha) of the resulting continuance commitment measure is 0.69 and 0.80 for affective commitment measure.

Analytic Approach

For hypotheses 1 through 4, a reliability analysis was conducted in SPSS to establish the items that were using similar scales were a part of a similar set. To assess the reliability of each scale, we used Cronbach's alpha, followed by a zero-order correlation comparing all variables. Then, a path analysis was conducted to determine the impact of the mediating variables using the Barron and Kenny approach with AMOS for hypotheses 1, 2, 3, and 4.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

Through random sampling for an online self-report survey, 334 participants responded over the course of four weeks. All relationships were evaluated by conducting a reliability analysis and a zero-order correlation in SPSS and a path analysis in AMOS to determine whether transformational leadership and workplace relationships impacted employee burnout, leading to effects in turnover intention and organizational commitment. The model we tested is presented in Fig. 2. Fit statistics, X^2 (2, N = 334) = 23.27, chi-square minimum = 11.63, comparative fit index = .95, normed fit index= .95, root mean square error of approximation = .18, indicated strong fit for our hypothesized model. The root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) is not the most ideal indicator for this type of analysis, however, it is listed to provide the complete statistical analysis. It is important to note that RMSEA is higher than the preferred .06 indicator, this is due to the Chi-square being high and the degrees of freedom being low. Descriptive statistics for the data such as the means, standard deviations, and zero-order correlations for key variables are presented in Table 1. Table 2 represents the demographic information captured from participants.

Table 1. Mean, Standard Deviations, and Correlations Among Variables

	M	*SD*	*1*	*2*	*3*	*4*	*5*	*6*
1. Transformational leadership [a]	3.72	0.84	(.91)					
2. Least preferred coworker	4.61	1.63	.25**	(.96)				
3. Employee burnout [b]	3.15	1.32	-.54**	-.19**	(.94)			
4. Turnover intention [c]	2.89	0.93	-.52**	-.19**	.66**	(.82)		
5. Affective commitment [d]	5.24	1.48	.45**	.19**	-.41**	-.50**	(.80)	
6. Continuance commitment [d]	5.85	1.57	-.13*	-.01	.38**	.26**	-.04	(.69)

Note. N = 259 – 289.
[a]1 = definitely not true, 2 = not true, 3 = neither true nor untrue, 4 = true, 5 = definitely true;
[b]1 = never, 2 = almost, 3 = never, 4 = rarely, 5 = sometimes, 6 = often, 7 = very often, 8 = always;
[c]1 = never/ highly unlikely, 5 = always/ highly likely;
[d]1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = slightly disagree, 4 = undecided, 5 = slightly agree, 6 = agree, 7 = strongly agree; Reliabilities (Coefficients alphas) reported on the diagonal in parentheses. * p < .05; **p < .01.

Table 2. Frequency and Percentage Reporting for Demographic Responses

Demographic	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Gender [a]	64 (19.2)	190 (56.9)	3 (0.9)	-	-	-
2. Age [b]	4 (1.2)	107 (32.0)	85 (25.4)	43 (12.9)	18 (5.4)	-
3. Highest level of education [c]	5 (1.5)	48 (14.4)	115 (34.4)	71 (21.3)	10 (3.0)	4 (1.2)
4. Marital status [d]	71 (21.3)	183 (54.8)	-	-	-	-
5. Income [e]	54 (16.2)	58 (17.4)	61 (18.3)	54 (16.2)	12 (3.6)	-
6. Employment [f]	145 (43.4)	89 (26.6)	15 (4.5)	3 (0.9)	-	-
7. Number of jobs [g]	11 (3.3)	213 (63.8)	29 (8.7)	4 (1.2)	-	-
8. Time with organization [h]	78 (23.4)	38 (11.4)	25 (7.5)	14 (4.2)	45 (13.5)	55 (16.5)
9. Time with direct supervisor [i]	73 (21.9)	24 (7.2)	2 (0.6)	56 (16.8)	95 (28.4)	-
10. Time with position [i]	82 (24.6)	33 (9.9)	10 (3.0)	59 (17.7)	70 (21.0)	-
11. Weekly hours worked [j]	82 (24.6)	85 (25.4)	64 (19.2)	22 (6.6)	-	-

Note. N = 257 – 258.
Percentages appear in parentheses.
[a] 1 = male, 2 = female, 3 = non-binary;
[b] 1 = 18 years old or younger, 2 = 19 - 24 years old or younger, 3 = 25 - 35 years old, 4 = 36 - 49 years old, 5 = 50 + years old;
[c] 1 = some high school, 2 = high school diploma, 3 = bachelor's degree, 4 = master's degree, 5 = Ph.D. or higher, 6 = trade school;
[d] 1 = yes, 2 = no;
[e] 1 = Less than $25,000, 2 = $25,000 - $50,000, 3 = $50,000 - $100,000, 4 = $100,000 - $200,000, 5 = More than $200,000;
[f] 1 = employed full-time, 2 = employed part-time, 3 = seeking opportunities, 4 = retired;
[g] 1 = unemployed, 2 = one job, 3 = two jobs, 4 = three or more jobs;
[h] 1 = 1-2 years, 2 = 3-5 years, 3 = 5-10 years, 4 = 10+ years, 5 = 2-3 years, 6 = less than 1 year;
[i] 1 = 1-2 years, 2 = 5-10 years, 3 = 10+ years, 4 = 2-4 years, 5 = less than 1 year;
[j] 1 = less than 30, 2 = 30-40 hours, 3 = 40-50 hours, 4 = 50+ hours;

Demographic Findings

Demographics of the sample are summarized in Table 2. Of the 258 participants who responded to demographic questions, 64 (19.2%) were male, and 190 (56.9%) were female. There were 107 (32%) participants between the ages of 19 to 24 years old, 85 (25.4%) between the ages of 25 to 35 years old, and 43 (12.9%) between the ages of 36 to 49 years old. Participants were of various educational backgrounds, 115 (34.4%) had a bachelor's degree, 71 (21.3%) had a master's degree, and 48 (14.4%) had a high school diploma. Of the participants, 71 (21.3%) were married while 183 (54.8%) were not. 145 (43.4%) of respondents reported to be employed full-time, 89 (26.6%) were employed part-time, and 15 (4.5%) were seeking opportunities for employment. 213 (63.8%) were employed at one job, 29 (8.7%) worked two jobs, while 11 (3.3%) of participants were unemployed.

When participants were asked about their time with an organization, 78 (23.4%) participants reported to be employed with their organization for 1 to 2 years, 55 (16.5%) participants reported to be employed for less than 1 year, 45 (13.5%) participants reported 2 to 3 years. When participants were asked about their time with their direct supervisor, 95 (28.4%) participants reported less than 1 year, 73 (21.9%) participants reported 1-2 years, and 56 (16.8%) participants reported 3-4 years. When participants were asked about their time in their current position, 82 (24.6%) participants reported less than 1 year, 70 (21%) participants reported 1 - 2 years, and 59 (17.7%) participants reported 3 - 4 years. 85 (25.4%)

participants worked between 30 to 40 hours per week, 82 (24.6%) worked less than 30 hours per week, and 64 (19.2) worked between 40 to 50 hours per week. The results representative of the regression estimates in the path analysis are presented in Figure 2.
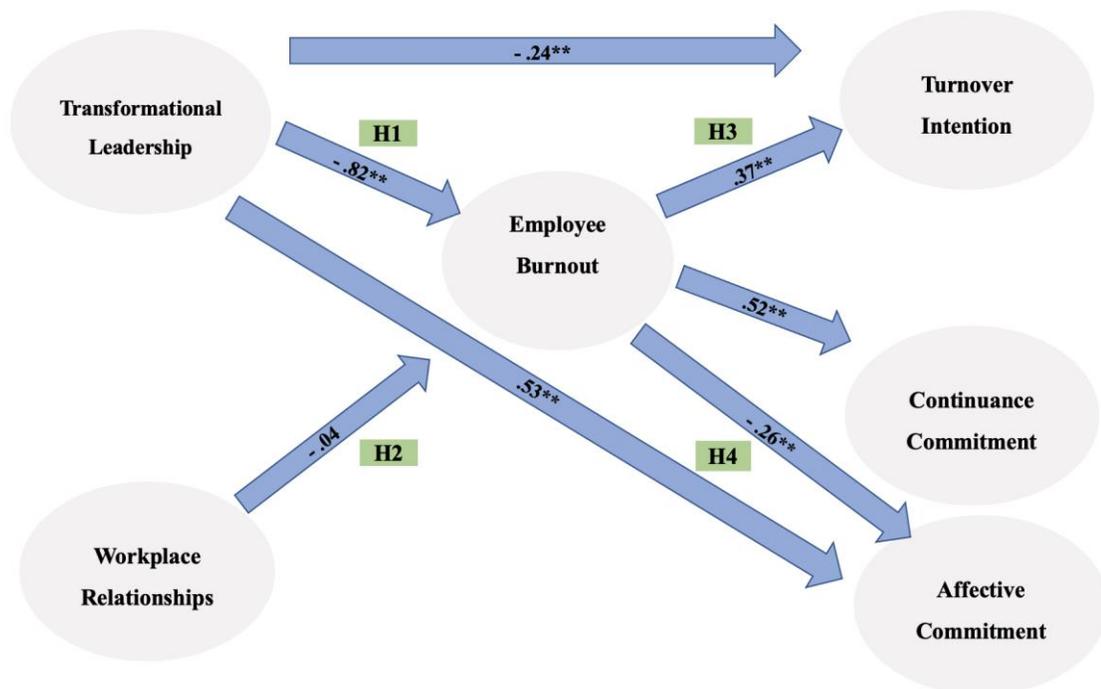

Figure 2. Unstandardized Regression Estimates of Path Analysis

Hypothesis 1: Transformational leadership (TL) negatively predicts employee burnout. High levels of transformational leadership result in low levels of employee burnout.

Evidentiary from the path analysis conducted on AMOS, this hypothesis was supported [b = -.82, SE = .08, β = -.53, r = -.54, p < .001]. Consistent with

the regression estimate, there was a significant negative zero-order correlation between transformational leadership and employee burnout. An increase in transformational leadership behaviors leads to lower levels of employee burnout.

Hypothesis 2: High-quality workplace relationships negatively affect employee burnout. High-quality workplace relationships result in low levels of employee burnout.

A path analysis conducted in AMOS provided evidence that this hypothesis is not supported [b = -.04, SE = .04, β = -.05, p = .32]. Consistent with the regression estimate, research did not indicate a significant correlation between workplace relationships and employee burnout.

Hypothesis 3: Employee burnout positively predicts turnover intention (TI). High levels of employee burnout result in increased rates of turnover intention.

This hypothesis was supported [b = .37, SE = .04, β = .53, r = .66, p < .001]. Consistent with the regression estimate, there was a significant positive zero-order correlation between the employee burnout and turnover intention. An increase in transformational leadership behaviors leads to higher levels of turnover intention.

Hypothesis 4: Employee burnout negatively affects organizational commitment (OC). High levels of employee burnout result in less organizational commitment.

To assess a respondent's level of organizational commitment, the data was operationalized in two ways: affective and continuance commitment. These

two factors were tested independently, and affective commitment and continuance commitment were supported, they show significant relationships between them and the employee burnout measure. Consistent with the regression estimate, there was a significant negative zero-order correlation between employee burnout and affective commitment [b = -.26, SE = .07, β = -.23, r = -.41, p < .001]. There was also a significant negative zero-order correlation between employee burnout and continuance commitment [b = .52, SE = .08, β = .44, r = .38, p < .001]. A decrease in levels of burnout will lead to higher levels of affective and continuance commitment, increasing organizational commitment.

A glance at the zero-order correlation shows that transformational leadership, turnover intention, and affective commitment were related. Looking at the path estimates in AMOS, the relationship was also significant in the same direction between transformational leadership positively effecting affective commitment [b = .53, SE = .11, β = .30, r = .45, p < .001], while having a negative effect on turnover intention [b = -.24, SE = .06, β = -.22, r = -.52, p < .001]. Therefore, transformational leadership behaviors lead to an increase in affective commitment, increasing employee organizational commitment. Transformational leadership behaviors also strongly predicted a decrease in turnover intention. During the analysis, we discovered these additional significant pathways while testing our model which served as a control for other relationships.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

The results of the present study show that transformational leadership behaviors relate to a decrease in employee burnout and turnover intention while predicting an increase in organizational commitment. Additionally, results also support that a decrease in employee burnout predicts a decrease in turnover intention and an increase in organizational commitment. Therefore, these results support Hypotheses 1, 3, and 4. Ultimately, an increase in transformational leadership behaviors result in a decrease in employee burnout which also leads to reduced levels of turnover intention and higher levels of organizational commitment.

Results failed to find a significant relationship between the workplace relationship measure, the least preferred coworker scale, and other measures such as employee burnout, organizational commitment, and turnover intention. Therefore, these results do not support Hypothesis 2, our theory that positive workplace relationships predict lower levels of employee burnout and turnover intention while increasing organizational commitment. This finding highlights that workplace relationships take the backseat in this study, while leadership is the driver. Effective leadership encourages voluntary contribution to the achievement of organizational goals (Moriano et al., 2021). Relationships between transformational leadership, employee burnout, turnover intention, and

organizational commitment bring attention to operationalizing the fostering of positive employee outcomes.

There are reasons why the results between workplace relationships, employee burnout, turnover intention, and organizational commitment may not be significant. It could be due to the Least Preferred Coworker scale not being an accurate representation of the workplace relationships measure. Previous studies have supported the prediction of workplace relationships lead to an increase in organizational commitment and decreases in levels of burnout and turnover. In our study, the bivariate results between the workplace relationships measure and employee burnout shows a significant relationship. This indicates that our results also support those of others, the least preferred coworker scale correlates as intended but is overlapping with other variables.

When we review workplace relationships and employee burnout within a multivariate model, they are overshadowed by transformational leadership. This is a case of classical suppression; the leadership variance accounts for most of it, this is supported by our results which indicate a positive correlation between transformational leadership and the least preferred coworker scale. This is most likely the case because the least preferred coworker scale and leadership are highly correlated. Although they are not multicollinear, this may be due to the workplace relationships measure being predicted by leadership. Therefore, when leadership is also considered alongside workplace relationships as a predictor of

employee burnout, leadership stands out because it is the overall variable of which workplace relationships are subsumed.

Another reason why data does not support our hypothesis is that it could simply just be a coincidence in the sample of respondents. Many individuals may favor working independently and are not too fond of making connections or investing in workplace relationships. The lack of linkage between workplace relationships, employee burnout, turnover intention, and organizational commitment may also be due to individual differences. Those who tend to be low in openness to experience and more introverted may not be as affected by workplace relationships as those who are more open and extroverted (Hildenbrand & Sacramento, 2018).

However, additional relationships were discovered while testing for our controlled hypotheses. Data supports a significant relationship between transformational leadership and affective commitment. This suggests that transformational leadership behaviors increase an employee's affective commitment, increasing organizational commitment. Similarly, transformational leadership was also found to have a significant relationship with turnover intention, suggesting transformational leadership behaviors lead to a decrease in turnover intention. Although these outcomes were not hypothesized, it is important to note their significance as leadership strongly influences turnover intention and organizational commitment. As discussed earlier in the

introduction, leadership is an important component in the health and well-being of employees, it plays a vital role necessary for organizations to thrive.

It comes as no surprise that transformational leadership leads to various positive outcomes. However, it is surprising within this model, which is controlled for employee burnout, there is still a significant effect between it and affective commitment. Transformational leadership behaviors such as innovative support, goal setting, and the influential aspect of the leader supporting the employee as an individual rather than an employee makes them feel seen. From one individual to another, the employee feels cared for and valued more so as an individual rather than an employee. This additional support and individualized consideration contribute to the employees' level of affective commitment, leading them to feel more connected to their role as an employee and as a part of their organization.

Practical Implications

Our study suggests that transformational leadership behaviors decrease the effects of burnout and turnover intention while increasing organizational commitment. Employees feel an increased sense of involvement when there are high cognitive demands at work. Many occupations are high in cognitive demands, which can be seen in jobs that are extremely complex requiring high levels of decision-making and may also require concentration for extended periods. On days when cognitive demand is high, it is even more crucial for the involvement of transformational leaders. Leaders display behaviors of

transformational leadership at different levels on various days. In the situations where transformational leadership behavior is needed the most, leaders that challenge their employees to revitalize their performance and engagement have the most to gain (Breevaart & Bakker, 2018). The support provided by transformational leaders replenishes the vault of resources available to their followers, leading them to a state of thriving.

The results of this study highlight the important role that leaders play in decreasing burnout, increasing organizational commitment, and reducing turnover. Leadership is the primary influence needed for change and much-needed positive outcomes. Reviewing similar articles relating to peer and leadership support also back the findings that leadership is septically related to these outcomes. For a systematic change, change needs to occur from the top down, starting with leaders. This change provided by leadership support is necessary as it takes the burden off the employees, improving individual well-being, and increasing occupational health. This support can be operationalized through formal training for supervisors to learn more transformational leadership behaviors such as clear goal setting, modeling fairness, and providing encouragement. They can provide additional assistance through coaching, mentoring, and more hands-on communication with other employees.

As any organization can advocate the importance of commitment, burnout, and turnover, these outcomes are proven to be greatly affected by leadership. Therefore, it is critical for companies big and small to keep track of factors

pertaining to employee wellness and occupational health. We recommend

organizations keep a close eye on and surveil the psychological health of

employees by surveying mental wellness in the workplace. It is not only in the

organization's best interest to aid in employees managing stress, but also vital to

reduce it. Actions such as making time for relaxation and fun can greatly

decrease stress and depression, improving employee occupational psychological

health.

<div align="center">Limitations</div>

This study has potential limitations. The study relied on the self-reports of

participants to complete the online survey questionnaire, which may cause an

issue with method variance and single-source bias. However, this method was

chosen due to our interest in understanding the effects of leader behavior and

workplace relationships. It is also critical to note that an individual's perception is

the best source to determine factors such as burnout, turnover intention, and

organizational commitment. Similarly, worth noting that steps were taken to

assure that respondents could skip or decline to answer questions. This is

explanatory for missing demagogic data which is due to a plethora of reasons.

Individuals may not have answered them because of a need or desire for privacy,

or they may not have felt they were essential to answer as they were at the end

of the survey.

The research for the study was collected within four weeks. This may be

criticized as four weeks is limited due to a participant's perception of seasonal

events occurring during that period. For example, if the respondents were to have participated during the holidays, their perception of their organization's commitment has been altered due to family obligations of time off needed. Another limitation may be the sample size of 334 participants. Although this may seem limited, it is similar to studies researching employee perceptions of leadership, burnout, and commitment.

Future Directions

Future research is encouraged to explore the relationship between transformational leadership, employee burnout, and organizational culture. Effective leaders contribute to the well-being of employees by reducing their levels of stress which decrease the likelihood of burnout, influencing voluntary contribution to organizational goals. Transformational leaders provide followers with resources to protect them, like security in the form of workplace psychological safety in the organizational climate. Moriano et al. (2021) investigated the relationship between security in leadership as a resource in the prevention of burnout. Research indicated that security provided by leadership was negatively correlated to burnout and can prevent or reduce organizational dehumanization, allowing employees opportunities to develop and grow within the organization.

Similarly, Tipu et al. (2012) investigated the relationship between transformational leadership, organizational culture, and innovation propensity. Transformational leadership was indicated to be similar across cultures and

generalizable on an organizational level. These leaders motivate followers to amplify innovation propensity by altering the organizational culture to one that praises originality and change. Results indicate transformational leadership to be positively related to organizational culture and innovation propensity. Additionally, concluding a significant difference in the perception of transformational leadership behaviors among those with different educational levels. Therefore, we propose additional research to explore organizational culture, psychological safety, and innovative propensity, particularly concerning organizational leadership behaviors.

Conclusion

The present findings provide insight into reducing an individual's level of burnout brought on by transformational leadership behaviors, decreasing the likelihood of turnover, and allowing for success through an increased level of organizational commitment. Individuals experience challenges every day that require energy, time, and effort. They rely on assets to assist them with daily demands, especially in the workplace. Employees have various tasks, deadlines, and expectations in need of attention which can only be completed when employees are operating in a willfully. It is critical for their psychological well-being and physical health to be well to efficiently operate organizational procedures. Transformational leadership aids in the achievement and maintenance of these resources, allowing followers to excel in their work. When individuals do not receive assistance in their duties and are facing depletion of

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resources over extended periods, they become at high risk of burnout. Burnout is not only detrimental to the health and well-being of employees, but also extremely harmful to organizations as it can predict an increase in absenteeism, turnover, and various other forms of poor organizational outcomes.

APPENDIX A

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD (IRB) APPROVAL

December 2, 2022

CSUSB INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
Administrative/Exempt Review Determination
Status: Exempt
IRB-FY2023-127

Ismael Diaz Teni Davoudian
CSBS - Psychology
California State University, San Bernardino
5500 University Parkway
San Bernardino, California 92407

Dear Ismael Diaz Teni Davoudian :

Your application to use human subjects, titled "The Impact of Transformational Leadership and Workplace Relationships on Employee Burnout and Their Correlation to Turnover Intention and Organizational Commitment" has been reviewed and determined exempt by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of California State University, San Bernardino under the federal regulations at 45 CFR 46. As the researcher under the exempt category, you do not have to follow the requirements under 45 CFR 46 which requires annual renewal and documentation of written informed consent which are not required for the exempt category. However, exempt status still requires you to attain consent from participants before conducting your research as needed.

Your IRB proposal is approved. This approval is valid from December 2, 2022.

This approval notice does not replace any departmental or additional campus approvals which may be required including access to CSUSB campus facilities and affiliate campuses. Investigators should consider the changing COVID-19 circumstances based on current CDC, California Department of Public Health, and campus guidance and submit appropriate protocol modifications to the IRB as needed. CSUSB campus and affiliate health screenings should be completed for all campus human research related activities. Human research activities conducted at off-campus sites should follow CDC, California Department of Public Health, and campus guidance. See CSUSB's COVID-19 Prevention

[Plan](#) for more information regarding campus requirements.

Your responsibilities as the investigator include reporting to the IRB Committee the following three requirements highlighted below. Please note, failure of the investigator to notify the IRB of the below requirements may result in disciplinary action.

- **Submit a protocol modification (change) form if any changes (no matter how minor) are proposed in your study for review and approval by the IRB before being implemented in your study to ensure the risk level to participants has not increased,**
- **Submit an unanticipated/adverse events form if harm is experienced by subjects during your research, and**
- **Submit a study closure through the Cayuse IRB submission system when your study has ended.**
- **Ensure your CITI human subjects training is kept up-to-date and current throughout the study for all investigators.**

The protocol modification, adverse/unanticipated event, and closure forms are located in the Cayuse Human Ethics (IRB) System. If you have any questions regarding the IRB decision, please contact Michael Gillespie, the Research Compliance Officer. Mr. Michael Gillespie can be reached by phone at (909) 537-7588, by fax at (909) 537-7028, or by email at mgillesp@csusb.edu. Please include your application approval identification number (listed at the top) in all correspondence.

If you have any questions regarding the IRB decision, please contact Dr. Jacob Jones, Assistant Professor of Psychology. Dr. Jones can be reached by email at Jacob.Jones@csusb.edu. Please include your application approval identification number (listed at the top) in all correspondence.

Best of luck with your research.

Sincerely,

King-To Yeung

King-To Yeung, Ph.D., IRB Chair
CSUSB Institutional Review Board

KY/MG

APPENDIX B

SURVEY QUESTIONS

Informed Consent

Informed Consent

This study is designed to measure the impact of transformational leadership and workplace relationships on employee burnout and their relation to turnover intention and organizational commitment. This study is conducted by Teni Davoudian, M.S. Industrial/Organizational Psychology, Graduate Student, California State University, San Bernardino.

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to gain a better understanding of the effects of transformational theory of leadership and workplace relationships on employee burnout (i.e. emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and lack of personal accomplishment), and how that may impact an employee's organizational commitment and turnover intention.

Description of Research: Responses will be collected from employees of all ranks in relation to the form of leadership they have experienced and their workplace relationship in relation to levels of burnout consisting of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and lack of personal accomplishment. Additionally, employee burnout will also be studied to view its' effects on turnover intention and organizational commitment.

Duration: Responding to the questions on the survey will require about 10 minutes, and the full survey should take no more than 15 minutes at most.

Risks: The risk associated with this study is low and no more than what would be encountered with daily routine activities. The nature of the questions is non-invasive.

Benefits: Survey takers will receive no direct benefits from this study.

Participation: Participation in this study is voluntary. Participants are able to withdraw from the study at any time without any negative consequences. However, full participation is important for advancing research on the effects of employee burnout impacting behaviors of turnover intention and organizational commitment.

Confidentiality: Demographic information collected for this study will be **anonymous**, and all records of this study will only be accessed by the primary researcher. All

identifying information will be excluded from any and all reports. Information from this study will only be presented at the group level with all identifying information removed. Data will be collected using Qualtrics which is a password-protected and encrypted online service. Only the primary researcher and study supervisor will have access to the dataset. There will be no identifying information collected in the survey. All information reported in the paper or publication will be at the group level and not an individual level.

Data Storage: Original responses will be stored on a password-protected server via Qualtrics.

Results: A report of the study findings will be compiled and presented in a Masters level thesis to review the impact of transformational leadership and workplace relationships on employee burnout and their correlation to turnover intention and organizational commitment.

Contact: In case of questions or if there are concerns, problems, or other issues, the primary researcher, Teni Davoudian, can be contacted at 007720746@coyote.csusb.edu. The study supervisor can also be contacted at Ismael.Diaz@csusb.edu.

CONFIRMATION STATEMENT: I have read the information above and agree to participate in your study. By selecting the option to continue, I affirm that I understand the above information and that I am taking part in this study voluntarily with the option to end my participation at any time with no penalty or negative consequence for voluntarily ending my participation. I also acknowledge that I am at least 18 years of age.

- ◯ I understand and consent
- ◯ I do not consent

Organizational Commitment Questionnaire, Short Version (OCQ)

Please read each question and indicate your response using the scale provided:

	strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	undecided	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree
I do not feel like 'part of the family' at my organization	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯

	strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	undecided	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree
I do not feel 'emotionally attached' to this organization	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
It would be very hard for me to leave my organization right now, even if I wanted to	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Right now, staying with my organization is a matter of necessity as much as desire	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
I feel that I have too few options to consider leaving this organization	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
One of the few serious consequences of leaving this organization would be the scarcity of available alternatives	O	O	O	O	O	O	O

Turnover Intention Scale (TIS-6)

Please read each question and indicate your response using the scale provided: During the past 9 months...

How often have you considered leaving your job?

Never O O O O O Always

How satisfying is your job in fulfilling your personal needs?

Very satisfying O O O O O Totally dissatisfying

How often are you frustrated when not given the opportunity at work to achieve your personal work-related goals?

Never ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Always

How often do you dream about getting another job that will better suit your personal needs?

Never ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Always

How likely are you to accept another job at the same compensation level should it be offered to you?

Highly unlikely ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Highly Likely

How often do you look forward to another day at work?

Always ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Never

Burnout Measure, Short Version (BMS)

Please use the following scale to answer the question: When you think about your work overall, how often do you feel the following?

	Never	Almost Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often	Always
Tired	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Disappointed with people	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Hopeless	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Trapped	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Helpless	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Depressed	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Physically weak/Sickly	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Worthless/Like a failure	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Difficulties sleeping	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
"I've had it"	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Least Preferred Coworker Scale (LPC)

Think of all the different people with whom you have ever worked with. Think of multiple individuals with whom you could work least well, that is, the people with whom you had the most difficulty getting a job done. This may be peers, bosses, or subordinates with whom you would least want to work with. Describe these people by sliding the scale to how it suits them best.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
Pleasant	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Unpleasant
Friendly	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Unfriendly
Rejecting	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Accepting
Tense	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Relaxed
Distant	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Close
Cold	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Warm
Supportive	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Hostile
Boring	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Interesting
Quarrelsome	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Harmonious
Gloomy	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Cheerful
Open	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Guarded
Backbiting	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Loyal
Untrustworthy	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Trustworthy
Considerate	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Inconsiderate
Nasty	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Nice
Agreeable	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Disagreeable
Insincere	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Sincere
Kind	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Unkind

Leader Behavior Scale -Transformational Leadership Subscale, Short Version (TLS)

Please read each question and indicate your response using the scale provided:

	Definitely not true	Not true	Neither true nor untrue	True	Definitely true
My team leader expects me to perform at my highest level.	○	○	○	○	○

	Definitely not true	Not true	Neither true nor untrue	True	Definitely true
My team leader encourages me to go above and beyond what is normally expected of one (e.g., extra effort).	○	○	○	○	○
My team leader isn't afraid to "break the mold" to find different ways of doing things.	○	○	○	○	○
Because of my team leader, I have a clear vision of our team's purpose.	○	○	○	○	○
My team leader has a strong personal dedication to higher purposes or ideals.	○	○	○	○	○
My team leader shows enthusiasm for my efforts.	○	○	○	○	○
My team leader approaches a new project or task in an enthusiastic way.	○	○	○	○	○
My team leader encourages me to rethink ideas that had never been questioned before.	○	○	○	○	○
My team leader seeks a broad range of perspectives when solving problems.	○	○	○	○	○
My team leader looks at problems from many different angles.	○	○	○	○	○

Demographics

What gender do you identify as?

○ Male

○ Female

○ Non-binary

○ Transgender

○ Prefer not to say

What is your age?

○ 18 years old or younger

○ 19 - 24 years old

○ 25 - 35 years old

○ 36 - 49 years old

○ 50+

○ Prefer not to say

What is the highest degree or level of education you have completed?

○ Some High School

○ High School Diploma

○ Bachelor's Degree

○ Master's Degree

○ Ph.D. or higher

○ Trade School

○ Prefer not to say

Are you married?

○ Yes

○ No

○ Prefer not to say

What is your annual household income?

○ Less than $25,000

○ $25,000 - $50,000

○ $50,000 - $100,000

○ $100,000 - $200,000

○ More than $200,000

○ Prefer not to say

What is your current employment status?

○ Employed full-time

○ Employed part-time

○ Seeking opportunities

○ Retired

○ Prefer not to say

How many jobs are you currently working?

○ Unemployed

○ One job

○ Two jobs

○ Three or more jobs

How long have you been working with the same organization?

○ Less than 1 year

○ 1-2 years

○ 2-3 years

○ 3-5 years

○ 5-10 years

○ 10+ years

○ Does not apply

How long have you been working with your direct supervisor?

○ Less than 1 year

○ 1-2 years

○ 2-4 years

○ 5-10 years

○ 10+ years

○ Does not apply

How long have you been working in the same position / job role?

○ Less than 1 year
○ 1-2 years
○ 2-4 years
○ 5-10 years
○ 10+ years
○ Does not apply

How many hours on average do you work every week?

○ Less than 30
○ 30-40 hours
○ 40-50 hours
○ 50+ hours
○ Does not apply

Debriefing

The survey you just completed was designed to study the impact of transformational leadership and workplace relationships on employee burnout and their correlation to turnover intention and organizational commitment. Employees are highly valued assets that build the organization to the full potential and success it could be. Therefore, it is critical to motivate employees and encourage them to be committed to the organization. This study aims to understand the impact of transformational leadership and workplace behaviors on burnout which effects organizational commitment and turnover intention. Thank you for your participation and for the privacy of not discussing the contents of this study with others.

If you have any questions about your work experiences, please contact the California Labor and Workforce Development Agency (LWDA) at labor.ca.gov. Should you have any particular questions about your workplace or potential problems at work, you can contact the Los Angeles County Workforce Development Board field office located on 510 S.

Data collection instrument is adapted from the following sources:

Leader Behavior Scale, Transformational Leadership Subscale, Short Version (TLS)

Pearce, C. L., & Sims, H. P. (2002). Vertical versus shared leadership as predictors of the effectiveness of Change Management Teams: An Examination of aversive, directive, Transactional, transformational, and empowering leader behaviors. *Group Dynamics: Theory, Research, and Practice*, *6*(2), 172–197. https://doi.org/10.1037/1089-2699.6.2.172

Least Preferred Coworker Scale (LPC)

Arjanto, P., Burhanuddin, & Sumarsono, R. B. (2022). Validity and Reliability of Least Preferred Coworker (LPC) Scale. *International Research-Based Education*, *4*(1).

Burnout Measure, Short Version (BMS)

Lourel, M., Gueguen, N., & Mouda, F. (2008). Psychometric Properties of A Global Measure of Job Burnout . *Studia Psychologica*, *50*(1).

Turnover Intention Scale (TIS-6)

Bothma, C. F. C., & Roodt, G. (2013). The validation of the turnover intention scale. *SA Journal of Human Resource Management*, *11*(1). https://doi.org/10.4102/sajhrm.v11i1.507

Organizational Commitment Questionnaire, Short Version (OCQ)

Allen, J.P., & Meyer, J.P. (1990). The measurement and antecedents of affective, continuance, and normative commitment to the organization. *Journal of Occupational Psychology*

APPENDIX C

AMOS PATH ANALYSIS
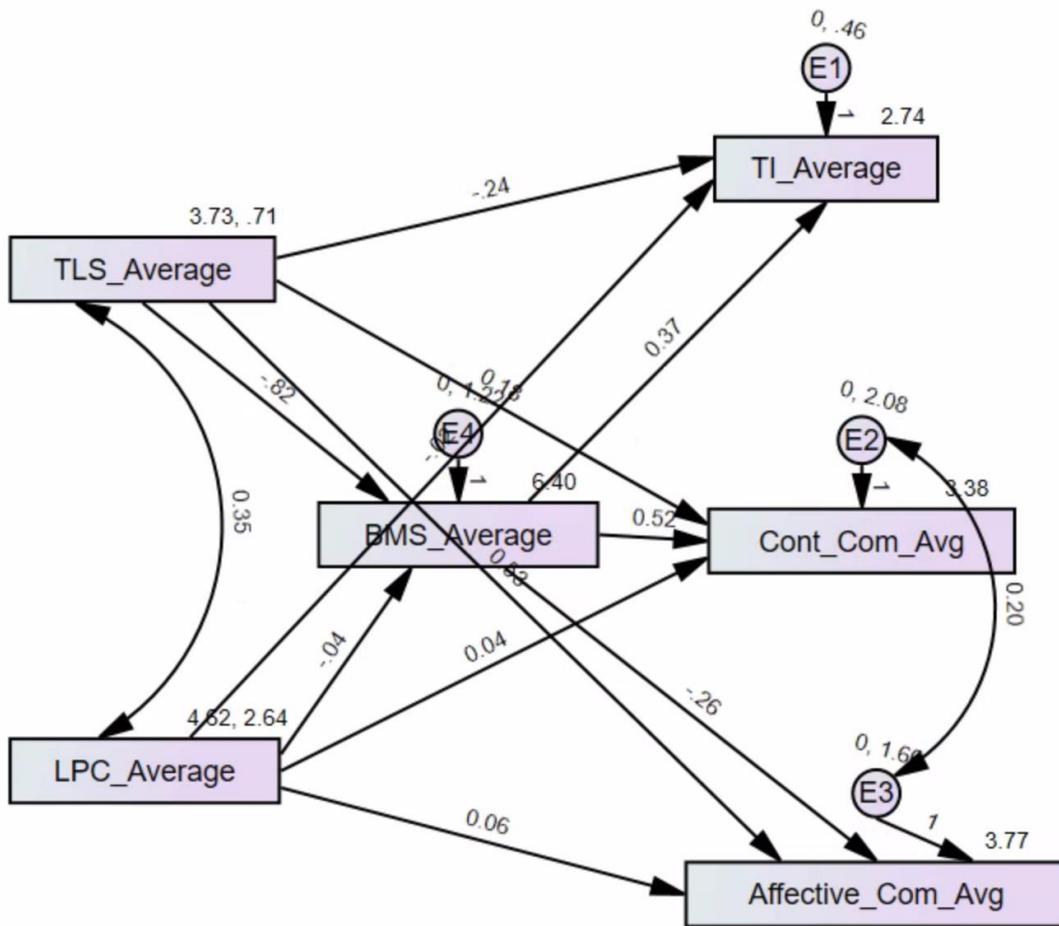
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