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# **Leadership and employees reaction towards change: Role of leaders' personal attributes and transformational leadership**

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**Abstract:** *This research study has empirically examined the role of leadership in shaping employees' attitude towards an organizational change/reform in an educational sector organization i.e. Army Public Schools and Colleges System, Pakistan. Data was collected from 95 leaders (principals, wing-heads and coordinators) and 250 employees (teachers) through convenience sampling technique. Data was analyzed through Hierarchical Linear Modeling (HLM). This study has found that leaders' and teachers' dispositional resistance to change were positively related to teachers' intentions to resist change and leaders' transformational behaviors had a negative impact on teachers' intentions to resist change. Furthermore, leaders' conservation values were positively related to teachers' resistance intentions whereas leaders' openness to change values were negatively associated with teachers' resistance intentions. However, transformational leadership did not moderate the relationship between teachers' dispositional resistance to change and teachers' resistance intentions.*

**Keywords:** Transformational leadership, organizational change, personal values, dispositional resistance to change, intentions to resist change

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## **1. Introduction**

Organizations undergo many changes either on small or large scales, but not every organizational change is accepted whole heartedly by the employees. They might be dispositionally resistant (i.e. personally inclined to resist) to change. Another factor can be employees' attitude towards change, which is how they think and feel about organizational change or intend to behave in future towards it. Such attitude and personal general orientation towards change create hindrance in the success of organizational changes and lead to inefficiency. But a question that arises at the point of time when employees are resisting change is that how can this be avoided? The answer lies at the heart of transformational leadership. Leaders, who are motivational, inspirational and charismatic help, mentor and coach the employees through their personal values of openness and adaptability in accepting the change. These leaders make the employees see organizational change as a crucial step towards achieving organizational as well as career goals. They set a common vision, a path to follow by providing innovative solutions to complex problems regarding organizational changes, making them look like challenging but achievable tasks.

Transformational leadership is often studied in context of Chief Executive Officers (CEOs), executive personnel, political leaders etc (Pawelec, 1998). Role of principals, wing-heads and coordinators as transformational leaders is crucial because they are not only the leaders of organization but are also leaders in the organization (Boal & Hooijberg, 2000) because they are the ones that the teachers look up to in times of organizational change. They have considerable authority to influence how the implementation of organizational change is carried out. They interact with teachers on quite frequent basis. They can coach, intellectually stimulate, inspire, create sense out of difficult situations, give sincere consideration to teachers and help them view organizational changes optimistically.

Teachers' have a really meaningful role when it comes to the acceptance of or resistance to organizational change in educational sector because they are actually the ones who get to carry out the changes and implement them in their daily routines. Their acceptance of change or intentions to resist organizational changes is fundamental to the success or failure of the organizational change and modifications that the leaders have envisioned (Armenakis & Bedeian, 1999).

The context of this study is an educational organization that is Army Public Schools and Colleges System (APSACS) of Pakistan that has been undergoing a large scale organizational change since 2005. This research study aimed to scrutinize a nation-wide school system reform, which is being applied with uniformity across each branch of APSACS. APSACS was called 'Army Public School and College' prior to a large scale organizational change in 2005. The most noticeable change is the setting up of APSACS Secretariat that called for centralized planning of all the Army Public schools and

colleges around Pakistan and to make them a 'system' with integrated policies. The basic purpose of this system-wide reform was to bring uniformity into all 130 branches of APSACS as far as syllabus, interactive and activity-based teaching methods, creative teaching aids, teachers' and students' grooming and conduct, core subjects' timetable and examination and evaluation system was concerned. The change was introduced to improve the system and bring it to a level where it could compete with popular private sector English medium schools in Pakistan. The whole system was divided into 2 major regions; warm and cold, each headed by a Regional Coordinator, who are in turn headed by four Deputy Directors and preceding Director. A task force was assigned with the duty to evaluate the acceptance level, implementation of these on-going organizational changes on micro (teachers' effectiveness) as well as macro level (branch's overall effectiveness) by visiting each and every branch of APSACS around Pakistan. This task force reported directly to the Secretariat.

The main purpose of this research study is to examine whether leaders' personal values, personal disposition towards change and transformational leadership behaviors have any effect on teachers' attitude towards a large scale organizational change. This study addresses the future direction of a research conducted by Oreg and Berson (2011) and replicates their theoretical model regarding the role of transformational leadership and leader's personal values and traits in determining employee's reaction towards an organizational change in Pakistan's cultural settings.

The focus of many of the research studies has been employees' reactions to change i.e. their acceptance or resistance of new changes but the role of leaders' personal attributes (personal values, personal tendency to resist change) and behaviors (transformational leadership) is rarely studied in elucidating the reactions of employees' regarding an organizational change (Oreg & Berson, 2011). Hence this study is significant because it aims to test a conceptual framework in which personal attributes of both employees (teachers) and leaders (principals, wing heads and coordinators) are taken into account to understand employees' attitude towards organizational change. Moreover, this study has been conducted in educational sector that is not often studied in terms of leaders' role in shaping employees' attitude towards change.

This study contributes towards the stream of researches conducted on employees' reaction towards organizational changes by incorporating the findings of a replicated research study conducted in a different cultural setting i.e. Pakistan, hence taking a step to contribute towards the soundness of Oreg and Berson's (2011) conceptual framework.

This study has also contributed towards the validity of all the scales used in this research in Pakistan's context especially the comparatively newer scales of intentions to resist change (Oreg, 2003) and dispositional resistance to change (Oreg, 2006).

## **2. Theory and Hypotheses Development**

### **2.1 Intentions to resist change: An attitude towards change**

Lewin (1947) in his work on group dynamics introduced the term resistance and introduced the three-step change model. His analysis has been based on the view that

behavior is a dynamic balance of forces but these forces work in opposite directions. He proposed that the employees are moved forward in the desired direction by the driving forces and hence encourage change, whereas restraining forces drive the employees in the opposite direction and hinder changes. Thus, planned changes must be always analyzed and employees should be motivated to go in the direction of acceptance of the proposed changes. He noted that change occurs when the collective strength of one force is greater than the other.

The term resistance to change in organizations was first studied by Coch and French (1948) in their study 'Overcoming Resistance to Change'. They asserted that their theory views resistance to change as an amalgamation of powerful group-provoked forces and individual's response to disturbance and instability. Coch and French (1948) suggested direct participation of groups in the development and design of changes and to enhance employees' involvement by holding group meetings. Lawrence (1970) has held similar opinion regarding participatory decision making methods to overcome resistance to change. Four general reasons of employees' resistance to change have been identified by Kotter and Schlesinger (1979); belief that the change seems to make no sense for the organization, misinterpretation of change and its repercussion, low forbearance for change, employees' focus on self interests.

Contrary to the common view that the system entails psychology of humans to be a part of the total system, Lewin (1947, 1951) believed resistance to change to be a systems phenomenon and not a psychological one. The term resistance to change has transformed in its meaning and understanding from systems concept to psychological concept (Dent & Goldberg, 1999).

Dent and Goldberg (1999) criticized the term resistance to change by stating that employees do not resist change but they only oppose management concepts that they do not find reasonable, unjust dictations and the unknown. They emphasized that people may resist loss of pay, comfort or status but point to be noted is that these are not same as resisting change. Mullin (1999) has attributed resistance to change to loss of freedom, inconvenience, fear of the unknown, economic repercussions and selective perception (cf. Piderit, 2000).

The multidimensional approach to anticipated organizational changes that focuses on reaction to change was used by Piderit (2000). He studied three dimensions of emotional, cognitive and intentional to resistance to change. According to him, if employees respond negatively to all three dimensions, it would lead to resistance to change, whereas positive responses on these dimensions would direct towards support for a change.

Oreg (2006) view resistance as a tridimensional (negative) attitude towards change, which includes affective, behavioral, and cognitive components. These elements constitute three distinct expressions of people's assessment of a situation or object. It has been emphasized by Oreg (2006) that these three components are dependent on each other, what a person feels about a change will often match with what they think about it and also with their behavioral intentions concerning it.

## 2.2 Dispositional Resistance to change

Change is inevitable; however, people react differently to change. The concept of dispositional resistance to change has been introduced by Oreg (2003) in his article '*Resistance to change: Developing an individual differences measure*' in which he discussed that not everyone accepts the idea of change happily, some try their best to evade change. This leads to the conception of resistance to change not only as an attitude but also as a personality trait (Oreg, 2003). Some people have a tendency to resist any or all types of changes. Oreg (2003) developed a scale to measure this personality trait dispositional resistance to change.

In his later study on dispositional resistance to change, Oreg (2006) demonstrated that those who are dispositionally resistant to change have more tendencies to develop negative attitudes towards changes that they experience and are less inclined towards initiation of changes. Oreg (2003, 2006) contended that individuals' dispositional resistance to change is not just a situation-specific explicit behavior but is a basic personality attribute (cf. Nov & Ye, 2009). A situation specific role of this personality trait in the acceptance of change regarding digital libraries was studied by Nov and Ye (2009).

There are four dimensions of this personality trait namely short term focus, emotional reaction, cognitive rigidity and routine seeking (Oreg et al., 2008). Short-term focus constitutes the degree to which people are concerned with long-term advantages of change versus the anxiety about short-term hassles of the change. How individuals feel worried and anxious in reaction to imposed change is tapped by the dimension of emotional reaction. Cognitive rigidity demonstrates unwilling and stubborn behavior regarding the deliberation of novel concepts and alternative solutions. Routine seeking comprises of the amount to which a person searches for unwavering and regular environments (Oreg et al., 2008). Although dispositional resistance to change is a personality trait similar to other personality traits, for instance it is related to, yet unique from risk aversion studied by Slovic (1972). (cf. Oreg et al., 2008).

There are various studies in the literature in which researchers have found a relationship between dispositional resistance to change and how employees react to particular organizational changes i.e. technological change- adoption of digital libraries (Nov & Ye, 2009); attitude of employees towards merger of two core units in defense industry (Oreg, 2006). Leaders' personality traits impact the reactions of followers based on what leaders choose to emphasize in the organizations which eventually affect the organizational culture, which in turn has an effect on employees' attitudes and behaviors (Berson, Oreg & Dvir, 2008). Oreg and Berson (2011) have highlighted that leader's dispositional resistance to change signifies that the leaders do not encourage change, novel ideas, plans and they value consistent actions of employees and stability in organizational plans. This personality trait of leader in return cultivates a negative attitude towards change among employees and hence, they are more likely to resist change. Moreover dispositionally resistant leaders signal that they only reward less risky actions of employees. Hence, this study hypothesizes that

**H1:** *Leaders' dispositional resistance to change will be positively associated with employees' resistance intentions.*

### **2.3 Personal Values**

Values are what we think of as being important to us in our lives (e.g. change in life, security, achievement). Every individual clings to various values that differ in significance compared to each other. The value that a particular person perceives to be the most important may not be of any importance to another person (Schwartz, 2006). Allport and Vernon (1931) in '*Study of Values*', distinguished between six types of values; economic values are about what is most useful, aesthetic values are related to form, beauty, and harmony, social values tell about seeking love of people, political values are linked to power, theoretical values relate to discovery of truth and religious values constitute the notion of unity and existence of world (cf. Bilsky & Schwartz, 1994).

Since 1950's an agreement regarding the conceptualizing of basic values have slowly appeared (Schwartz, 2006). Morris (1956) differentiated between three types of values i.e. object values economic in nature, conceived values-normative in nature and operative values-behavioral in nature. Earlier theorists (see Kluckhohn, 1951 & Williams, 1968) who worked on the concept of values took the stance of viewing values as the standard people use to weigh up people (including their own self), events and defend actions (Schwartz, 1992). Rokeach (1973) developed Rokeach Value Survey (RVS) entailing 36 values.

McClelland (1987) in his book '*Human Motivation*' thoroughly differentiated between implicit motives i.e. basis of which are biological needs and explicit motives i.e. basis of which are explicit social motivations e.g. demands, expectations or rewards etc. Hence, based on his research, developed Personal Values Questionnaire (PVQ) (McClelland, 1987). Hofstede (1980), in similar stream of studies, presented his renowned model of '*Cultural Values*'. Most prominent empirical research on the concept of values emerged with the work of Schwartz and Bilsky's (1987), who contended that values can be classified in a way that they either represent instrumental goals (means) or terminal goals (end-states). Support of this argument can also be found in the work of Rokeach (1973). Schwartz (1992) took on the view of value as a standard or norm rather than traits that are innate in things. He tested his Values Theory (individual level values) to find the phenomenon of universal-values through a multitude of cross cultural samples (Schwartz 1992, 1994) by developing Schwartz Value Survey, which was later modified to Portrait Value Questionnaire (Schwartz et. al, 2001).

Based on the '*Personal Values Theory*', Schwartz (1992) explained the ten basic values which are characterized by a central motivational goal (Schwartz, 2006); Self-Direction, Stimulation, Hedonism, Achievement, Power, Security, Conformity, Tradition, Benevolence and Universalism.

The Personal Values Theory (Schwartz, 1992) does not only identify ten motivationally unique basic values, but also identifies the structures i.e. the dynamic relations among these values. If an individual acts in a way that conforms to these values, it leads to

practical, social and psychological consequences that may be in congruent or in conflict of other values' achievement. Hence, the structure of value relations (Schwartz, 1992, 1994, 2006; Bilsky & Schwartz, 1994) can be summarized with two bipolar dimensions i.e. Self-enhancement vs. self-transcendence. Self-enhancement dimension emphasize pursuit of self-interests (power and achievement values) and self-transcendence dimension is regarding concern for the welfare of others (universalism and benevolence values).

In the dimension of Openness to change vs. conservation, stimulation and self-direction values (emphasize openness to new experiences, autonomous actions and thoughts) are in conflict with tradition and conformity values (self-control, stability and resistance to change). Features of both; self-enhancement and openness to change are reflected in Hedonism (Schwartz, 1992, 1994, 2006; Bilsky & Schwartz, 1994).

Leaders who openly value novelty, reward innovation, stimulate creative thinking among followers. They are more likely to encourage organizational changes and hence it leads to reduction of resistance to change on the part of employees. Whereas, the leaders who give importance and priority to strict routines, stable and less risky actions of employees are more like to create a climate in which employees develop negative attitude towards organizational changes. Hence leader's personal values directly influence employees' intentions to resist change (Oreg & Berson, 2011). This leads to the following hypotheses:

**H2a:** *Leaders' conservation values will be positively related with employees' resistance intentions.*

**H2b:** *Leaders' openness to change values will be negatively related with employees' resistance intentions.*

## **2.4 Transformational Leadership**

Without any proper redefinition, the word 'leadership' has been adapted from common vocabulary and has been inculcated into the technical vocabulary of research (Yukl, 2002). A belief has been held by Burns (1978) that leadership is put into effect when people organize political, psychological, and institutional or such resources to awaken, gratify and connect to the cause of the followers. A bird eye view of literature of leadership brings into highlight gradual evolution of various schools of thoughts i.e. great man, trait theories, behavioral theories, transactional leadership, and contingency theories (Bolden, Gosling, Marturano & Dennison, 2003). These theories highlight a universal fact that organizations face various types of changes due to rapidly changing environments. The changing environments has led Bass, Avolio, Jung, and Berson (2003) to contended that there is a need to have adaptive leaders who can help followers develop, who can act as coach and mentor and help followers create sense out of challenging circumstances.

Transactional contingent reinforcement has been considered as the basic element of efficient and effective leadership behavior prior to the beginning of era of



transformational leadership theory into the literature, a very important component of which is charisma (See Burns, 1978; Bass 1985). Transformational leadership is rooted in the literature of leadership since 1960s. It is believed to be a paradigm-shift in the research area that previously focused on leaders' traits, behaviors, and situations regarding leadership styles but now takes into account the part of followers as well. Burns (1978) has been the one who actually started to disentangle the notion of transformational leadership in his study on transformational leadership and he has highlighted the fact that there exists a difference between transformational and transactional leadership.

Bass (1990) called transformational leadership a superior leadership performance and has the following approach about it: "*Transformational leadership occurs when leaders broaden and elevate the interests of their employees, when they generate awareness and acceptance of the purposes and mission of the group, and when they stir their employees to look beyond their own self-interest for the good of the group*" Bass (1990, p. 21).

The dimensions of transformational leadership include; inspirational motivation (transformational leaders are enthusiastic, optimistic, make their followers' work challenging and meaningful and this motivates them), intellectual stimulation (transformational leaders encourage new ideas and follower's participation in decision making), idealized influence/ charisma (transformational leaders are the ones who are trusted by their followers as well as they gain their admiration and respect, their followers try to be like them and identify with them) and individualized consideration (leader act as a mentor or a coach and recognizes and cares for individual differences) (Bass, 1985; Bass, 1990; Bass et al., 2003).

Transformational leaders empower their followers to undertake higher levels of responsibilities encourage creativity and change acceptance, build support to bring followers under the shadow of a vision. They bring the best out of their followers (Bass & Avolio, 1994). An interesting point about the role of transformational leadership on followers' motivation has been highlighted by Burns (1978) i.e. the principle intention of transformational leaders is to stimulate hidden needs of self actualization that lie at the top most level of Maslow's (1954) need hierarchy (cf. Avolio, Dvir, Eden, & Shamir, 2002). Whereas, transactional leaders are only concerned with the fulfillment of present needs of their followers (Bass, 1985).

The components of transformational leadership are particularly meaningful for determining employee's attitude towards change by challenging status quo (Bass, 1985). Transformational leader motivates the followers to have a common vision towards change, to have optimistic behavioral intentions towards change and to agree to new solutions to complex problems (Oreg & Berson, 2011).

In their study on the role of transformational leadership in acquisition acceptance, Nemanich and Keller (2007) have highlighted that transformational leadership can play a twin role; it can either directly affect the followers' reaction towards change or indirectly create a kind of environment that leads to resistance or non-resistance to organizational change. Leadership can affect organizational change process on multiple levels; either directly by impacting employees' attitudes during change or indirectly by

adjusting the predictors of employees' predisposition to change (Appelbaum, Degbe, MacDonald, & Nguyen-Quang, 2015). Transformational leadership can also impact organizational change by empowering employees through participatory decision-making and knowledge-sharing (Hussain, Lei, Akram, Haider, Hussain, & Ali, 2016).

Transformational leadership has direct positive relationship with employees' commitment to change (Herold, Fedor, Caldwell, and Liu, 2008), significant relationship with the resistance to change (Hamidianpour, Esmaeilpour, & Zarei, 2016), indirect relationship with three components of resistance of change (affective, cognitive and behavioral) through individualized consideration (Penava, & Šehić, 2014) and significant correlation with employees' resistance to change in healthcare setting (Garcia, 2016). Based on the discussion, following hypothesis is presented.

**H3:** *Leaders' transformational leadership behavior will be negatively related to employees' resistance intentions.*

### **2.5 Moderating role of Transformational Leadership**

Transformational leadership also have indirect effects on followers' attitude towards change. This is because transformational leaders motivate their followers to look beyond their self interest (Bass, 1985) and transform themselves to contribute towards a collective aim. This collective aim can be an organizational change as well. Oreg and Berson (2011) have argued that transformational leaders successfully reduce ambiguities through their charisma, idealized influence and inspirational motivation towards a common goal. This results in less room for individual interpretations and doubts and it lessens the role and effects of personality differences in reactions towards change (Stewart & Barrick, 2004). Hence, transformational leadership interacts with employee's traits and creates such strong climate in which role of individuals' personal disposition (tendency) to resist change gets weakened. This leads to the last hypothesis of this study.

**H4:** *Transformational leadership will moderate the relationship between employees' dispositional resistance to change and resistance intentions such that this relationship will be weaker as transformational leadership increases.*

The model of study is shown in figure 1.

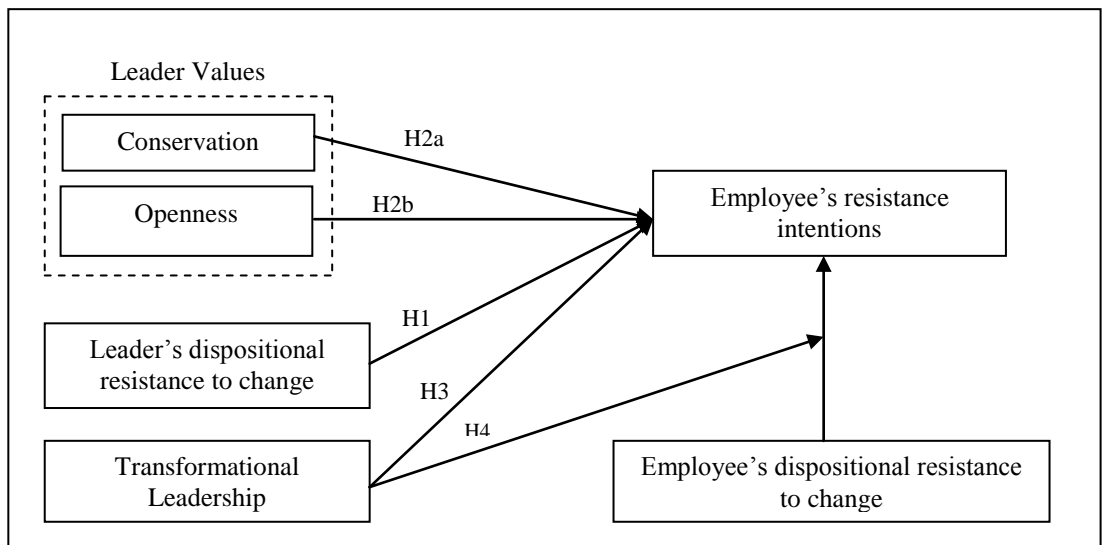


Figure 1: Model of the Study

### 3. Research Methodology

The study adopted quantitative approach with cross sectional survey data. However, though not in this study's scope, interviews were conducted after the results were obtained and findings were discussed with leaders' (one principal, two wing-heads and two coordinators) and some teachers.

Sample of this study was Army Public Schools and Colleges System (APSACS) Sialkot (Zafar Ali Road) and Rawalpindi branches (Westridge and Humayun road). Data was collected using convenience sampling technique. Data were collected from 95 leaders (i.e. Principals, Wing Heads and Coordinators) and 250 teachers. As the objective of the research is to find out leaders' personal values, personal disposition towards change and transformational leadership behaviors impact on teachers' attitude towards organizational change, therefore, survey also captured the leaders responses towards change.

Instrument for the study was adopted. Principals, wing heads and coordinators were asked to report their demographics, dispositional resistance to change, personal values and transformational leadership. On the other hand, teachers were asked to rate their dispositional resistance to change and behavioral intentions to resist change. Pilot study was conducted for each variable's scale on a sample size of 32 leaders and 33 teachers. The final reliability results using Cronbach alpha reliability revealed that the instrument was reliable in the Pakistani context.

Personal values of leaders were tapped using 20-items from Portrait Value Questionnaire (PVQ) (Schwartz et al., 2001). The items were related to openness to change (seven items) and conservation (thirteen items). The Cronbach's alpha for

openness to change values items was .91 in this study, which shows 91% reliability, and for conservation values items it was .97 which shows high reliability of 97%.

Oreg's (2003) 17-item *RTC* scale (Resistance to Change) was used to evaluate employees' and leaders' dispositional resistance to change. Four dimensions of Resistance to change are measured through this scale i.e. *cognitive rigidity*, *emotional reaction*, *routine seeking* and *short-term focus*. The alpha reliability coefficient of this scale in this research study was .95.

Oreg's (2006) Change Attitudes Scale was used to measure Resistance Intentions of employees. Five items of Behavioral intentions tap the resistance intentions that employees have regarding particular organizational change. The alpha reliability coefficient of this scale in this research study was .91.

Transformational leadership was tapped using the 20-items from the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire; MLQ – 5X-short Form (Bass (& Avolio, 1995)). The alpha reliability coefficient was .92 of this scale in this research study.

Data analysis was done through SPSS software. Tests include descriptive analysis, bivariate correlation and Hierarchical Linear Modeling. Hierarchical linear modeling (HLM) was used in this study to statistically examine a data structure where teachers (level-1) were nested within schools (level-2: School leaders) (Oreg & Berson, 2011). Raudenbush, Bryk, Cheong and Congdon (2000) have explained that in education, *hierarchical linear model* is a term that describes the research designs in which the sample is '*nested within the organizations*' e.g. students and teachers within schools. Another name for such a model is *Multilevel model* because data is collected from sample at more than one level (Davison, Kwak, Seo, & Choi, 2002).

Similarly in this research study, the data which is used for analysis was collected from two main levels i.e. Level-1: Teachers' Level and Level-2 Leaders' level. Another rationale for using Hierarchical Linear modeling is that the data is not independent because leaders' and teachers' both responded to the same scale of *Dispositional resistance to change*. Because teachers also act as coordinators, so the observations are not fully independent which violates the primary assumption of Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) or Simple Linear regression that involves a single predictor (Osborne, 2002).

#### **4. Results and Discussion**

Mean age for teachers was 26.93 (SD= 4.052) and mean age for leaders was 31.55 (SD= 4.743). Out of all teachers, 11.5% were males and 88.5% were females. Out of all leaders, 17.3% were males and 82.7% were females. 81.5% of teachers had 1-5 years working experience, 14.5% had 5-10 years and 4% had 10-15 years of working experience. On the other hand, 45.3% of leaders had 1-5 years working experience, 40% had 5-10 years, 13.3% had 10-15 years and 1.3% had 15 years or above working experience. Out of leaders, 4% were principals, 24% were wing heads and 72% were coordinators.

Descriptive analyses (Table 1) show that data was normally distributed because the value of skewness for each variable is between the acceptable ranges of -1 to +1. The mean for leader level variables are as follow: for Transformational Leadership the mean

is 3.06 (SD= 0.78, skewness= -0.31), similarly the mean for Leaders' openness to change values is 2.38 (SD= 1.04, skewness= 0.44), for Leaders' Conservation values the mean is 2.90 (SD= 1.20, skewness= -0.01), for Leaders' Dispositional Resistance to change 2.68 (SD= 1.02, skewness= 0.48). The mean for teachers-level variable Teachers' Dispositional Resistance to change is 2.63 (SD= 0.97, skewness= 0.27), Teachers' Behavioral Intentions to resist change 3.64 (SD= 1.10, skewness= -0.99).

Table 1: Bivariate Correlations

	Mean	SD	Skewness	1	2	3	4	5
<i>Leaders-level Variables</i>								
1. Transformational leadership	3.06	0.78	-0.31					
2. Leaders openness to change	2.38	1.04	0.44	.22*				
3. Leaders conservation values	2.90	1.20	-0.01	-.25*	-.27*			
4. Leaders dispositional resistance to change	2.68	1.02	0.48	-.22	-.35**	.48**		
<i>Teachers-level Variables</i>								
5. Teachers dispositional resistance to change	2.63	0.97	0.27	-.16	-.38**	.005	.18	
6. Teachers behavioral intentions to resist change	3.64	1.10	-0.99	-.23*	-.57**	.35**	.48**	.26**
*Correlation significant at 0.05 level								
**Correlation significant at 0.01 level;				Leaders N = 95; Teachers N = 250				

The results of bivariate correlation analysis (Table 1) show that Transformational leadership has significant negative correlation with Teachers' behavioral intentions to resist change ( $r = -.23$ ,  $p < .05$ ) which means that an increase in Leaders' transformational leadership would cause a decrease in Teachers' behavioral intentions to resist change. In other words, employees of highly transformational leaders are less likely to have intentions to resist large scale organizational changes. Transformational Leadership also has significant positive correlation with Leaders' openness to change values ( $r = .22$ ,  $p < .05$ ), significant negative relationship with Leaders' conservation values ( $r = -.25$ ,  $p < .05$ ), negative but insignificant relationship with Leaders' Dispositional resistance to change ( $r = -.22$ ,  $p > .05$ ) and Teachers' Dispositional resistance to change ( $r = -.16$ ,  $p > .05$ ). Leaders' openness to change values has strong negative relationship with Teachers' behavioral intentions to resist change ( $r = -.57$ ,  $p < .01$ ). This highlights that the employees of those leaders who value openness and see organizational changes optimistically are less likely to resist the organizational changes. Leaders' openness to change is significantly, negatively associated with Leaders' conservation values ( $r = -.27$ ,  $p < .05$ ). This brings into attention an interesting finding that is quite apparent that Leaders' who encourage changes, risk taking, initiative, creative and new solutions and ideas are going to score low on conservation values i.e.

an increase in openness value would cause the conservation values to decrease. Leaders' openness to change values has significant negative correlation with both Leaders' Dispositional resistance to change ( $r = -.35, p < .01$ ) and Teachers' Dispositional resistance to change ( $r = -.38, p < .01$ ). Leaders' conservation values has significant positive correlation with Leaders' Dispositional Resistance to change ( $r = .48, p < .01$ ) and has no correlation with Teachers' Dispositional Resistance to change ( $r = .005, p > .05$ ). Teachers' Behavioral intentions to resist change is significantly positively related to Leaders' Conservation values ( $r = .35, p < .01$ ) and Teachers' Dispositional resistance to change ( $r = .26, p < .01$ ).

As the data was collected on two levels, the hypotheses 1, 2a, 2b, 3 and 4 consisted of cross-level test in which predictors were leaders' level variables (i.e. Leader's openness to change values, Leaders' conservation values, Leaders' Dispositional Resistance to change and Transformational Leadership). The outcome variable was teachers' level variable (i.e. Teachers' Behavioral Intentions to resist change) in all the hypotheses. There was also a hypothesis regarding cross level interaction (moderation) in which a teachers' level variable (Teachers' Dispositional Resistance to change) interacted with a leaders' level variable (Transformational leadership) to influence a teachers' level outcome (Teachers' Behavioral Intentions to resist change). Hierarchical linear model consisted of three steps. In the step one, all four leaders' level variables (i.e. Leader's openness to change values, Leaders' conservation values, Leaders' Dispositional Resistance to change and Transformational Leadership) were entered and in step two teachers' level variable (Teachers' Dispositional Resistance to change) was entered and in the third step the product term was entered. These three steps provide a good comparison between the three models as shown in table 2.

Table 2: Hierarchical Linear Modeling

	Model 1 $\beta$	t- stat	Model 2 $\beta$	t-stat	Model 3 $\beta$	t-stat
Intercept	3.9**	6.86	.77	1.76	.89	1.92
<i>Level 2 Predictor</i>						
Leaders' transformational behaviors	-.17*	-	-.15*	-1.91	-.20*	-2.04
		2.29				
Leaders openness to change	-.46***	-	-.18**	-2.72	-.18**	-2.63
		4.37				
Leaders' conservation values	.16*	2.05	.20***	3.52	.21***	3.57
Leaders' dispositional resistance to change	.29**	2.56	.20**	2.91	.19**	2.76
<i>Level-1 Predictor</i>						
Teachers dispositional resistance to change			.87***	11.09	.88***	11.08
<i>Cross level interaction</i>						
Leaders' transformational leadership x teachers' dispositional resistance to change					.06	.81
R <sup>2</sup>	.42***		.79***		.79	

$\Delta R^2$		.37***	.002
Adjusted $R^2$	.38***	.77***	.77
F-stats	12.74***	52.59***	43.73

Dependent variable: Teachers behavioral intentions to resist changes.

\*\*\*Correlation is significant at .001 level; \*\*Correlation is significant at .01 level; \*Correlation is significant at .05 level.

Model-1 shows the collective impact that all the leaders' level predictors have on Teachers' Behavioral Intentions to resist change. Model-2 shows the collective impact that all the leaders' level predictors along with the teachers' level predictor has on Teachers' Behavioral Intentions to resist change. Model-3 shows details about cross level interaction.

The model-1 of Hierarchical linear modeling is of more interest regarding the hypotheses 1, 2a, 2b and 3 as it shows the collective impact of the leaders' level predictors alone (which is the foremost aim of this study). Therefore, its results will be referred to more often while discussing these hypotheses in this study.

Hypothesis-1 predicted that Leaders' dispositional resistance to change will be positively related to teachers' resistance intentions. The results of all the three models support this hypothesis (model-1:  $\beta = .29$ ,  $p < 0.01$ , model-2:  $\beta = .20$ ,  $p < 0.01$ , model-3:  $\beta = .19$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Consistent with the hypothesis, leaders' dispositional resistance to change has 29% impact on Teachers' Behavioral intentions to resist change. Moreover the results show that the direction of this relationship is positive and the result is significant as well. This leads us into highlighting that per unit increase in Leaders' dispositional resistance to change will cause 29% increase in Teachers' intentions to resist change. Hence hypothesis-1 is supported.

Hypothesis-2a predicted that Leaders' conservation values will be positively associated with teachers' resistance intentions. Consistent with this hypothesis, Leaders' conservation values has a significant positive impact on teachers' resistance intentions (model-1:  $\beta = .16$ ,  $p < 0.05$ , model-2:  $\beta = .20$ ,  $p < 0.001$ , model-3:  $\beta = .21$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). Moreover, Leaders' conservation values accounts for 16% variance in teachers' intentions to resist change. Hence, hypothesis-2a is also supported.

Hypothesis-2b predicted that Leaders' openness to change values will be negatively associated with teachers' resistance intentions. The results of HLM show that Leaders' openness to change values has significant negative effect on employees' resistance intentions (model-1:  $\beta = -.46$ ,  $p < 0.001$ , model-2:  $\beta = -.18$ ,  $p < 0.01$ , model-3:  $\beta = -.18$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). In all three models, the effects were significant. Leaders' openness to change values accounted for 46% variance in employees' resistance intentions. Moreover there inverse relationship highlights that an increase in Leaders' openness to change values will cause a decrease in teachers' resistance intentions. Hence hypothesis-2b is supported as well.

Hypothesis-3 predicted that Leaders' transformational leadership behavior will be negatively related to teachers' resistance intentions. Consistent with this hypothesis, the results of HLM show that transformational leadership behavior indeed has a significant negative impact on teachers' resistance intentions (model-1:  $\beta = -.17$ ,  $p < 0.05$ , model-

2:  $\beta = -.15, p < 0.05$ , model-3:  $\beta = -.20, p < 0.05$ ). Transformational leadership accounts for 17% variance in teachers' resistance intentions. The negative relationship confirms the hypothesis that an increase in transformational leadership will cause a decrease in teachers' resistance intentions. Hence hypothesis 3 is supported.

Hypothesis-4 predicted that Transformational leadership will moderate the relationship between teachers' dispositional resistance to change and teachers' resistance intentions such that this relationship will be weaker as transformational leadership increases. Although there is a significant strong positive impact of teachers' dispositional resistance to change on teachers' resistance intentions (model-2:  $\beta = .87, p < 0.001$ , model-3:  $\beta = .88, p < 0.001$ ) and teachers' dispositional resistance to change is accounted for 87% variance in the outcome variable teachers' resistance intentions in model 2 and 88% in model 3, still transformational leadership did not moderate the relationship between teachers' dispositional resistance to change and teachers' resistance intentions (model-3:  $R^2 = .79, \Delta R^2 = .002, p > 0.05$ ). Since the cross-level interaction was insignificant, hypothesis-4 is rejected.

Overall, leaders' level predictors (Model-1) accounted for 42% variance in teachers' resistance intentions ( $R^2 = .42, p < 0.001$ ). Teachers' level predictor along with leaders' level predictors (Model-2) collectively accounted for 79% variance in teachers' resistance intentions ( $R^2 = .79, p < 0.001$ ). Model 3 (cross-level interaction) did not yield any significant impact on teachers' intentions to resist change.

An interesting finding brought into light by model-2 is that when teachers' level predictor was entered transformational leadership's significant negative impact on teachers' resistance intentions decreased from 17% to 15% (model-1:  $\beta = -.17, p < 0.05$ , model-2:  $\beta = -.15, p < 0.05$ ), leaders' openness to change values' significant negative impact on teachers' resistance intentions also decreased from 46% to 18% (model-1:  $\beta = -.46, p < 0.001$ , model-2:  $\beta = -.18, p < 0.01$ ) and leaders' dispositional resistance to change had a lesser effect on resistance intentions in model-2 i.e. 20% as compared to model-1 i.e. 29% (model-1:  $\beta = .29, p < 0.01$ , model-2:  $\beta = .20, p < 0.01$ ). Only the positive effect of leaders' conservation values on teachers' resistance intentions increased in model-2 i.e. 20% as compared to model-1 i.e. 16%. Also this relationship's significance level also increased in model-2.

The main focus of this study was to examine whether leader's behaviors, personal values and leaders' personal orientation towards change have any significant relationship with teachers' reactions to a large scale organizational change or not. The results and findings are meaningful and support the claim that leaders' behaviors and especially their personal values and leaders' and teacher's orientation towards change is reflected in teacher's reaction towards organizational change.

The results show that leaders' personal values are significantly related to the teachers' reaction towards change. Particularly, leaders' openness values were negatively related to teachers' resistance intentions. But if we look at the other side of the same relationship in context of this study, it highlights the fact that in APSACS, leaders' on average do not value openness to change (Mean of Leaders' Openness to change values = 2.38). Along with that, teachers have intentions to resist organizational changes



(Mean of Teachers' Resistance Intentions= 3.64). This shows that most of the teachers tend to agree that they will protest against the organizational changes and complain about them. This was also confirmed by conducting interviews with wing-head and coordinators who told that the teachers often complain about the on-going rigid, dictated organizational changes. This explains the negative relationship between leaders' openness to change values and teachers' resistance intentions because leaders' of APSACS are not in favor of independent thought and this gives teachers almost no space to apply their own ideas where they can in order to achieve a better outcome while following the guidelines, policies.

Moreover leaders' conservation values were positively associated with teachers' resistance intentions. This demonstrates that APSACS leaders' value traditional ways of doing things, conform to rigid ideas and they have an autocratic style of implementing organizational changes. Although APSACS has realized the need to have various changes in their system because of competition in educational sector of Pakistan, still they have Retired Army Officers as Principals, serving Army Officers design and plan all the policies and organizational changes in APSACS secretariat and this is the reason why their policies are rigid and their way of implementation is not flexible at all. They dictate their terms about new organizational policies and changes to the Principals of each school and they too being retired army officers (who are used to dictating) in turn want teachers to conform to all the dictations as they are.

Leaders' Dispositional resistance to change was positively linked with teacher's resistance intentions. This is particularly meaningful because findings show that leaders' personality orientation towards change is reflected in teachers' reaction towards change. This highlights that leaders' who are dispositionally resistant to change and generally dislike change in turn create a conservative environment in which teachers also have intentions to resist organizational changes.

The ASA (Attraction, Selection and Attrition) model of Schneider (1987), suggests that *people make the place*, which means that the environment is a function of people behaving in them is more appropriate here for discussion. It is because people get attracted to, select and stay in the organizations they find interesting and having culture which is similar to their personality orientation and values. Similarly organizations attract, select and retain those employees who fit into their organizational culture well and terminate the ones who do not fit into the culture. Hence, because in educational sector specifically in APSACS, principals and wing-heads have considerable authority to select and hire teachers, ASA model (Schneider, 1987) supports this study's finding in a way that the link between leaders' personal attributes and teacher's resistance intentions may have stemmed from the decision of leaders (principals) regarding who to attract, select and retain or terminate. Teacher's dispositional resistance to change had the strongest positive impact on teachers' resistance intentions, which also confirms this stance that the principals of APSACS might have selected those teachers who have similar dispositionally resistant orientation towards change. There is a possibility that this might have resulted from similarity error (Aguinis, 2009) that members of organization who have authority to hire and rate performance make sometimes (e.g.

during interview giving favorable/pleasant ratings to candidates who have similar attitude, personality traits etc.). And as Schneider (1987) has proposed, all this might have led into a state of collection of homogenous personalities in APSACS (all of whom are personally resistant to change).

Transformational leadership was negatively related to teachers' intentions to resist change. APSACS leaders have low to moderate transformational leadership (Mean of Transformational leadership= 3.06) which indicates that on average, leaders reported that they practice transformational leadership behaviors '*sometimes*'. This shows that because there is less coaching, intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration and inspirational motivation by the leaders' (principals, wing-heads and coordinators), teachers tend to lose their positive vision about organizational changes and start resisting them because of lower morale. This was also confirmed by interviewing the teachers who talked about the leadership style of their wing-head which they thought to be less motivational, not inspirational and quite autocratic and the fact that they had almost no participation in decision making regarding APSACS' policy changes (as it is centralized in the hands of few who are members of APSACS Secretariat). They believed that their wing-head has unrealistic expectations and emphasized typical traditional methods even though the policy of APSACS is to implement newer teaching methods. They complained that they are immensely burdened by the work load and said that the APSACS secretariat keeps on changing policies every other day, and as they start getting used to one policy, the secretariat implements a newer version which they do not like. This not only indicates that they have immense work-load but also indicates that they personally do not like changes and lack adaptability to change.

Hussain, Aamir and Rehman (2011) also had similar results regarding transformational leaders' role during merger/acquisition in banking sector of Pakistan in which they found that leaders' failed to exhibit transformational leadership behaviors, did not provide coaching, mentoring, emotional or intellectual support to the employees during a large scale organizational change, which created ambiguity and uncertainty and led the employees into developing intentions to leave the organization. Ismail, Khurram, Hussain, and Jafri (2011) conducted their research in Medical and Engineering sector of Pakistan and found that there is a moderate level of transformational leadership in these sectors in Pakistan and suggested that steps should be taken to improve it.

Transformational leadership did not moderate the relationship between teachers' dispositional resistance to change and teachers' resistance intentions. A possible explanation can be the low to moderate level of transformational leadership in APSACS. Even though transformational leadership did work as a moderator in the replica research study conducted in Israel by Oreg and Berson (2011) but it must be noted that there is a lot of cultural difference between Israel and Pakistan and people of Pakistan usually have conservative personalities and do not like changes because of the uncertainty these changes create. It was hypothesized that transformational leadership would weaken the relationship between teachers' dispositional resistance to change and teachers' resistance intentions but in this study, the biggest impact on teachers' resistance intentions was of teachers' dispositional resistance to change, teachers had

personal disliking for change and also the transformational leadership behaviors were less displayed by the principals, wing-heads and coordinators. Thus, in absence of high level transformational leadership behaviors (coaching, inspiring teachers to motivate them to accept changes whole-heartedly) one can expect teachers to follow their personality traits more and resist the organizational changes rather than accepting them. In other words as it was hypothesized that high level transformational leadership behavior would create such an open environment in which all the teachers' personal tendency to resist change would lessen but because low transformational leadership behaviors do not have such an inspiring effect on the environment, teachers act in ways they want to and resist changes because their personalities are as such.

Another point that was brought into account through interview is that teachers at APSACS Sialkot Branch talked about insecurity regarding their job because two wing-heads (one of boys' junior wing and the other one of boys' middle wing) and the principals (of both girls' and boys' APSACS Sialkot Branch) have got terminated recently because of the poor evaluation report of the task force that evaluates nationwide APSACS branches' to check organizational changes' effectiveness. Job insecurity along with teachers' personal tendency to resist change might have contributed towards more bitter feelings of dislike and anxiousness of teachers' towards new APSACS' policies. Hence this might also be reason why teachers' dispositional resistance to change had the biggest impact on teachers' resistance intentions.

## **5. Conclusion**

Leaders' can play a meaningful role in determining the success or failure of organizational changes by influencing employees' attitude towards change. The way employees see an organizational change is mostly because of their personal orientation towards change but leaders' transformational behaviors and personal values do have the tendency to influence how employees' react to a large scale organizational change.

An interesting finding of this research study is that there is a link between leaders' and teachers' personal orientation towards change i.e. both the leaders and employees generally dislike changes. That highlighted an interesting possibility that the leaders (principals and wing-heads who have considerable discretion in hiring and firing decisions) may select teachers who have personalities similar to theirs. This may lead to a homogenous organizational environment in which change is not often appreciated or valued. Employees should look beyond their self interest and work for a collective goal, otherwise their resistance to an organizational change would only hinder organization's success. This study has found that leaders' and teachers' dispositional resistance to change were positively related to teachers' intentions to resist change and leaders' transformational behaviors had a negative impact on teachers' intentions to resist change. Furthermore, leaders' conservation values were positively related to teachers' resistance intentions whereas leaders' openness to change values was negatively associated with employees' resistance intentions. However, transformational leadership did not moderate the relationship between teachers' dispositional resistance to change and teachers' resistance intentions.

The study is not without limitations. First, the data was collected through convenience sampling with smaller sample size and limited to one organization only; hence the results of this study cannot be generalized. Secondly, the data was collected cross-sectionally, which also leads to inconsistent findings. This limitation has two features. One is that although leaders' personal values and personal disposition towards change is a relatively stable predictor, still teachers' attitude i.e. resistance intentions may vary over time. The second aspect is regarding the stage of organizational change. The data was collected when organization was going through the implementation of a large scale organizational change and examined the behavioral intentions of teachers to resist the ongoing changes. Therefore, data prior to the implementation of the organizational change was not collected, which might have yielded more interesting findings regarding teachers' resistance intentions in the anticipation phase (Isabella, 1990) of that organizational change. Thirdly, the study used self-reporting technique with which principals, wing-heads and coordinators rated their transformational leadership behaviors. This might have led to self-reporting bias and they might have exaggerated their transformational leadership behaviors.

Future research can be carried out on various other sectors' using probability sampling technique so that the findings can be generalized over whole population of those sectors. Contrary to this case study approach, researchers can take multiple organizations from the same sector. Cross sector comparisons can be done for more meaningful results. The framework can be tested in different cultural settings (can also address limitations to have more meaningful findings) in their so that generalization can be made with confidence. Longitudinal study comparing pre and post implementation and leaders' level predictors tendency to create an impact in teachers' attitudes over time is another area for researchers.

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