

Transformational Leadership and Innovative Behaviour: Role of Work Meaningfulness and Personal Identification with Leader

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The goal of this study is to find out the effect of transformational leadership on innovative behaviour through work meaningfulness. We also modelled the moderating effect of personal identification on the association between transformational leadership and innovative behaviour. We based our hypotheses on the theory of positive emotions, and the interpersonal social cognitive paradigm. The participants of the study were managerial level workers (supervisor-subordinate dyads) in the manufacturing sector of Gujrat-Sialkot-Gujranwala (aka, the Golden Triangle) industrial cluster of Pakistan. We implemented the two-step structural equations modelling technique on our sample of 273 respondents. Results reveal that transformational leaders do not only have a direct influence on innovative behaviour but also affect employee innovative behaviour through work meaningfulness. The employees who identified more with their transformational leaders were more innovative. The study adds to our understanding about how transformational leadership enhances innovative behaviour by introducing new mechanisms into this linkage. The results also establish the external validity, in a South Asian context, of the theory of positive emotions and an interpersonal social cognitive paradigm.

Key words: *Transformational leadership, Innovative behaviour, Meaningfulness, Identification*

Introduction

The present times are characterised by tough competition among organisations. There is a race to keep ahead and sustain a distinctive position in the market. With the pace of technological advancements, only those organisations that innovate continuously can survive, grow and enjoy a sustainable competitive edge (Gumusluoğlu and Ilsev, 2009). In this regard, it becomes imperative for organisations to rely on the innovative behaviour of their people. According to Yuan and Woodman (2010), innovative behaviour ranges from idea generation, idea realisation, to idea implementation in terms of either products, services or work methods. Innovative behaviour is an intentional effort by employees to conceive, advocate and introduce novel ideas within the workplace (Janssen and Van Yperen, 2004).

Leadership has been proven to influence followers' innovative behaviour (Jung et al., 2008). Among the many aspects of leadership, the transformational behaviour of leaders has been held as the most relevant indicator of innovativeness (Choi et al., 2016). Transformational leaders psychologically empower followers, and can inspire their innovative behaviour (Kao et al., 2015). However, comprehensive understanding of this connection requires further investigation. There is a need to investigate its mediating and moderating effects (Choi et al., 2016). This call for research is further supported by Aryee et al. (2012), who highlight that the association between transformational leadership and innovative behaviours must be delved into to include mediators and moderators.

Aryee et al. (2012) particularly recommend that psychological processes linking transformational leadership with employee outcomes must be elucidated. Hence, for this research, we add work meaningfulness as an intervening psychological mechanism between transformational leadership and employee innovative behaviour, as there exists no earlier evidence proving such a linkage. Work meaningfulness is the amount of significance and the positive valence that the work signifies for a person (Rosso et al., 2010). Meaningfulness arises out of what an individual seeks in and what the work offers (Lips-Wiersma and Wright, 2012) not merely in monetary terms, but more importantly in socio-psychological aspects (Alderfer, 1969). Researchers have provided that those who believe their work to be meaningful are more satisfied, highly committed, deeply engaged (Geldenhuis et al., 2014, May et al., 2004) and they also voice their opinions (Chen et al., 2018).

Chen et al. (2018) argue that employees usually devote a substantial share of their daily time at work. Therefore, work has to be meaningful for them to make most out of it. Chen et al. further stress that top managers have a vital role in accentuating the meaningfulness of work among subordinates. When leaders transform the meaningfulness of work among subordinates, these employees will be more willing to engage in positive behaviours such as offering suggestions and presenting novel ideas. In the scope of the present research, the theory of positive emotions (Fredrickson and Branigan, 2005) may help explain how a transformational leader develops a sense of meaning among subordinates, and then leads them to engage in

innovative behaviour. Transformational leadership is a positive leader behaviour; it builds positive emotions such as work meaningfulness, which in turn may translate into positive behaviour, for instance, innovative behaviour. However, such a contention does not yet have empirical support. Therefore, this study is a step in this direction.

Furthermore, individual outcomes of followers of transformational leaders may also be moderated by different factors, such as how much a follower identifies with the leader. As individuals identify themselves with their organisation (Riketta, 2005), their work group (Van Knippenberg et al., 2007) and their profession (Hekman et al., 2009), they would also identify themselves with the leader they work for. Such an identification is an outcome of leader-follower interaction, and has been labelled as personal identification with the leader, embodying an employee's feelings of proximity with his/her leader (Huang et al., 2014). According to Hobman et al. (2011), personal identification with the leader means, "a self-categorisation process that involves an individual defining him or herself in terms of the attributes of the leader, shifting his or her focus on individual gains for the leader, and experiencing a high level of connection with the leader" (p. 556). Zhu et al. (2013) highlight that as compared to other forms/levels of identification, identification with the leader has been explored less in studies on leadership. Researchers (e.g., Zhu et al., 2013, Huang et al., 2014, Hobman et al., 2011) have pointed out the need to examine the effect of personal identification with the leadership in relation to different follower outcomes. Hence, this research promises to further the understanding of how the follower's personal identification with the leader interacts with transformational leadership behaviour to influence the follower's innovativeness.

Hence, the contribution of this study is three-folds. First, this resolves the conflict about the relationship that transformational leadership has with innovative behaviour. Second, it adds to our understanding about the mediating role of work meaningfulness. This is also an external validation to the theory of positive emotions. Third, the investigation of personal identification with a leader is also a novel contribution to literature.

Hypotheses Development

Transformational leadership and innovative behaviour

Transformational leadership means, "the process through which leaders and followers help each other to advance to a higher level of morality and motivation" (Burns, 1979). Transformational leaders motivate their subordinates by developing a high moral reasoning among themselves for their work (Burns, 1979). Bass (1985) conceptualises transformational leadership in terms of four factors: inspirational motivation, idealised influence, individualised consideration and intellectual stimulation. This conceptualisation serves as an overarching framework for this study as it has established its validity across various cultures (Miao et al., 2012).

“Innovative behaviour is an initiative behaviour of employees aimed at the introduction of new processes, new products, new markets, or combinations of such into the organisation” (Åmo and Kolvereid, 2005). Likewise, Janssen and Van Yperen (2004) define innovative behaviour as a deliberate effort to generate, promote and implement new ideas within our own work, within the workgroup tasks, or within the organisation. Innovative behaviour begins with the identification of a problem and the finding of a solution for it (Dhar, 2016). According to Scott and Bruce (1994), innovative behaviour is a multifaceted behaviour involving three stages: idea generation, idea promotion and idea realisation. It initiates with idea generation which may involve both an absolute novelty or a modification of existing products/services (Kanter, 1988). Idea promotion, the next step, involves the advocacy of the idea to the stakeholders in general, and to the idea sponsors in particular. This may also entail idea selling through social interactions. The stages of innovative behaviour conclude with idea implementation. Successfully transformed innovative ideas into products or services or procedures enhance the profitability and efficiency of the organisation and its members (Scott and Bruce, 1994, Kanter, 1988).

Transformational leadership theory suggests that it is constructed of four leader behaviours: intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, individualised consideration and idealised influence (Bass and Riggio, 2006). A manifestation of each of these transformational behaviours has implications for the followers’ behavioural outcomes. The followers redefine their norms and values as a result of a leader’s behavioural dictates (Choi et al., 2016, Jung et al., 2003). Intellectually stimulating behaviours of leaders inspire followers to avert the established practices, find novel ways of doing the job and solve the problems creatively (Bass and Avolio, 1994, Peng et al., 2015). Intellectually stimulated individuals think out of the box and spare their energies for their organisational goals (Wilson-Evered et al., 2004). It has also been reported that out of the box thinkers create a vision for themselves and also follow innovative ways to achieve their destination (Kark et al., 2003). Through individualised consideration, leaders transfer their unique knowledge to their subordinates. A considerate behaviour of a leader would enhance the confidence of the follower to confront the status quo. The confronted status quo would have to be replaced with more novel and innovative approaches for which the required support comes from the leader (Bass et al., 2003, Bass and Avolio, 1994, Miao et al., 2012). Transformational leaders also inspirationally motivate their followers. They highlight the significance of even minor contributions and encourage the followers to contribute novel ideas for their own, and organisational, performance (Bass et al., 2003). Idealised influence over the employees occurs when leaders become role models for their followers. The leader’s frame of influence boosts employees’ morale in their workplace (Shamir et al., 1993). In this vein, Shin and Zhou (2003) believe that such an influence makes employees focus keenly on their job with more concentration and hence become creative. With these arguments, we propose that:

H1: Transformational leadership has a positive effect on innovative behaviour.

Role of work meaningfulness

Work becomes meaningful when employees perceive it to be significant, engaging and purposeful (Cohen-Meitar et al., 2009). Work meaningfulness is “the value of the purpose of work or goals benchmarked against an individual’s own standards or ideals” (May et al., 2004). According to Steger et al. (2012), meaningfulness in work arises when the work has significance, has positive valence and is growth and purpose oriented. Aktouf (1992) expounds that an individual, by purpose and nature, needs meaning and tries to find meaning in his/her work and life. It boils down to queries such as, “who am I?” and “why am I here?”. These are also referred to as sense-making questions (Cohen-Meitar et al., 2009). Work meaningfulness motivates individuals to achieve mastery in their skills and grow in their careers (Pratt and Ashforth, 2003). Kahn (1990) notes that most frequently people ask themselves how their work is important for them. Thus, they are on the look for the factors to be attributed to meaning in their work.

The research on work meaningfulness has been geared toward the reason that employees’ heightened feelings of meaning in what they are doing has influence on their performance at the individual and organisational level (Rosso et al., 2010). For instance, work meaningfulness has been related with well-being (Nielsen et al., 2008), engagement (Ghadi et al., 2013) and creativity (Cohen-Meitar et al., 2009). A further examination of the literature provides that the mediating role of work meaningfulness has yet to be explored.

Transformational leaders, through intellectual stimulation and inspirational motivation, also instil work meaningfulness among employees. Shamir et al. (1993) believes that leaders develop self-esteem among followers through the stimulation of their intellectual abilities. Their followers can freely voice their feelings and ideas without the fear of rejection, hence, giving them more control over the happenings within their own work and around themselves. Scroggins (2008) reports that there is a linkage between what one experiences in his/her work and what meanings one draws out of those experiences.

Intellectually stimulating behaviour, compared to other dimensions, is task-focused and induces the thought pattern of employees (Peng et al., 2015). Intellectually stimulating leaders frame the mindset of their followers by using metaphors, jargons and stories (Fairhurst and Sarr, 1996). They develop a sense of purpose by reflecting on the significance of employees’ work for the larger benefits of the organisation in general, and for society in particular. This makes the work meaningful for followers (Cleavenger and Munyon, 2013). Intellectually stimulating leaders also induce their followers to explore more effective approaches to perform the job. While employees explore novel approaches to do their work, they are in a position to apply their skills to their work (Kark et al., 2003). The discovery of novel approaches to work thus leads to empowered employees who are also engaged in decision making processes. Empowered employees thus draw a sense of purpose in their work (Peng et al., 2015).

Likewise, from a cognitive perspective also, intellectually stimulated employees explore novel aspects of their work and develop meaningful perceptions about their job (Peng et al., 2015).

Work meaningfulness can also be linked with innovative behaviour. In a recent theoretical review, Amabile and Pratt (2016) proposed that a person experiencing meaningfulness in work is more likely to engage in creative behaviours. Those who find work meaningful are intrinsically motivated to perform better. Grant and Berry (2011) empirically established that a perception of meaningfulness in work enhances intrinsic motivation and thus leads to creative behaviours. Individuals intrinsically motivated feel moved towards work. They try to make their work efficient and useful by contributing ideas, opinions and suggestions. They do not calculate the costs and benefits of their contributions (Liang et al., 2012, Chen et al., 2018).

The broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions (Fredrickson, 2001) can help explain the linkage further. Fredrickson (2001) proposes that while individuals experience positive feelings, it is more likely that they engage in positive behaviours. Positive feelings also stimulate the positive mental states. Positive mental frames prompt creativity and novelty. According to the broaden-and-build theory (Fredrickson, 2001), positive emotions stimulate the intellectual capabilities. Intellectually stimulated individuals are more prone to explore, create and innovate (Fredrickson and Branigan, 2005). The theory (Fredrickson, 2001) also proposes that, even if brief in nature, positive experiences change mental states, expand the horizons, broaden behavioural spheres and enhance creativity. Anchor (2010) opines that positivity fuels performance in many different ways. Isen (2005) argues that individuals with positive mood states interact with others more frequently, easily deal with complex situations, absorb new knowledge and are innovative.

Furthermore, people who find meaning in their work find their role more important in the workplace (Harpaz and Fu, 2002). The importance perception leads them to contribute more towards their work. They consider their role as more important and try to benefit their organisation (Chen et al., 2018). They are more satisfied and committed (Steger et al., 2012). They develop strong sense of identity and dignity, experience positivity, and are able to deal with stress. They enjoy their work and have high self-esteem (Britt et al., 2001). The positivity arising out of work makes one think out of the box, go beyond their roles, and hence, they are more likely to engage in novel activities (Zhang et al., 2020). According to Pratt and Ashforth (2003), individuals' work meaningfulness is a positive psychological experience that translates into innovativeness. Hence, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2a: Transformational leadership has a positive effect on work meaningfulness.

H2b: Work meaningfulness has a positive effect on innovative behaviour.

H2c: Work meaningfulness partially mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and innovative behaviour.

Moderating role of personal identification

Personal identification refers to the follower's identification with the leader (Zhu et al., 2013). A subordinate's identification with the leader is a phenomenon of self-definition based on the roles being performed and relations engaged in (Huang et al., 2014). It is also called relational identification (Sluss and Ashforth, 2007) and is different from social identification, which is based on membership with a group/organisation (Kark et al., 2003). In the definition of self, the subordinate includes supervisory relations as a salient dimension of relations. Through personal identification, a subordinate is involved in a process of self-expansion. When one engages in a process of self-extension, he/she includes the qualities into his/her personality of the individual to whom he/she identifies with. Hence, the follower, despite replacing his/her own sense of self, broadens his/her personality make-up (Sluss and Ashforth, 2007). According to Hobman et al. (2011), personal identification is "a self-categorisation process that involves an individual defining him or herself in terms of the attributes of the leader, shifting his or her focus on individual gains for the leader, and experiencing a high level of connection with the leader". Huang et al. (2014) points out that the phenomenon of personal identification occurs only if a leader is regarded as a significant other for the subordinate. Furthermore, personal identification manifests in two stages. First, it induces a follower's realisation that he/she keeps comparable values with the leader. Second, it evokes the follower to transform his/her self-concept so that his/her values and beliefs are aligned with the leader (Pratt, 1998). Followers' personal identification with a leader has been stated in literature (Sluss and Ashforth, 2007, Hobman et al., 2011), however, moderating influences of personal identification are yet to be discovered.

Interpersonal social cognitive theory by Andersen and Chen (2002) proposes that a higher level of integration of leader into follower's relational-self results in a lesser degree of discrepancy between the interests of both parties. Sluss and Ashforth (2007) observe that the followers who identify highly with their leaders are more committed to the vision of the leader. Such followers align their interest with the vision of the leadership. Hence, their behaviour reflects the wishes of their leader. In this regard, Van Knippenberg et al. (2004) has also pointed that identification with a leader enhances the chances of the follower being influenced by the leader (Van Knippenberg et al., 2004). Wang and Rode (2010) also state that a follower's personal identification with the leader would enhance the effects of transformational leadership on the follower's creativity and hence recommend further empirical inquiry. According to Zhu et al. (2013), personal identification with the leader is also a motivational state and may directly influence the follower outcomes including innovativeness. With this discussion, we propose the following hypothesis:

H3: Higher personal identification with a leader strengthens the effect of transformational leadership on employee innovative behaviour.

The above discussion is summed up in the following diagram (see Figure 1):

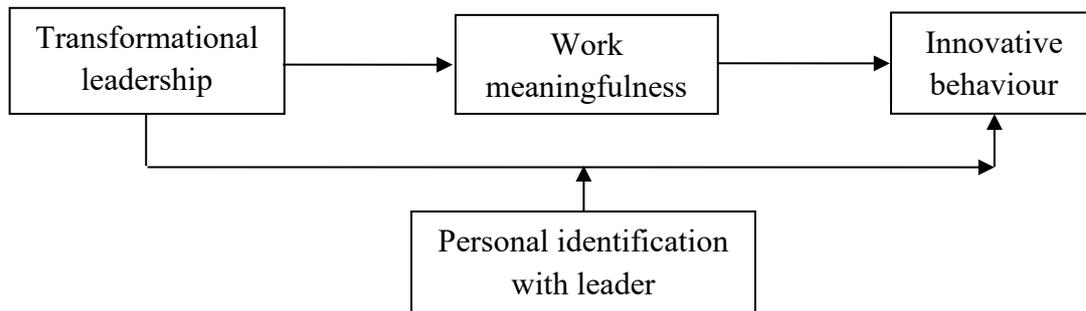


Figure 1: Conceptual Model

Methods and Procedures

Participants

This research was conducted in the Gujrat-Sialkot-Gujranwala industrial cluster of Pakistan. The major industries in this triangle are the fan industry, shoe industry, sports industry, surgical industry, leather industry, steel industry and the electronics industry. Individuals employed in the industry of the industrial triangle were the population of this study.

Rule of thumb (Hair et al., 2010) was followed to determine the sample size. Against each item, we recruited ten (10) respondents. Hence, the sample size was counted as 310. We took two measures to collect the data. These measures were adopted to reduce the problem of method bias. First, the data were collected from supervisor-subordinate dyads. The questionnaire, consisting of transformational leadership, work meaningfulness and personal identification, was administered to subordinates. The questionnaire consisting of innovative behaviour was filled out by the supervisors. Second, we also added a temporal order of precedence in the collection of data. At T1 (Time 1), data on transformational leadership, work meaningfulness and personal identification were collected with follower-reports. Data on the outcome variable, innovative behaviour, were collected at T2 (Time 2) and were supervisor-reported. A gap of 30 days occurred in the collection of data at both time points.

The sample consisted of 71.3 percent males and 28.7 percent females. This confirms to our general observation of male dominated workforce employed in the golden triangle. Mean age of the respondents were 32.1 years. In total 53 units were covered in the survey. The sample represented 37 percent surgical units, 21 percent sports goods manufacturing units, 27 percent electrical manufacturing units and 15 percent were leather and leather products units.

Measures

All measures were adopted from well-established scales and were measured on a five-point Likert scale.

Innovative behaviour. We used a nine-item scale presented by Janssen (2000) to measure the

innovative behaviour. Janssen reported the reliability of this scale as: $\alpha=0.93$.

Work meaningfulness. For measuring work meaningfulness, we adopted the scale established by Spreitzer (1995). It was adopted because of a decent reliability value as reported by Spreitzer: $\alpha=0.83$.

Transformational leadership. We measured transformational leadership with the help of an instrument developed by Bass and Avolio (1997). There were twelve items in total, three for each dimension. Bass and Avolio reported the reliability of the scale as: $\alpha=0.93$.

Personal identification with leader. A scale consisting of seven items, established by Shamir et al. (2000), was adopted for this study. Reliability of this scale was: $\alpha=0.91$.

Analyses and Results

We followed structural equations modelling, a two-step approach (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988). First, construct reliability and validity were established through the assessment of the measurement model. Secondly, hypotheses were tested by running structural regression.

Assessment of measurement model

Model fit. In our hypothesised measurement model, there were four latent variables; innovative behaviour, transformational leadership, work meaningfulness and personal identification. Both innovative behaviour and transformational leadership were second-order constructs with three (3) and four (4) dimensions, respectively. Work meaningfulness and personal identification were first order constructs. Apart from the hypothesised measurement model, we conducted four different confirmatory factor analyses. The purpose was to explore if there exist any alternative explanations of our measurement structure. This technique has been recommended by Shah and Goldstein (2006). The following table (see Table 1) reports the results of model fit in all cases.

Table 1: Measurement model fit

Model	Structure	CMIN/df	CFI	TLI	RMSEA
Model 1	Hypothesised	1.354	0.965	0.954	0.047
Model 2	IB as first order construct	2.741	0.903	0.899	0.057
Model 3	TL as first order construct	3.210	0.891	0.871	0.066
Model 4	Both TL and IB first order constructs	3.672	0.883	0.878	0.071
Model 5	All factors combined into single construct	4.513	0.861	0.840	0.088
Criteria*		<3	>.90	>.90	<.08

CMIN/df = Normed Chi-Square, CFI = Comparative Fit index, TLI = Tucker-Lewis Index, RMSEA = Root Mean Square of Error Approximation *

Loadings, reliability and validity. The table (see Table 2) following reports construct reliability and validity. Internal consistency reliability was established through composite reliability. Hair et al. (2010) recommends a threshold of 0.70 for composite reliability. All the constructs established composite reliability. For assessing convergent and discriminant validities, we adopted the technique suggested by Fornell and Larcker (1981). All the constructs established validity also (see Table 2). All correlations were also significant.

Table 2: Reliability, validity and correlations

Constructs	CR	AVE	Inter-construct correlations			
			1	2	3	4
1. IB	0.843	0.522	(0.72)	0.538***	0.472***	0.489***
2. TL	0.872	0.538		(0.73)	0.429***	0.361***
3. WM	0.902	0.674			(0.82)	0.493***
4. PI	0.882	0.613				(0.78)
Mean			3.971	3.107	3.183	3.191
SD			1.624	1.317	1.568	1.708

Cut off: CR>0.7; AVE>.50; CR=Composite Reliability, AVE=Average Variance Extracted, ***p<.001, IB=Innovative Behaviour, TL=Transformational Leadership, WM=Work Meaningfulness, PI=Personal Identification

Test of method bias. Podsakoff et al. (2003) recommends a Common Latent Factor (CLF) method to assess common method variance. A common latent factor was added to the measurement model. The model fit in this case (CMIN/df= 1.373, CFI= 0.933, TLI=0.922, RMSEA=0.053) did not show any significant shift. Further, the difference between loadings with a common latent factor and without a common latent factor were lesser than 0.20. Hence, we are confident that the data did not have any method bias.

Hypotheses Testing

Hypotheses (direct effect and mediating effects) were tested by running structural regression in SPSS AMOS 21. Control variables: age, gender, qualification and tenure, were also added. Before analysing the significance of path coefficients, we resorted to the fit indices first. The fitness of the hypothesised model alone, and also after the addition of control variables, were assessed. The model showed an appropriate fit to the data (see Table 3).

Table 3: Structural regression model fit

Model	CMIN/df	CFI	TLI	RMSEA
Hypothesised	1.361	0.989	0.957	0.043
With control variables	1.871	0.953	0.931	0.047
Cut-off Values	CMIN/df<3	CFI>.90	TLI>.90	RMSEA<.08

Control variables=age, gender, qualification, tenure

H1 proposed that transformational leadership has a positive effect on innovative behaviour. The results support the hypothesis. There is a statistically significant effect of transformational leadership on innovative behaviour ($\beta=0.371$, $p<.05$). The model explained 33.9 percent variance ($R^2=0.339$). H2a proposed that transformational leadership has a positive effect on

work meaningfulness. The result shows that the effect is positive and statistically significant ($\beta=0.328$, $p<.05$). Furthermore, transformational leadership explains 30.7 percent variance in work meaningfulness. H2b proposed that work meaningfulness has a positive effect on innovative behaviour. This effect was also proved statistically significant ($\beta=0.403$, $p<.05$). Work meaningfulness explained 25 percent variance in innovative behaviour (see Table 4).

Table 4: Hypotheses results-direct effects

Dependent variable	Paths	Standardised path coefficients	p-value	R ²
Innovative Behaviour	TL→IB	0.221	.001	0.196
	WM→IB	0.403	.001	
Work Meaningfulness	TL→WM	0.328	.001	0.307

* $p<.05$, ** $p<.01$, *** $p<.001$

H2c proposed that the positive effect of transformational leadership on innovative behaviour is mediated by the work meaningfulness. To check the mediating effects, we performed bootstrapping in AMOS 21 and commanded for the indirect effects. We used 10000 bootstrap sample with a 95 percent bias corrected confidence interval. The results reveal that indirect effect was statistically significant ($\beta=0.140$, $p<0.001$) and different from zero, since the upper bound and lower bound of the confidence interval ranged between (LCI=0.076, UCI=0.223).

In order to probe further, whether mediation was full or partial, we checked the significance of the direct path (TL→IB). Despite the inclusion of an indirect path (TL→WM→IB), the direct path remained significant. Hence, we infer that our hypothesis was partially supported, as the mediation was partial (see Table 5).

Table 5: Results of mediation

Effects	Point of estimate	SE	BC 95 % CI		p-value	Mediation observed
			Lower	Upper		
Direct effect (TL→IB)	0.107	0.062	0.014	0.181	0.001	
Indirect effect (TL→WM→IB)	0.137	0.034	0.079	0.216	0.001	
Total effect	0.244	0.056	0.131	0.353	0.001	Partial

Mediator=Work Meaningfulness, Bootstrap sample=10000

BC=Bias Corrected, CI= Confidence Interval

H3 proposed that personal identification with a leader moderates the effect of transformational leadership on innovative behaviour such that when personal identification is higher the strength of relationship is higher, and vice versa. We conducted moderation analysis using Process Macro for SPSS by Hayes (2012). The results provide that personal identification interacts with transformational leadership and thus enhances innovative behaviour ($\beta=0.178$ $p<=0.001$). Further, the bias corrected confidence interval obtained through bootstrapping shows that these results were statistically different from zero (LCI=0.101, UCI=0.253). Hence, we have enough evidence not to reject H3 (see Table 6).

Further, we probed the interaction through interaction plotting. The figure (see Figure 2) shows that while the personal identification with a leader shows an increasing trend, there occurs an upward movement in the innovative behaviour of employees as a consequence of transformational leadership.

Table 6: Moderating effects

Effects	Point of estimate	SE	BC 95 % CI		p-value
			Lower	Upper	
TL	0.204	0.013	0.108	0.279	0.001
PI	0.143	0.017	0.089	0.201	0.001
TL x PI	0.178	0.034	0.101	0.253	0.001

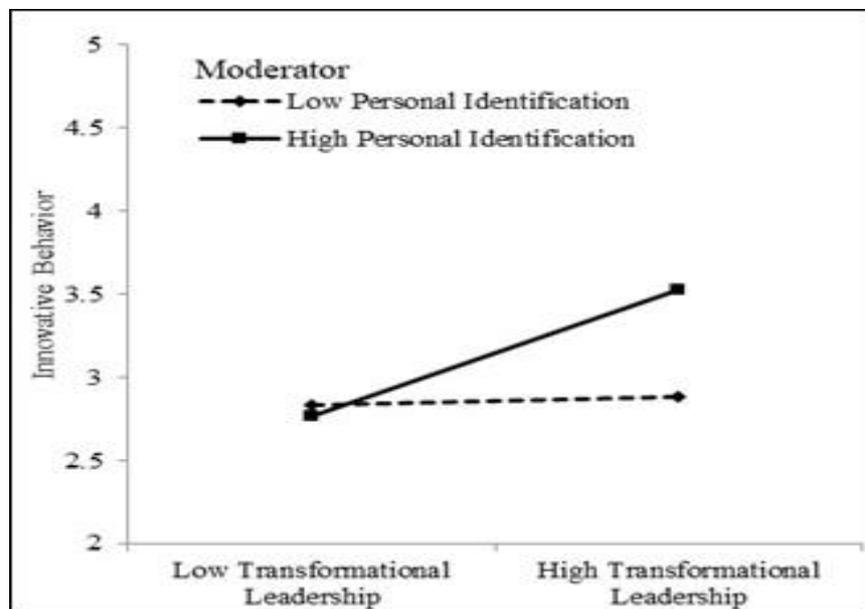


Figure 2: Moderating effect of personal identification

Discussion and Implications

Theoretical implications

This study has made important contributions to literature on innovative behaviour, transformational leadership, work meaningfulness and personal identification with leaders.

First, this study uses a theory of positive emotions (Fredrickson, 2001) as its underlying framework and brings empirical support for this theory, whereas earlier studies on transformational leadership and innovative behaviour were primarily based on motivational perspectives (Gumusluoglu and Ilsev, 2009, Choi et al., 2016). Transformational leadership is a positive behaviour, builds positive emotions/attitudes such as work meaningfulness, and

leads to positive behaviour, such as innovativeness. This empirical study also provides external validity to the theory of positive emotions (Fredrickson, 2001) in a non-Western context.

Second, Gumusluoğlu and Ilsev (2009) and Bass et al. (2003) focused on organisational level outcomes of transformational leadership. We focus on individual level outcome of innovative behaviour, thus, furthering the literature both on transformational leadership and individual innovative behaviour. The findings confirm that the transformational behaviours of leaders have implications for innovativeness in organisations (Choi et al., 2016). Further, we accumulate the evidence from the hospitality sector of Pakistan.

Third, work meaningfulness has been studied as an intervening mechanism, for the first time, in the relationship between innovative behaviour and transformational leadership. Ghadi et al. (2013) studied the mediating role of work engagement. Choi et al. (2016) investigated the mediating role of knowledge sharing. This enhances our understanding of the role of work meaningfulness. Transformational leaders make work meaningful for their followers. Followers while inferring meaning out of their work put their innovative potential toward the organisation.

Fourth, this research makes significant contributions to identification literature. Alike the organisational identification and group identification, this study proves that personal identification with leaders also strengthens the follower outcomes such as innovativeness. Particularly, it relates to the investigation of the moderating role of personal identification with leaders. Earlier, Miao et al. (2012) studied the role of personal identification with leaders as a mediating variable. We take personal identification as a situational condition. In an organisational setting, it is highly likely that followers develop identification with their leaders given the behaviour, charisma, profile and stature of the leaders. Such an identification would interact with the attitude of the leader to influence the behaviours of the follower. Our findings provide that when followers had a higher level of identification with the leader, the effect of transformational leadership on the innovative behaviour of the followers was strengthened. These findings can be explained by analogising with the group-engagement model (Tyler and Blader, 2003). The model proposes that the level to which one identifies with the group has a direct effect on an individual's attitudes and behaviours. The model provides that those who identify with the group strongly are intrinsically motivated to contribute to collective success. Similarly, in the presence of feelings of identification, the contributions of followers of transformational leaders are strengthened further.

Lastly, most of the research evidence on leadership and innovative behaviour has hailed from a Western context. The conduct of this study in the Pakistani context enhances the validity of models involving innovative behaviour and transformational leadership.

Practical implications

We recommend a few guidelines for practicing managers. Given the competitive marketplace in the present times, managers must understand the significance of innovative behaviour of employees for improved organisational performance. In order to enhance the innovative behaviour of followers, leaders themselves need a change in their own behaviour. As the results suggest, managers must adopt transformational behaviours, including inspirational motivation, individualised consideration, idealised influence and intellectual stimulation. When a manager practices these behaviours, the followers will find meaningfulness in their work. Hence, transformational behaviours of a manager would not only have implications for innovativeness but also for other beneficial organisational outcomes such as performance, satisfaction and commitment with the organisation. In this regard, organisations are recommended to integrate the programs for the enhancement of transformational skills in their leadership development programs.

Second, we showed that personal identification with a leader would enhance the influence of transformational leadership on innovative behaviour. Employees only develop identification with those having a higher level of knowledge, skills and expertise, and with those whom they consider role models in their field. It is a general observation that people look out for an ideal role model in their life in almost all life settings, ranging from their social circles to political philosophies to workplace scenarios. In the workplace situation, they would keenly observe the behaviours of their manager and would try to identify with those whom they find as more iconic figures. This entrusts a great responsibility on the shoulders of the manager to gain those skills and knowledge and adopt such behaviours that their followers idealise about. This personal identification with the leader strengthens those behaviours which the followers engage in.

Conclusion

The generalisability of this research might be limited and biased due to some design issues. First, the data was collected using cross-sectional design. Though we managed to create temporal order by the collection of responses on independent and dependent variables with a gap of 30 days, we still cannot claim for the causality to have really occurred. For future research, we recommend the application of longitudinal design.

As a modification to the conceptual model, there should be an exploration of more mediating and moderating mechanisms relating to transformational leadership and innovative behaviour. For instance, transformational leader behaviours are instrumental in establishing trust among followers. Higher levels of mutual trust between supervisors and subordinates may lead employees to experiment with incorporating novel ideas into their work. Further, employees who are open to experience are usually deemed to be more innovative. Therefore, openness to experience may be a possible moderating variable in such a framework.

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