



Transformational Leadership and Its Impact on Organizational Commitment During Change Management

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ABSTRACT

This research investigates the impact of transformational leadership on employee organizational commitment during significant organizational change, drawing on established theories and empirical data. Building on the frameworks of Burns (1978) and Bass (1985) for transformational leadership, and Meyer and Allen's (1991) model of organizational commitment, the study explores how leaders' visionary and supportive behaviors influence affective, normative, and continuance commitment within the context of change management. A quantitative survey was conducted with 346 employees from diverse backgrounds, measuring perceptions of transformational leadership, organizational commitment, and change management practices on a 1-5 Likert scale. The results revealed generally positive perceptions across all constructs, with mean scores of 4.15 for transformational leadership, 4.22 for organizational commitment, and 3.25 for change management, indicating a supportive environment for change initiatives. Regression analyses provided clear evidence that transformational leadership significantly predicts all three forms of commitment. The strongest effect was observed for normative commitment ($\beta = 0.42$, $R^2 = 0.38$, $p < 0.001$), followed by continuance ($\beta = 0.29$, $R^2 = 0.17$, $p < 0.001$) and affective commitment ($\beta = 0.15$, $R^2 = 0.08$, $p < 0.001$). This pattern suggests that transformational leaders are especially effective in fostering a sense of duty and loyalty, while also positively influencing emotional attachment and retention. To further understand the mechanisms at play, the study examined whether organizational change management (OCM) mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and commitment. While transformational leadership was a strong predictor of OCM ($\beta = 0.90$, $R^2 = 0.76$, $p < 0.001$), OCM did not significantly mediate the effect of leadership on any form of commitment. These findings highlight that the direct influence of transformational leaders is more substantial than the indirect effect through formal change management processes. These results align with and extend established change management frameworks such as Lewin's Unfreeze–Change–Refreeze model, Kotter's 8-Step Change Model, and the ADKAR model. The evidence underscores the pivotal role of transformational leaders in driving employee commitment during organizational transitions. While structured change management remains important, it is the direct, personal influence of transformational leaders that most powerfully shapes commitment outcomes. This insight emphasizes the need for organizations to develop transformational leadership capabilities to achieve successful and sustainable change.

Keywords: Transformational leadership, Employee commitment, Organizational stability, Change management.

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INTRODUCTION

Modern organizations face constant and rapid changes owing to technological advancements, shifting markets, and growing global competition. To navigate this, they must adopt flexible and effective change management strategies. Employee commitment is crucial for successfully implementing new initiatives and maintaining performance levels. Without it, organizations risk resistance, lower productivity, and higher turnover rates. Strong leadership plays a key role in shaping

culture and guiding teams through transitions. Among various leadership styles, transformational leadership, with its inherent emphasis on inspiring, motivating, and providing individualized support to followers, is widely posited as a particularly efficacious approach in these contexts. It is important to acknowledge that organizational change, while indispensable for growth and evolution, is not inherently benign. It carries inherent risks and can, without judicious

and effective management, lead to adverse outcomes for the organization and its personnel. This inherent potential for disruption underscores the profound necessity for capable leadership during transitional phases. The ability of leaders to navigate these periods, mitigating potential harm and ensuring positive outcomes, becomes paramount, thereby justifying a focused examination of leadership's influence during such turbulent times.

The primary objective of this study is to explore the effect of Transformational leadership on Organisational Commitment, with a specific focus on understanding the mediating mechanisms that facilitate this relationship. By integrating recent empirical research and established theoretical frameworks, this article offers actionable insights for leaders and HR professionals aiming to leverage Transformational leadership to cultivate a more committed workforce. Furthermore, it contributes to the growing body of literature on Transformational Leadership by exploring its relevance and applicability across diverse cultural contexts, thereby addressing a significant gap in existing research. The article is structured as follows. The first section provides a comprehensive review of the literature on Transformational Leadership and Organisational commitment, highlighting key theoretical frameworks and empirical findings. The second section outlines the research methodology, including data collection and analysis techniques. The third section presents the findings, followed by a discussion of their implications for theory and practice. The final section concludes with limitations and directions for future research, emphasizing the need for further exploration of Transformational leadership as a driver of employee commitment in a globalized workplace.

Theoretical Background

In today's fast-changing business world, organizations often go through changes to stay competitive. However, for any change to be successful, employees need to be committed and motivated to support it. One key factor that can influence employee commitment during such times is leadership—especially Transformational Leadership (TL).

Transformational Leadership Theory

Transformational leadership theory, a cornerstone of contemporary leadership studies, was initially developed by Burns through his analysis of political leaders.^[1] He characterized it as a dynamic process where “one or more persons engage with others in such a way that leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality”. This foundational concept was subsequently expanded and refined by Bass and other scholars, including Avolio and Bass, Bass and Avolio, Bennis and Nanus and Tichy and Devanna specifically for application within organizational contexts.^[2-5] Their work focused on the intricate exchanges and relationships between leaders and followers within the organizational setting. The central premise of transformational leadership lies in the leader's extraordinary ability to motivate

followers to accomplish outcomes that extend beyond their initial expectations. These leaders inspire and influence their subordinates by articulating compelling visions and helping them to envision appealing future outcomes for the organization. Bass further delineated transformational leadership into four key components:^[2]

- Idealized Influence – They lead by example and earn trust and respect.
- Inspirational Motivation – Leaders articulate a compelling vision that motivates employees.
- Intellectual Stimulation – They encourage innovation and creative problem-solving.
- Individualized Consideration – They pay attention to each employee's needs and help them grow.

Research suggests that transformational leadership fosters employee commitment by aligning individual values with organizational goals, thereby enhancing motivation and engagement.^[6] This leadership style can have a strong positive effect on how employees feel about their work and their organization, especially during times of change.

Employee commitment

Employee commitment refers to how emotionally attached, loyal, and dedicated employees are to their organization. According to Meyer and Allen's model, there are three types of commitment:^[7]

- Affective Commitment – Emotional attachment to the organization.
- Continuance Commitment – Perceived cost of leaving the organization.
- Normative Commitment – Sense of obligation to remain.

Transformational leaders enhance affective commitment by fostering trust and psychological safety, which encourages employees to embrace change. Transformational leaders are especially good at building *affective commitment* by helping employees feel valued, involved, and aligned with the organization's goals. This makes employees more likely to support change.^[8]

Change management frameworks

Effective change management is critical in ensuring that transformational leadership initiatives lead to lasting employee commitment. Several models offer structured approaches to managing transitions:

- *Lewin's Change Model (Unfreeze–Change–Refreeze)*

This model emphasizes preparing the organization for change, implementing new strategies, and then consolidating these changes to ensure sustainability. The role of transformational leadership is pivotal at each stage, particularly in ‘unfreezing’ outdated practices and forging a new path forward.

- *Kotter's 8-Step Change Model*

Kotter's framework focuses on creating urgency, guiding a vision, and enabling employee participation throughout the change process. Transformational leaders excel in these areas by engaging employees and reducing resistance.

- **ADKAR Model**

Emphasizing individual readiness, the ADKAR model—comprising Awareness, Desire, Knowledge, Ability, and Reinforcement—aligns closely with transformational leadership initiatives that prioritize communication, empowerment, and follow-up.

Integrating Complementary Theoretical Perspectives

- **Social Exchange Theory:** This theory posits that positive exchanges between leaders and employees cultivate reciprocal loyalty. When transformational leaders invest in their teams through meaningful support and inspirational communication, employees are more likely to reciprocate with dedication and commitment.
- **Self-Determination Theory:** Focusing on intrinsic motivation, this theory underscores the importance of satisfying the basic psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Transformational leadership naturally aligns with these needs by encouraging employee innovation, which in turn reinforces their commitment during times of change.
- **Practical Implications:** Combining these perspectives helps explain not only how transformational leadership drives employee commitment, but also why employees remain engaged and willing to participate in the change process. This integrated approach provides a robust theoretical foundation for examining the dynamic interplay between leadership behaviors and employee attitudes.

These models provide a roadmap for integrating leadership theory with practical change management, ensuring that employee commitment is maintained even in turbulent times. Transformational leaders play a crucial role in reducing resistance and enhancing adaptability by creating a shared vision and empowering employees.^[9] This study builds on these ideas to explore how transformational leadership can strengthen employee commitment during organizational change, filling a gap in the existing research and offering useful insights for both scholars and practitioners.

Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

The extant literature underscores the pivotal role of transformational leadership in shaping employee commitment during periods of organizational change. Grounded in the seminal works of Burns and Bass, transformational leadership is characterized by its core dimensions—idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration—which together foster an environment ripe for inspiring and empowering employees. This leadership paradigm not only catalyzes change but also deepens employee commitment by aligning personal values with broader organizational objectives. In this context, employee commitment is understood as a multifaceted construct, comprised of affective, continuance, and normative components, each subject to varying influences during change processes.

Transformational leadership, first introduced by Burns and further refined by Bass, has become one of the most influential leadership theories in contemporary organizational research.^[1,2] The model emphasizes the ability of leaders to inspire, intellectually stimulate, and individually support employees in ways that transcend transactional exchanges. Bass and Avolio categorized transformational leadership into four components:^[4] idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. These components are widely acknowledged for their positive influence on employee attitudes, behaviors, and organizational outcomes. Empirical studies have consistently shown that transformational leaders foster trust, enhance team performance, and improve job satisfaction.^[9-11] More importantly, such leaders are particularly effective in contexts characterized by volatility and change, as they provide vision, reassurance, and support that help employees navigate uncertainty.^[12,13]

Employee commitment has been extensively studied as a key driver of organizational performance and employee retention. The most widely accepted framework is Meyer and Allen's i.e. Three-Component Model, which includes: Affective commitment, Continuance commitment, and Normative commitment.^[14] Among these, affective commitment has been found to have the strongest association with positive employee outcomes such as job performance, organizational citizenship behavior, and willingness to accept change.^[15] Scholars have also found that leadership style is a key predictor of affective and normative commitment.^[16,17]

Numerous empirical studies suggest a significant positive relationship between transformational leadership and employee commitment.^[18,19] Transformational leaders influence affective commitment by aligning organizational values with individual values, thereby fostering identification with the organization.^[20] Furthermore, individualized consideration helps strengthen interpersonal relationships, while intellectual stimulation encourages participation and innovation, both of which contribute to stronger employee engagement and commitment. Research by Nguni et al. found that transformational leadership was a stronger predictor of employee commitment than transactional leadership, particularly in times of organizational restructuring or strategic change.^[21]

Organizational change, whether planned or emergent, often triggers uncertainty and resistance among employees.^[22] Leadership plays a pivotal role in managing these reactions by providing clarity, fostering trust, and maintaining morale. Transformational leadership, with its focus on vision and individualized support, is particularly well-suited to mitigating resistance and fostering commitment during change initiatives.^[23,24] Some studies have shown that transformational leadership can help buffer the negative effects of change-related stress by promoting psychological safety and resilience.^[25] Yet, there is still limited research to explain *how* and *under what conditions* transformational leadership fosters commitment in dynamic and diverse organizational settings.

Building on this foundation, several complementary theoretical perspectives further enrich our understanding. Social Exchange Theory, for instance, suggests that when leaders invest in meaningful relationships and demonstrate genuine support, employees reciprocate through heightened loyalty and commitment. Similarly, Self-Determination Theory emphasizes that when transformational leaders cater to employees' intrinsic needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness, this catalyzes internal motivation that is critical during organizational transitions. Together, these frameworks not only explain how leadership behaviors directly impact employee commitment but also illuminate the psychological mechanisms underlying this dynamic interplay.

Despite the breadth of literature on transformational leadership and employee commitment, several critical research gaps remain:

- Much of the foundational research on transformational leadership has been conducted in Western contexts, raising questions about its universal applicability.^[26] In culturally diverse environments, such as India's private sector, leadership effectiveness is influenced by cultural values like collectivism, power distance, and respect for authority.^[27,28] Some studies suggest that transformational leadership may need to be adapted to fit local cultural expectations, but empirical evidence in Indian organizational settings remains sparse.^[29]
- Few studies have examined the *mechanisms* through which transformational leadership influences employee commitment during organizational change. Mediating variables such as Organisational Change Management remain underexplored.
- Furthermore, emerging issues such as digital transformation, spiritual intelligence, and the moderating role of organizational culture remain underexplored, suggesting a complex interplay that warrants further empirical investigation.

In response to these gaps, the present study sets out with three primary objectives. First, it aims to explore the impact of transformational leadership on the distinct dimensions of employee commitment—*affective*, *normative*, and *continuance*—during periods of change. This objective directly addresses the gap in the literature regarding the multidimensional nature of employee commitment. Second, the study seeks to investigate the moderating role of Organisational change management, on the relationship between transformational leadership and employee commitment.

Based on these objectives, the research questions guiding the study include:

- **RQ1:** What are the differential impacts of transformational leadership on affective, normative, and continuance commitment during organizational change?
- **RQ2:** How do the effects of transformational leadership on employee commitment evolve over the change process?

To address these research questions, the following hypotheses have been formulated:

- **Hypothesis 1 (H1):** Transformational leadership will

have a significantly positive influence on employees' affective commitment during organizational change, as the visionary and supportive behaviors inherent in this leadership style foster strong emotional bonds with the organization.

- **Hypothesis 2 (H2):** Transformational leadership will also positively impact normative commitment, as leaders who communicate shared values and ethical standards can instill a sense of duty and responsibility among employees.
- **Hypothesis 3 (H3):** The relationship between transformational leadership and continuance commitment will be weaker compared to the other dimensions, given that continuance commitment is largely determined by perceived costs of leaving rather than by inspirational leadership behaviors.
- **Hypothesis 4 (H4):** The positive effects of transformational leadership on employee commitment will be mediated by organisational change management.

By explicitly linking these research gaps to the study's objectives, the present research will offer a more nuanced understanding of how transformational leadership operates across different facets of employee commitment and under varying contextual conditions. This, in turn, will contribute theoretical advancements and provide practical recommendations for effective leadership practices during the turbulent phases of organizational change.

Conceptual Model

Drawing from these arguments, Figure 1 presents a simple conceptual model. The model shows that Transformational Leadership improves organizational commitment in two ways. First, it has a direct impact on commitment. Second, it influences commitment indirectly through Organisational Change. In other words, TL creates an environment where employees are not only more adaptable during change but also more committed to organizational success.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Design

In this study, we used a convenience sampling method. This non-probability approach allowed us to select participants based on how easily they could be reached and their willingness to participate.^[30] Although this method limits how much we can generalize the findings, it was practical for reaching full-time employees from various sectors (such as technology, healthcare, and education) within our time and resource constraints. This approach also ensured that we gathered perspectives from different organizational levels, ranging from entry-level staff to senior management.

We focused on full-time employees across these industries to keep the sample homogeneous. The only requirement for participation was that respondents had to be actively engaged in a full-time role. In total, we collected 346 responses through an online survey using Google Forms over three months. Participants were invited via email and social media, and the invitation letter explained the study's purpose, assured

confidentiality, and emphasized that participation was voluntary. Table 1 provides an overview of the participants' demographic characteristics.

The questionnaire was divided into three main sections: (1) spiritual intelligence, (2) spiritual well-being, and (3) employee engagement. All questions were measured on a five-point Likert scale, with 1 indicating "strongly disagree" and 5 indicating "strongly agree."

Transformational Leadership (TL)

TL was measured using 7 items adapted from Bass & Avolio - MLQ Short Form [4]. These items were designed to capture various dimensions of transformational leadership, including the ability to find a compelling vision, inspire motivation, stimulate innovative thinking, and provide individualized support. The items included:

- "My leader communicates a clear vision for the future"
- "My leader motivates me to achieve ambitious goals"
- "My leader encourages innovation and new ideas among team members"
- "My leader acts with fairness and integrity in decision-making"
- "My leader recognises individual contributions and provides tailored support"
- "My leader actively facilitates and values team discussions on innovative ideas"
- "My leader demonstrates adaptability and sets an example for embracing organizational changes"

Organisational Change Management (OCM)

Change Management was assessed through 05 questions Adapted from Herold *et al.*^[23] These questions covered aspects such as effective communication of changes, clarity of implementation strategy, perceived organizational support during change, understanding of change alignment with goals, leadership's management of resistance, allocation of adequate resources, and how change management practices influenced confidence in leadership, engagement, and perception of leadership effectiveness. Measurement Items included:

- "Employees actively participate in planning and executing organisational change"
- "Employees concern during change are addressed"
- "The leadership communicates expected outcomes of change initiatives"
- "Employee feedbacks are incorporated into change processes"
- "The organisation provides sufficient resources and training to help employees effectively adapt to changes."

Organizational Commitment (5 items)

Affective, continuance and Normative commitments were measured as per scale adopted from Allen & Meyer Revised.^[31]

- "I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization"
- "I really feel as if this organization's problems are my own"
- "I do not feel like 'part of the family' at my organization (R)"

- "I do not feel 'emotionally attached' to this organization (R)"
- "This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me"
- "I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization (R)"

Normative Commitment Scales

- I do not feel any obligation to remain with my current employer. (R)
- Even if it were to my advantage, I do not feel it would be right to leave my organization now.
- I would feel guilty if I left my organization now.
- This organization deserves my loyalty.
- I would not leave my organization right now because I have a sense of obligation to the people in it
- I owe a great deal to my organization.

Continuance Commitment Scales

- Right now, staying with my organization is a matter of necessity as much as desire.
- It would be very hard for me to leave my organization right now, even if I wanted to.
- Too much of my life would be disrupted if I decided I wanted to leave my organization now
- I feel that I have too few options to consider leaving this organization.
- If I had not already put so much of myself into this organization, I might consider working elsewhere
- One of the few negative consequences of leaving this organization would be the scarcity of available alternatives

Data Analysis Procedures

The data analysis followed a five-stage sequence. First, preliminary screening was conducted to clean the dataset, address missing values, and flag outliers. Second, descriptive statistics—means and standard deviations—were calculated for Transformational Leadership, Organizational Commitment, and Change Management to capture central tendency and dispersion in employee perceptions. Third, scale quality was verified: internal consistency was assessed with Cronbach's α , while an exploratory factor analysis uncovered latent structure and a confirmatory factor analysis validated the measurement model (acceptable fit: CFI/TLI ≥ 0.90 ; RMSEA/SRMR ≤ 0.08). Fourth, Pearson correlations quantified the bivariate relationships among the three constructs, offering an initial view of their interconnections. Finally, the study hypotheses were tested with regression techniques: multiple regressions estimated the direct effects of Transformational Leadership on each commitment dimension (affective, normative, continuance), and moderated regressions—implemented via Hayes' PROCESS macro—examined whether organizational context conditioned these effects. Diagnostic checks for multicollinearity, heteroscedasticity, and common-method bias ensured the robustness of all findings, providing a rigorous empirical evaluation of the research model.

The structured and numerical nature of the survey responses, coupled with the clear categorization of questions into the three key constructs, renders the dataset highly suitable for robust quantitative analysis. This quantitative format is ideal for statistical methods such as descriptive statistics, correlation, and potentially regression, which are the most rigorous ways to empirically demonstrate relationships and potential influence, thereby directly addressing the core research objectives of this paper.

RESULTS

Descriptive Statistics of Key Constructs:

Table 1 reflects the Descriptive Statistics. The descriptive analysis of the survey data provides an initial overview of the perceived levels of transformational leadership, organizational commitment, and change management effectiveness among 346 participants. The scores are based on a 5-point Likert scale, where 5 represents the highest level of agreement or most positive perception.

Transformational Leadership has a mean score of 4.158 with a standard deviation of 0.769, indicating generally high ratings with moderate variability. Change Management shows the highest mean score at 4.224 with a standard deviation of 0.770, suggesting employees perceive change management practices quite positively. Organizational Commitment has the lowest mean score at 3.251 but the highest variability with a standard deviation of 1.293, indicating more diverse opinions about organizational commitment among respondents.

The mean for Transformational Leadership is 4.158, while for Change Management it is slightly higher at 4.224. This suggests that, on average, respondents rate their organization's change management practices a bit more favourably than transformational leadership behaviors. The mean for Organizational Commitment is notably lower at 3.251, indicating that employees feel less committed to the organization compared to how they perceive leadership and change management.

Looking at the variability, the standard deviation for Change Management is 0.77, which is very close to that of Transformational Leadership (0.769, not shown here but previously calculated). This means that responses for both constructs are similarly spread out around the mean, indicating moderate agreement among respondents. The coefficient of variation (CV) for Change Management is 18.23%, and for Transformational Leadership it is 18.49%. These similar values reinforce that both constructs have a comparable level of relative variability. In contrast, Organizational Commitment has a much higher CV at 39.77%. This means that not only is the average commitment lower, but there is also much greater diversity in how employees feel about their commitment to the organization.

When comparing means, the difference between Change Management and Transformational Leadership is small (0.066), showing that employees view these two areas almost equally positively. The gap between Transformational Leadership

Table 1: Descriptive statistics

<i>Descriptive statistics (Mean ± SD)</i>		
<i>Construct</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Standard deviation</i>
Transformational leadership	4.158	0.769
Organizational commitment	4.224	1.293
Change management	3.251	0.77

Transformational Leadership CV: 18.49%

Change Management CV: 18.23%

Organizational Commitment CV: 39.77%

and Organizational Commitment is larger (0.907), and the gap between Change Management and Organizational Commitment is even greater (0.973). This highlights a significant drop in positive sentiment when moving from perceptions of leadership and change management to feelings of commitment.

In summary, both transformational leadership and change management is perceived strong in organisations, with consistent and positive ratings. However, there is a clear opportunity to improve organizational commitment, as employees are less uniformly positive and more divided in their feelings about staying with the organization. This could be an area for further investigation and targeted interventions.

Scale Quality

Transformational Leadership and Change Management both show excellent reliability, with alpha values above 0.88. The three subdimensions of commitment—Affective, Continuance, and Normative Commitment—also demonstrate strong internal consistency, each with alpha values well above 0.78. The visualization at Fig 2,

shows that most respondents rate these constructs highly, with relatively few low outliers. The interquartile ranges are tight, especially for Continuance Commitment, indicating that most participants cluster around the upper end of the scale. These findings are evidence that employees in the sample perceive strong transformational leadership, effective change management, and high organizational commitment across all subdimensions. The high reliability (Cronbach's alpha) and strong central tendency support the validity of these scales for further inferential analysis, such as group comparisons or regression modelling.

Exploratory Factor Analysis

The suitability tests for Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) shows KMO: 0.9. Both the chi-square value and the p-value returned as (not a number). This can sometimes happen if there are issues with the data matrix, such as multicollinearity, constant columns, or numerical instability due to the size or structure of the data. Despite this, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure was excellent (0.91), and the EFA results were interpretable and meaningful. In practice, a high KMO and clear factor structure are strong indicators that data is suitable for factor analysis, even if Bartlett's test cannot be computed.

Table 2: Reliability statistics

Construct	Cronbach alpha	Num items
Transformational leadership	0.9155960218	7
Change management	0.8932828827	5
Affective commitment	0.8180009927	6
Continuance commitment	0.7971901664	6
Normative commitment	0.7971901664	6
Overall commitment	0.9480835236	18

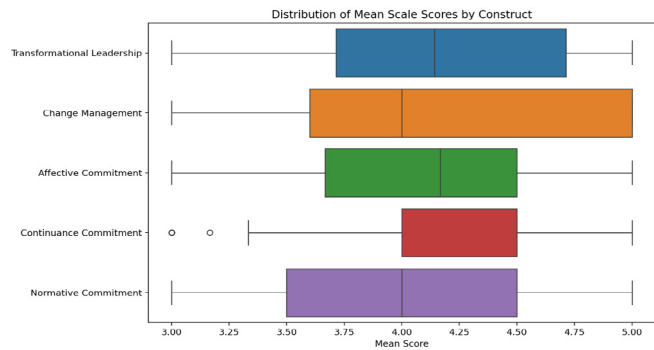
The scree plot and eigenvalues suggested 6 factors (all with eigenvalues > 1), which aligns with the theoretical structure of scale. Subsequently, EFA with 6 factors and varimax rotation was executed. The results showed how strongly each item relates to each factor. High values (typically > 0.4) indicate that an item is strongly associated with that factor. **The table below shows** the variance explained by each factor and the cumulative proportion of variance explained: Factor 1 explains about 24% of the variance, Factor 2 about 19%, and so on. The first six factors together explain about 70% of the total variance, which is quite strong for social science research. In summary, the scale demonstrates a clear multi-factor structure, with each factor capturing a meaningful portion of the variance in responses. This supports the validity of constructs and suggests that items are well-designed to measure distinct but related aspects of organizational commitment and leadership.

In Table 3 and 4 below, CFI (0.931): Indicates good fit (above 0.90). TLI (0.896): Slightly below the ideal cutoff (0.90), but very close. RMSEA (0.092): Slightly above the preferred threshold (0.08), but the 90% CI lower bound (0.071) is close to acceptable. SRMR (0.065): Well within the good fit range.

In summary, the three factors (visual, textual, speed) are distinct but moderately correlated, which is typical in psychological constructs. The fit indices suggest the model is a good representation of data. The factors themselves are distinct but related, which is typical in psychological measurement. The model fits the data reasonably well. CFI and SRMR are good, TLI is marginal, and RMSEA is a bit high but not extreme.

Correlation and Regression Analysis of Relationships

Each value in the Table 5 shows how strongly two constructs are related. Leadership and Change Management have a very strong positive correlation (0.87), meaning that respondents who rate their leaders highly also tend to perceive change management practices positively. Leadership is also strongly related to Affective Commitment (0.70) and Normative Commitment (0.64), suggesting that good leadership is associated with both emotional attachment and a sense of obligation to the organization. Affective Commitment and Normative Commitment are extremely closely linked (0.82), which is common in organizational research—employees who feel emotionally attached to their organization often also feel a sense of duty to stay. Continuance Commitment, which reflects staying out of necessity, is less strongly related to the other constructs, but still shows moderate positive correlations.

**Figure 1:** Mean scale scores of constructs**Table 3:** Fit analysis

Factor	Variance explained	Proportion
Factor1	0.2384504283	0.2384504283
Factor2	0.1949013646	0.4333517928
Factor3	0.1268304233	0.5601822161
Factor4	0.0622364338	0.6224186499
Factor5	0.045919495	0.6683381449
Factor6	0.0275332096	0.6958713545

Table 4: Model fit indices

Index	Value	Cutoff (Good Fit)
CFI	0.931	> 0.90
TLI	0.896	> 0.90
RMSEA	0.092	< 0.08
SRMR	0.065	< 0.08

The correlation table above reveals that Transformational Leadership (TL) has a moderate positive correlation with Normative Commitment (NC) ($r=0.62$), a moderate positive correlation with Continuance Commitment (CC) ($r=0.41$) and a weaker positive correlation with Affective Commitment (AC) ($r=0.27$). The scatterplots visually confirm these relationships, with the strongest linear trend between TL and NC, followed by TL and CC, and the weakest between TL and AC.

The regression analysis reveals that for affective commitment (AC), transformational leadership (TL) is a significant positive predictor ($\beta=0.15, p<0.001$), but the effect size is modest ($R^2=0.075$). This means TL explains about 7.5% of the variance in AC. For normative commitment (NC), TL is a much stronger predictor ($\beta=0.42, p<0.001$), with $R^2=0.38$. TL explains 38% of the variance in NC, indicating a substantial effect. For continuance commitment (CC), TL is also a significant predictor ($\beta=0.29, p<0.001$), but the effect is weaker than for NC ($R^2=0.17$). In summary, TL has the strongest effect on normative commitment, followed by continuance, and the

Table 5: Correlation between constructs

	Leadership	Change management	Affective commitment	Continuance commitment	Normative commitment
Leadership	1	0.8688782241	0.7009941396	0.4132817026	0.64069705
Change Management	0.8688782241	1	0.5863841633	0.4006287915	0.5417426278
Affective Commitment	0.7009941396	0.5863841633	1	0.3449536933	0.8233486913
Continuance Commitment	0.4132817026	0.4006287915	0.3449536933	1	0.3058173653
Normative Commitment	0.64069705	0.5417426278	0.8233486913	0.3058173653	1

weakest on affective commitment. All effects are statistically significant.

As per mediation analysis, the regression shows that Transformational Leadership (TL) is a very strong and significant predictor of Organizational Change Management (OCM), with $R^2=0.755$ and $\beta=0.90$ ($p<0.001$). This means TL explains 75.5% of the variance in OCM, indicating a very strong relationship.

The mediation analysis for each type of commitment (Affective, Normative, Continuance) reveals that the coefficients for OCM are not statistically significant for any of the commitment types (all p -values > 0.05), while TL remains a significant predictor in all models. This means that, although TL very strongly predicts OCM, OCM does not significantly predict any of the commitment outcomes when TL is included in the model. Thus, there is no evidence for a mediation effect of OCM in the relationship between TL and employee commitment in this dataset. It can therefore be concluded that TL significantly and positively predicts all three types of commitment, with the strongest effect on normative commitment. OCM is strongly predicted by TL, but does not mediate the effect of TL on commitment.

DISCUSSION

The first respondent in the dataset is a female, aged 26-35, at a senior-level position. Her responses reflect consistently high ratings across all leadership and organizational constructs. She

rated all leadership items (such as “My leader communicates a clear vision for the future,” “My leader motivates me to achieve ambitious goals,” and “My leader recognises individual contributions and provides tailored support”) at the maximum score of 5, indicating a very positive perception of her leader’s abilities in vision, motivation, fairness, support, and adaptability. Similarly, her ratings for change management items are also at the upper end of the scale, with scores of 5 for most items and a 4 for “Employees actively participate in planning and executing organisational change.” This suggests she perceives her organization as highly effective in communicating, supporting, and involving employees during change processes.

When it comes to organizational commitment, her responses continue this positive trend. She gave high scores (mostly 4s and 5s) to items reflecting affective commitment, such as “I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization” and “I really feel as if this organization’s problems are my own.” Her responses to continuance and normative commitment items are also high, indicating that she feels both a strong emotional attachment and a sense of obligation to remain with the organization, as well as perceiving significant costs and few alternatives to leaving. This pattern of responses is consistent with the overall trends observed in the Pearson correlation matrix for all constructs.

The strong positive correlations between leadership, change management, and both affective and normative commitment

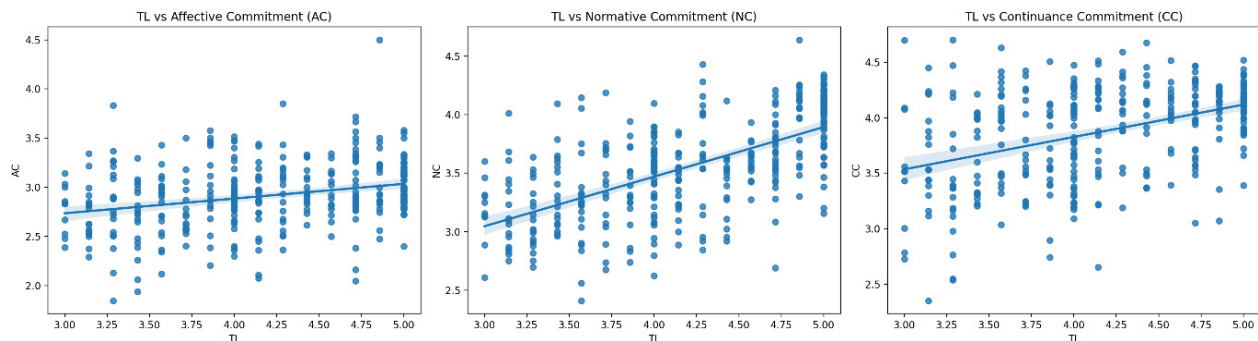


Figure 2: Construct relationship

suggest that employees who perceive strong leadership and effective change management are also more likely to feel emotionally attached to and obligated to their organization. The moderate correlation with continuance commitment indicates that while necessity plays a role, it is less central than emotional and normative factors.

In summary, the data from the first respondent exemplifies the broader pattern in the dataset: high-quality leadership and change management are closely linked to higher levels of organizational commitment, especially affective and normative commitment. This underscores the importance of leadership and change practices in fostering a committed workforce, and highlights how positive experiences in these areas can translate into stronger employee loyalty and retention.

The present study set out to examine the influence of transformational leadership (TL) on employees' affective, normative, and continuance commitment during organizational change, as well as the potential mediating role of organizational change management (OCM). The regression analyses revealed that TL was a significant positive predictor of all three forms of commitment. Notably, the effect of TL was strongest for normative commitment ($\beta=0.42$, $R^2=0.38$, $p<0.001$), indicating that leaders who communicate shared values and ethical standards are particularly effective in fostering a sense of duty and loyalty among employees. TL also significantly predicted continuance commitment ($\beta=0.29$, $R^2=0.17$, $p<0.001$) and, to a lesser extent, affective commitment ($\beta=0.15$, $R^2=0.08$, $p<0.001$), supporting the notion that inspirational leadership behaviors can influence employees' emotional attachment and perceived costs of leaving the organization, though the latter effect is weaker.

Further, the mediation analysis demonstrated that while TL was a very strong predictor of OCM ($\beta=0.90$, $R^2=0.76$, $p<0.001$), OCM did not significantly predict any form of commitment when TL was included in the model. This suggests that the positive effects of TL on employee commitment are largely direct, rather than being channelled through organizational change management practices. In other words, the visionary and supportive behaviors of transformational leaders appear to exert their influence on commitment independently of formal change management processes.

In conclusion, these findings highlight the central role of transformational leadership in shaping employee commitment during periods of organizational change, with the strongest impact observed for normative commitment. However, the anticipated mediating role of organizational change management was not supported in this sample, suggesting that leadership behaviors themselves may be the primary driver of commitment outcomes in this context.

Comparison with Existing Literature. The predicted finding of the study—that transformational leadership positively influences organizational commitment—is

consistent with existing research. Many studies have found that transformational leadership improves commitment within organizations. For example, Barling et al. and Koh et al. provided early evidence of this relationship, and more recent research by Cao and Le confirms that transformational leadership plays a significant role in shaping employees' commitment during organizational change [32, 33,34]. This study would further support these well-established ideas, especially within organizations facing change. The survey questions in our study match the key elements of transformational leadership (idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration), which strengthens the reliability of our measurement tool, as originally described by Bass [2]. In short, the survey data confirms these links and validate the existing theory. It shows how transformational leadership works in real-world settings during times of transition. This alignment between theory and data is crucial for understanding leadership in practice.

The findings of this study offer important insights into how transformational leadership interacts with established change management frameworks to influence employee commitment during organizational change. The results demonstrate that transformational leadership (TL) has a direct and significant positive effect on all three forms of commitment— affective, normative, and continuance—with the strongest impact observed for normative commitment. This aligns well with the core principles of major change management models, even though the mediation effect of organizational change management (OCM) was not statistically significant in this dataset.

Integration with Lewin's Change Model: Lewin's Unfreeze—Change—Refreeze model underscores the importance of preparing the organization for change, implementing new behaviors, and solidifying these changes. The strong direct effect of TL found in this study suggests that transformational leaders are especially effective in the 'unfreezing' stage, where they challenge the status quo and inspire readiness for change. Their ability to communicate a compelling vision and provide individualized support helps employees let go of old practices and embrace new directions, facilitating both the transition and the consolidation phases.

Integration with Kotter's 8-Step Change Model: Kotter's model emphasizes creating urgency, building a guiding coalition, and empowering broad-based action. The study's findings that TL most strongly predicts normative commitment indicate that transformational leaders are adept at instilling a sense of shared purpose and ethical responsibility, which are critical for building momentum and sustaining change. By directly engaging employees and fostering a sense of loyalty and obligation, transformational leaders help reduce resistance and drive the change process forward, as outlined in Kotter's steps.

Integration with the ADKAR Model: The ADKAR model focuses on individual change through Awareness, Desire, Knowledge, Ability, and Reinforcement. Transformational

leaders, as shown by the study, directly enhance employee commitment by raising awareness of the need for change, cultivating desire through inspirational motivation, and reinforcing new behaviors with ongoing support. The lack of a significant mediation effect for OCM suggests that, in this context, the personal influence of leaders may be more critical than formal change management processes in moving employees through the ADKAR stages.

In summary, the study validates the central role of transformational leadership as envisioned by leading change management frameworks. While structured change management practices are important, these results highlight that the direct influence of transformational leaders—through vision, support, and ethical guidance—may be the most crucial factor in fostering lasting employee commitment during organizational transitions. This underscores the need for organizations to invest in developing transformational leadership capabilities alongside formal change management strategies.

Theoretical and Practical Implications

The findings from this analysis offer important theoretical implications for understanding the dynamics between leadership, change management, and organizational commitment within organizations. The strong positive correlations observed between leadership, change management, and both affective and normative commitment suggest that effective leadership behaviors and robust change management practices are not only operational necessities but also foundational drivers of employees' emotional attachment and sense of obligation to their organizations. This supports and extends existing theories such as Meyer and Allen's Three-Component Model of Organizational Commitment, which posits that affective, continuance, and normative commitment are distinct yet interrelated constructs. The data indicate that leadership and change management practices are particularly influential in shaping affective and normative commitment, as evidenced by the high correlation coefficients (e.g., 0.70 between leadership and affective commitment, and 0.82 between affective and normative commitment). This implies that when employees perceive their leaders as visionary, supportive, and fair, and when they experience transparent and inclusive change processes, they are more likely to internalize organizational values and develop a strong sense of loyalty and moral obligation to stay.

Conversely, the more moderate correlations with continuance commitment highlight that while leadership and change management can influence employees' perceptions of the costs and alternatives associated with leaving, these factors are less central than emotional and normative drivers. This nuance reinforces the theoretical distinction between staying with an organization out of necessity versus desire or obligation. The results also suggest that interventions aimed at enhancing leadership quality and change management effectiveness may yield the greatest returns in fostering affective and normative commitment, rather than simply reducing

turnover by increasing perceived costs of leaving. Overall, these findings contribute to a more nuanced understanding of how organizational practices shape the psychological bonds employees form with their organizations, and underscore the value of investing in leadership development and participative change strategies to build a committed and resilient workforce.

The findings from this study can be meaningfully integrated with both Social Exchange Theory and Self-Determination Theory, offering a rich, multi-theoretical perspective on organizational commitment. Social Exchange Theory posits that relationships within organizations are built on reciprocal exchanges of resources, trust, and support. The strong positive correlations observed between leadership, change management, and both affective and normative commitment suggest that when employees perceive their leaders as supportive, fair, and communicative - especially during times of change - they are likely to feel valued and respected. This sense of being valued fosters a reciprocal sense of loyalty and obligation, as employees seek to "repay" the organization through increased commitment and engagement. The high levels of affective and normative commitment found in the data reflect this reciprocal dynamic, where positive organizational practices are met with strong emotional and moral bonds from employees.

At the same time, Self-Determination Theory emphasizes the importance of fulfilling basic psychological needs—autonomy, competence, and relatedness - for intrinsic motivation and well-being. The data show that effective leadership and participative change management are closely linked to higher affective and normative commitment, indicating that when employees experience autonomy (through involvement in change), competence (through adequate resources and support), and relatedness (through fair and supportive leadership), they are more likely to internalize organizational values and develop a genuine desire to remain. This internalization is reflected in the strong affective commitment scores and their close association with leadership and change management constructs. Thus, the findings illustrate how organizations that foster high-quality exchanges and support employees' psychological needs not only build trust and reciprocity (as per Social Exchange Theory) but also cultivate intrinsic motivation and deep-seated commitment (as per Self-Determination Theory), resulting in a more engaged and loyal workforce.

Practical Implications: The practical implications of these findings are significant for organizational leaders, HR professionals, and change agents aiming to foster a committed and resilient workforce. The strong positive relationships between leadership quality, effective change management, and both affective and normative commitment highlight the critical role that leaders play in shaping employees' attitudes and loyalty. Organizations should prioritize leadership development programs that cultivate visionary, supportive, and fair leaders, as these qualities are closely linked to employees' emotional attachment and sense of obligation to the organization. Additionally, the data underscore the importance

of transparent and participative change management practices. When employees are actively involved in change processes, feel their feedback is valued, and receive adequate resources and communication, they are more likely to internalize organizational goals and remain committed even during periods of transition.

The correlation matrix illustrates these relationships, showing how leadership and change management are strongly associated with affective and normative commitment, while continuance commitment is less influenced by these factors:

This pattern suggests that organizations seeking to enhance commitment should focus less on strategies that merely increase the perceived costs of leaving (continuance commitment) and more on building a positive, supportive environment that fulfils employees' psychological needs and fosters a sense of belonging and shared purpose. Practical steps may include regular leadership training, open forums for employee input during change, recognition programs, and clear communication of organizational vision and values. By investing in these areas, organizations can not only improve retention but also cultivate a workforce that is motivated, engaged, and aligned with organizational objectives, ultimately driving long-term success and adaptability.

CONCLUSION AND LIMITATIONS

In conclusion, the analysis reveals that high-quality leadership and effective change management are pivotal in fostering strong affective and normative commitment among employees, as evidenced by the robust positive correlations between these constructs. Employees who perceive their leaders as visionary, supportive, and fair, and who experience transparent and participative change processes, are more likely to develop deep emotional bonds and a sense of moral obligation to their organizations. This is further supported by the close association between affective and normative commitment, suggesting that these forms of commitment are mutually reinforcing and central to building a loyal and engaged workforce. In contrast, continuance commitment reflecting the perceived costs of leaving shows weaker associations with leadership and change management, indicating that emotional and normative drivers are more influential in shaping organizational loyalty.

However, several limitations should be considered when interpreting these findings. First, the data are cross-sectional and self-reported, which may introduce common method bias and limit the ability to draw causal inferences. The sample may not be fully representative of all organizational contexts, as it appears to be drawn from a specific sector or set of organizations, potentially limiting generalizability. Additionally, while the constructs were measured using established scales, cultural or organizational nuances may influence how respondents interpret and answer the items. The reliance on composite scores, while useful for summarizing constructs, may also mask important item-level variation or multidimensionality within each scale. Finally, the analysis focused on correlations, which capture linear relationships but do not account for potential mediating or moderating variables

that could further explain the dynamics between leadership, change management, and commitment.

Despite these limitations, the findings provide valuable insights for both theory and practice, highlighting the central role of leadership and change management in cultivating a committed workforce. Future research could address these limitations by employing longitudinal designs, expanding the sample to diverse organizational settings, and exploring more complex models that account for additional psychological and contextual factors.

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