



## **The Role of Leadership Style on Turnover Intention**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This research aims at exploring the effect of transformational leadership and transactional leadership on the turnover intention for directors of the Greater Amman Municipality directorates; an Analytical, descriptive method has been applied and utilised. Research population was chosen from directors of the Greater Amman Municipality departments and heads of sections, where the number of the population was 602, and a simple random sample was chosen, which equal to 274 responds, the researcher relied on questionnaires as the primary tool to collect data, 190 surveys were received back and 18 questionnaire were canceled because of the lack of their suitability for statistical analysis, this results in 172 valid questionnaires which represent 62.7% as a response rate for this study, The results find out also that there is a statistically significant impact for the transformational leadership and transactional leadership on substantial level to affect turnover intention from directors of Greater Amman Municipality department's point of view. The study concludes some points, most of them are: More research and field studies must be undertaken to identify the importance of transformational and transactional leadership in achieving Greater Amman municipality's present and future objectives, more attention must be paid for those directors in Greater Amman municipality who seem to have the attributes and characteristics of transformation leadership, and also those who have the ability and required skill to develop human resources in Greater Amman Municipality, giving more trainings and special workshops to build leaders and train them on modern administrative methods in order to improve their abilities, performance and encourage them to provide the best they have.

**Keywords:** Transformational Leadership, Transactional Leadership, Turnover Intention

**JEL Classifications:** G1, G12

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Employees are the most valuable assets in the organization (Gul et al., 2012). Many successful organizations have strategies to look after their employees, such as good pay, attractive work environment, and profit sharing systems. They motivate employees for high productivity and retention with the organization. Normally, employees will remain in the organization if they have a feeling of commitment to the organization.

Employee turnover is a critical and a serious challenge faced by organizations (Ahmad 2010), which will affect both direct and indirect costs of an organization (Steers et al., 2012). In addition, Voon et al. (2011) estimates that hiring and training a replacement for a lost employee costs approximately 50% of the worker's annual salary. Lost revenues occur because new employees are not as productive as established employees.

Leadership is an influence process between leaders and followers. The leader intends to influence the followers' behaviour to

reach the organizational goals (Limsila and Ogunlana, 2008). Furthermore, for an organization to succeed in its goals achievement and objectives the burden is on the leaders in the organization and their leadership behaviour (Voon et al., 2011). In other words, the leadership must introduce activities to stimulate employees, and establish the roles for an individual or group towards goal achievement (Awan and Mahmood, 2010) and style is the behaviour pattern that characterizes a leader to tackle organizational issues. Numerous different styles are identifiable in various leaders. Every style possesses its own set of good and bad personalities (Awan and Mahmood, 2010) and (Randeree and Chaudhry, 2012). The differences in the work setting lead to the manager using different leadership style (Jogulu, 2010) and (Mujtaba et al., 2011).

And (Mat, 2008) suggests that the definitions of leadership are still evolving and scholars are always seeking to simplify these definitions to make it more comprehensible and practical during the daily business usage. For many years, the concern of many scholars was revolving around the characteristics of the active leader and

identifying who he is. However, it is tough to provide one standard definition of leadership. Thus, people are still exploring leadership and its related matters.

### 1.1. Research Questions

Based on the problems discussed above, the central issue for this study would be what factors are considered critical in influencing individual's turnover intention. Specifically,

1. Does transformational leadership affect turnover intention?
2. Does transactional leadership affect turnover intention?

### 1.3. Research Objectives

Generally, this study aims to examine what influence turnover intention, therefore, to answer the research questions posted above, the following research objectives were formulated:

1. To explore the relationship between transformational leadership and turnover intention.
2. To examine the relationship between transactional leadership and turnover intention.

## 2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND PREVIOUS STUDIES

### 2.1. Leadership Style

Leadership is considered very significant in any organisation because it is the leaders' behaviours that are considered responsible for ruining or improving the organisation. The organisation's orientations rely on the style adopted by its leaders. Since leadership helps in planning the organisation's orientations about the future, its leaders' behaviours and practices are the things that drive their followers to achieve the goals. Thus, followers usually follow their leaders' behaviours when performing their duties (Heravi et al., 2010).

Huang et al. (2010) identify two significant leadership styles. In the first style, the employee's job level affects participative leadership behaviour perceptions and the second style the participative leadership influences performance which shall help practitioners in designing an adequate number of training and development programs to enhance the participative management.

Also, (Limsila and Ogunlana, 2008) and (Heravi et al., 2010) found that the leadership behaviours are considered as an essential factor that influences organisational commitment and has a direct or indirect impact on turnover intention. Hamstra et al. (2011) concluded that the leadership style is considered crucial in supporting work values to reduce employees' turnover intention. The functions performed by managers can promote loyalty and friendly relations among employees. Working with friends is considered as a crucial factor for employees to maximise their productivity and efficiency and thus, that shall significantly reduce the turnover rates (Erkutlu, 2008).

Practical leadership skills and styles can improve job satisfaction and promote employees' retention in organisations (Kleinman, 2013). Thus, employees' retention and performance in organisations can be improved by adopting the appropriate leadership and managerial styles which are consistent with the business strategies to improve the employees' motivation and morale.

Transformational leadership Transformational leaders offer a purpose that goes is long-term and focuses on higher order intrinsic needs of their followers. These leaders are described as those who use motivation to guide their subordinates to perform to the best of their ability and to raise their levels of confidence through constant support (Engelen et al., 2015).

Transactional leaders offer something employees want in exchange what the leaders want. In other words, transactional leaders exchange resources with their employees or a leader's behaviour that provides rewards and punishments in return for the subordinate's effort and Transactional performance leadership involves motivating and directing followers primarily through attracted to their self-interest (Deichmann and Stam, 2015).

According to Gilbert et al. (2016) transformational leadership is determined by five factors. The first is represented in the idealised impact or attributed charisma which refers to the way in which the followers perceive their leader, and that shall affect the way they perceive the leader's confidence, power, and transcendent ideals. As for the second factor, it is represented in the idealised impact or behaviour charisma (i.e., the specific leader's behaviours reflecting his values, beliefs, sense of mission and purpose, and ethical and moral orientation). The third factor is represented in the inspirational motivation which refers to the leader's capability to motivate and inspire his/her followers to pursue the achievement of the ambitious goals, raise followers' expectations, promote their confidence, and create a self-fulfilling prophecy. The fourth factor is represented in the intellectual stimulation which refers to the way the leaders question the status quo and appeal to their followers' intellect. It also refers to the method of innovating and solving problems creatively. The fifth factor is represented in the individualised consideration which is concerned with the leaders who provide their followers with customised socio-emotional support and empower and develop their followers simultaneously.

On the other hand, Bass (1999) believes that transformational leadership has shown an exchanged relationship between leaders and their followers. Such leadership makes use of contingent rewards through which leaders clarify the expectations of the job to their follower. In addition, transformational leadership style refers to the elevating followers by their leaders beyond immediate self-interest. That can be done through idealised influence, individualised consideration, inspiration, and intellectual stimulation. Such leadership shall boost follower's maturity and ideals. It is concerned with the organisation and leaders' self-actualisation, achievement, and well-being. As for the followers who work under the authority of a transformational leader or within a transformational team, they shall take care of each other, stimulate and inspire one another intellectually, and identify with the team goal. Such followers tend to be highly productive.

In recent studies (Tafvelin, 2013) investigates factors influenced by transformational leadership. By analysing responses from questionnaires and interviews retrieved from social service employees, the findings showed that transformational leadership has a positive relationship with organisational outcomes which include well-being, commitment, and role clarity. Similarly (Tsai et al., 2015) examine the impact of transformational leadership

on job performance in Taiwan SMEs with the mediating effect of organisational commitment and the moderating effect of employee competency. They find that transformational leadership influence job performance.

In recent studies (Brahim et al., 2015) examine the effect of transactional leadership on employee performance in banking institutions in Algeria. By analysing a sample size of 132 employees from five banks with analysis of variance, the findings indicate that transactional leadership style has a substantial effect on employee performance. Similarly, Advani (2015) examines the impact of transformational and transactional leadership styles on employee performance in Pakistan banking sector. By analysing responses through questionnaires from 172 employees, the findings indicate that both transactional and transformational leadership styles have an impact on employee performance.

Koesmono (2017) examines the impact of transactional leadership on employee turnover intention in Indonesia. The data of 150 respondents were analysed with structural equation modelling program. The findings show that transactional leadership alongside job satisfaction and work motivation have an influence on turnover intention of employees at PT. Sumber Alfaria Trijaya Tbk. (Minimarket Alfamart) in East Surabaya region of Indonesia. In addition, Saif (2017) examines the impact of transactional and transformational leadership on employee satisfaction in Jordanian public hospitals. Using a response rate of 86% from 800 questionnaires distributed among nine hospitals, the results of the analysis show that transactional and transformational leadership averagely influence employee satisfaction.

## 2.2. Conceptualization of Turnover Intention

Many scholars have defined the concept of turnover in many ways. For example, Price in 1977 describes turnover as the degree of movement across the membership division of an organisation. On the other hand, Mobley in 1982 defines employee turnover as the discontinuance of membership in an organisation from an individual who received monetary compensation from the organisation. Also, Tracey in 1991 sees labour turnover as the changes in the composition of the workforce due to termination.

A frequently used distinction of employee turnover from an organization is between voluntary and involuntary; voluntary employees-initiated decision is to leave the organization on their own; while instinctive organization-initiated choice is an employer's decision to terminate the employee, plus death or mandatory retirement (Dess and Shaw, 2001), Similarly (Xiancheng, 2010) argues that voluntary turnover begins by employees wanting to leave for specific reasons, while involuntary turnover is an employee going the organization because the organization is downsizing or cost saving, or due to employee's poor performance.

Transformational leaders have the high order needs of employees, while transactional leaders emphasise exchanging rewards for accomplishment. Both transformational leadership behaviour and transactional leadership behaviour provide an efficient clarification of the employee turnover in the organisation (Long and Thean, 2012) and (Hamstra et al., 2011).

But (Wells and Peachey, 2011) investigated the relationship between leadership behaviour and turnover intention from National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I softball and volleyball assistant coaches in the USA. The results showed that transformational leadership has a direct effect on, and a negative relationship with turnover intention. However, transactional leadership also has a negative correlation with turnover intention.

Heravi et al. (2010) investigated the relationship between leadership behaviour and personnel turnover intention in IT companies in Iran. The results showed that transformational leadership had a negative correlation with turnover intention. While transactional leadership was not related to turnover intention.

Gul et al. (2012) examined the relationship between transformational and transactional leadership and turnover intention. The insurance sector of Pakistan comprised the participants in this study. One hundred and twenty-one questionnaires were used. The results showed that the relationship between transformational and transactional leadership and turnover intention is negative. Furthermore, the results showed that the samples are more related to transformational leadership than transactional leadership.

Long et al. (2012) found the relationship between leadership style and employees' turnover intention of academic staff in Malaysia. They argue that both types of leadership behaviour (transformational and transactional leadership) have a negative relationship with turnover intention, but the correlation is not significant.

Ali et al. (2014) examined leadership style by using transformational and transactional leadership behaviour. The study collected data from private section schools in Pakistan. Three hundred and fifty-six questionnaires were used. The study found that transformational and transactional leadership behaviours are negatively associated with turnover intention.

Tse et al. (2013) explored the relationship between transformational leadership and turnover intention, and the mediation role of affective commitment. The study used 490 employees in a large call centre of a telecommunication company in northern China. This study found that transformational leadership has a negative relationship with turnover intention and that affective commitment mediates it.

Ekong et al. (2013) investigated the relationship between leadership style and employee turnover. They conducted a survey in Nigerian banks from which 500 questionnaires were collected. The study found that leadership style has a relationship to employee turnover intention.

## 3. METHODOLOGY

The section describes the research framework, research hypothesis, unit of analysis, data collection procedure and data analysis technique.

### 3.1 Research Framework

This research framework was developed from past theoretical reviews that examined the relationship between all the variables

mentioned in the literature reviewed section (Figure 1). The research framework was based on the academic gaps found in the theory and practices. Precisely, this study intends to examine the relationship between leadership style, and turnover intention, the primary constructs include turnover intention as a dependent variable and leadership style.

### 3.2. Research Hypothesis

H<sub>1</sub>: Transformational leadership style is negatively related to turnover intention.

H<sub>2</sub>: Transactional leadership style is negatively related to turnover intention.

### 3.3. Sample Size

The target population are involved in this study were directors and heads of department from different departments who are working in Greater Amman Municipality. Based on the total population in this study which is 602, the recommended sample size table by Sekaran and Bougie (2010) appropriate for the current research is 274. This means 274 doctors will be included as a representative sample for the whole study population.

### 3.3. Unit of Analysis

This study is an attempt to explain the relationship between leadership style, and turnover intention among directors of the Greater Amman Municipality departments and heads of sections. Therefore, the unit of analysis is individually based; this implies that data was collected from directors and leaders of divisions who are currently working in Greater Amman Municipality.

### 3.4. Data Collection Procedure

The primary target of this research is to test the stability of the constructs as proposed in the research hypothesis, based on the conceptual framework of the study. This study is quantitative in nature and data was collected through questionnaire. The

questionnaire was based on scales adapted from previous studies. On a scale 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

### 3.5. Data Analysis Technique

Data collected through the survey were analysed using SPSS (version 22) program for Windows. Before primary analyses, the data were examined for data entry accuracy, outliers, and distributional properties.

## 4. RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

A total of 274 respondents from directors of the Greater Amman Municipality departments and heads of sections filled and returned the survey instruments administered to them, giving a response rate of (69.3%). A total of 18 questionnaires were discarded from analysis on two principal grounds. Firstly, 13 surveys were excluded from analysis because they were incomplete as several missing data per case has been observed. Secondly, five multivariate outliers were detected and excluded from further analysis as well. Removing these numbers of questionnaires from the report is imperative as they do not represent the sample (Hersey et al., 2010). Eventually, the sample for this study was made up of a total number of 172 effective responses used for further analysis.

Table 1 shows the response rate obtained from the survey. The response rate of (62.7%) per cent achieved in this study is therefore considered excellent in view of Sekaran and Bougie (2010) suggestion that not <30% response rate is acceptable in survey research.

The profiles of respondents are as follows: 57.1% of employee's participants were male, and 42.9% were female (78% married and the rest stated as non-married). However, only 3.6% was noted that their age is more than 55 years old. The amount of salary they annually received was asked according to 6 different categories, the amounts of <400JD, to >1400JD. Regarding the educational levels, 21.6% respondents held of a diploma certificate, 48.7% had bachelor's degree. However, 29.7% were the holder of a postgraduate certificate (PhD and master's degrees). According to the data, response has 1 to 25-years experience working in Greater Amman Municipality.

The result indicated that the data set did not violate the normality assumption, indicating that all variables were approximately normally distributed (Tables 2 and 3).

As can be seen from Table 4, the mean and the standard deviation of transformational leadership is 3.270 and 0.923 respectively,

Figure 1: Research framework

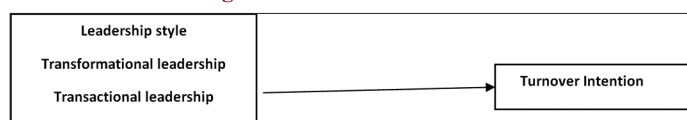


Table 1: Response rate

Item	Frequency (%)
Number questionnaires distributed	274 (100)
Number of questionnaires returned	190 (69.3)
Number of questionnaires rejected	18 (6.5)
Number of questionnaires retained	172 (62.7)
Number of questionnaires Not return	84 (30.6)

Table 2: Results of skewness and kurtosis for normality test

Variables	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Std. error	Statistic	Std. Error
Turnover intention	-0.933	0.139	0.483	0.276
Transformational leadership	-0.533	0.139	-0.453	0.276
Transactional leadership	-0.345	0.139	-0.187	0.276
Organizational climate	-0.714	0.139	-0.161	0.276
Valid N (listwise)	172	172	172	172



**Table 3: Multicollinearity test**

Model	Collinearity statistics	
	Tolerance	VIF
Transformational leadership	0.681	1.469
Transactional leadership	0.540	1.852

Dependent variable turnover intention

**Table 4: Descriptive statistics of the constructs (n=172)**

Construct	Minimum	Maximum	Mean±Standard deviation
Turnover Intention	1.00	5.00	4.324±1.120
Transformational leadership	1.00	5.00	3.270±0.923
Transactional leadership	1.00	5.00	3.292±0.831

**Table 5: Regression results of transformational leadership, transactional leadership on turnover intention**

Independent variables	Dependent variable	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
<b>Work engagement</b>					
<b>(Std Beta)</b>					
Transformational leadership	-0.265**	-8.50	0.000	0.901	1.11
Transactional leadership	-0.264**	-8.11	0.000	0.826	1.21
F value			122.71		
R <sup>2</sup>			0.54		
Adj.R <sup>2</sup>			0.534		
Durbin-Watson			1.757		

\*P<0.05, \*\*P<0.01

which implies that the respondents are close to agreeing with the questions or statements of this construct. Likewise, the mean, as well as the standard deviation for the other independent variables, are 3.292 and 0.831 for Transactional Leadership, Therefore, in nearly all the independent latent constructs, respondents have lean towards moderately agreed. For the dependent variable (Turnover intention), it shows mean of 4.324 and standard deviation of 1.120, indicating that respondents lean towards reasonably accepted.

As shown in Table 5, 54% (R<sup>2</sup> = 0.54, F = 122.71, P < 0.01) of the variance in turnover intention was significantly explained by transformational leadership, transactional leadership, In the model, transformational leadership ( $\beta = -0.265$ , P < 0.01) and transactional leadership ( $\beta = -0.264$ , P < 0.01) were found negatively related to turnover intention, Therefore, Hypotheses 1 and 2 were supported. The results suggest that response with leadership style tend to have lower turnover intention.

## 5. CONCLUSION

Consistent with the second research question, the secondary objectives of the study were to investigate the relationship between leadership styles and turnover intention. Towards this direction, two hypotheses were developed to test the connections for transformational and transactional leadership styles.

The first leg of this research question hypothesised that transformational leadership has a negative and significant relationship with employee retention. The result also shows negative direction and considerable t-value. Thus, transformational leadership is negatively and significantly correlated with turnover intention. This finding is consistent with the findings of (Gul et al.,

2012; Long, et al., 2012; Ali et al., 2014; Tse et al., 2013; Long and Thean, 2012; Wells and Peachey, 2011). They all found a negative relationship between transformational leadership and turnover intention. Therefore, employees are more likely to remain with an organisation if they believe that their managers show interest and concern for them. If they know what is expected of them, if they are given a role that fits their capabilities and if they receive regular positive feedback and recognition. Mohammad et al. (2009) argued that transformational leaders able to provide a higher level of commitment, satisfaction and performance to the employees.

The second leg of RQ2 posed that transactional leadership style is negatively and significantly related to turnover intention. However, the empirical result does not support this proposition because the beta value is positive and the t-value was not significant. The findings revealed that transactional leadership doesn't have any meaningful relationship with turnover intention, which leads to the decision that hypothesis H2, is not accepted. Though not significant in findings, the link is positive in line with previous research findings (Ekong et al., 2013; Mohammad et al., 2009; Hamstra et al., 2011). Interestingly, other researchers also find a negative but significant relationship between transactional leadership style and turnover intention (Ali et al., 2014). Further, Gwavuya (2011) affirm that incompetent leadership will lead to reduced employee performance, high stress, low job commitment, low job satisfaction and turnover intention. Riaz and Haider (2010) argued that transactional leadership style provides high comfort and organisational identification as compared to transformational leadership style. As a conclusion, once the transactional leader motivated the employee, such employee will stay with the organisation.

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