

The impact of transformational leadership on organizational citizenship behaviour: Evidence from Malaysian higher education context

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Abstract.

BACKGROUND: Research on Transformational leadership has received attention among scholars, particularly in the field of management. However, the discussion about this issue in the context of higher education is still limited, particularly in the context of Research Universities in Malaysia. Therefore, this study is conducted to address this gap.

OBJECTIVE: This study aims to examine the role of organizational commitment in mediating the relationship between transformational leadership and organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB).

METHODS: The study was conducted by a structured survey questionnaire on 250 academic staff in Malaysian public universities (MRUs). Structured Equation Modeling (SEM) via SmartPLS software was utilized to examine study hypothesis.

RESULTS: The findings of this study showed that transformational leadership has significant direct effect on organizational commitment and organizational commitment has significant direct effect on OCB. These results highlight the importance of mediating role of organizational commitment in predicting transformational leadership – OCB relationship.

CONCLUSIONS: The leaders in Malaysian research universities could utilize these findings by setting up strategies to promote transformational leadership and maximize the feeling of academic staff of being committed; this will enhance citizenship behaviour of academic staff. It adds empirical evidence in the existing literature that organizational commitment has a mediation effects on the relationship between transformational leadership and organizational citizenship behaviour, especially in the Malaysian higher education context.

Keywords: Transformational leadership, organizational commitment, organizational citizenship behaviour, Malaysian academic staff



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Commitment, Transformational Leadership, and Educational Technology.

1. Introduction

There has been increasing interest in researching working habits in recent years that go beyond the main tasks of contributing workers to the company and, ultimately, improve the organizations' effectiveness. The increased attention provided to positive work activity, such as the conduct of organizational citizenry, encourages researchers to continually concentrate on the building of theory and to perform

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applicable research on the subject. This would allow for better use by employees of the workplace of positives and actions [1]. Organizational citizenship behaviour plays an important determining role that contribute to the overall organizational effectiveness and the way it leads organizations towards success in the intense competitive business environment.

The compliance with organizational citizenship is among the most important factors and variables that help to improve the organizations' overall company performance and effectiveness in an intensely competitive environment [2, 3]. Specifically, the actions of the organization in terms of organizational citizenship can affect the performance of the organization [4]. In addition, constructive leadership becomes an important research field in order to better understand the motivational basis for employee behaviour [5–7]. Transformational leaders enhance positive work-related outcomes, and decrease negative work-related outcomes through influencing of inspirational motivation, idealized influence, individualized consideration, and intellectual stimulation [8–12]. Researchers found that transformational leadership positively impact on work positive work outcomes [12–14]. The relationship of transformation leadership with the OCB has been investigated in previous studies [15–18]. This research group has together shown that leadership is also among the important factors in the effective change of behaviour. It also showed that transformational leadership forms and trains workers to succeed. In the current study, we extend the theory to include organizational commitment and transformational leadership as indicators of OCB and measure the relationship between the two variables. This study attempt to identify the strength of the relationship among transformational leadership, organizational commitment and OCB in Higher education sector of Malaysia. Previous research have investigated the effect of organizational commitment on organizational citizenship behaviour [19–27]. Therefore, the relationship between transformational leadership, organizational commitment and OCB can be discussed further.

2. Literature review

2.1. *Research universities in Malaysia*

According to Alsenwi [28] establishing Research Universities (RUs) is the milestone of the Ministry of Higher Education in Malaysia. The Malaysian

National Higher Education Strategic Plan Beyond 2020 has implemented several thrusts for future directions. One of these thrusts is selecting five Malaysian public universities as Research Universities to change Malaysian universities' status to world class and to facilitate the transformational process of national higher education [29]. In 2006, four public universities were granted with RU status, namely Universiti Malaya (UM), Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM), Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), and Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM). The fifth Research University which is Universiti Teknologi Malaysia was selected in 2010.

There are six goals of the Malaysian research universities (MRUs). First, to be a leader in innovation. Second, to set up and enhance centers of excellence in prioritized areas of the nations. Third, to produce world class research outputs. Fourth, to generate high impact research publications. Fifth, to attract quality postgraduate students, and finally, to provide a conducive environment for research [28]. The Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE) recognized these five universities as research universities based on eight selection criteria which has been determined by the Assessment of Research Universities Committee. The marking criteria are: (i) Quantity and Quality of Researchers; (ii) Quantity and Quality of Research; (iii) Quantity of Postgraduates; (iv) Quality of Postgraduates; (v) Innovation; (vi) Professional Services and Gifts; (vii) Networking and Linkages; and (viii) Supporting Facility (Ministry of Education [29].

The needs for this study arise because Malaysian Research universities seek to be at the high ranked universities. Thus, there is a need to maintain academic staffs' organizational citizenship behaviour which is essential in maintaining the pursuit of public universities in offering a quality of education [30–34].

2.2. *Transformational leadership (TFL)*

There is no true definition of leadership. The definition continues to evolve and change each and every day just as the workforce changes and the need for a company to look for their place in a global economy [35]. Organizations now need to look for what they do best and capitalize on the positive assets in order to be successful [36]. The most essential traits in a good leader are honesty, integrity, accountability, availability, respectfulness, focus, fairness, and consistency [37]. These are of utmost importance in leadership roles as well and these behaviors can be obtained through training: accountability,

availability, and confidentiality [38]. Communication is also most important thing which helps transformational leadership [39]. A leader should be effective by helping to guide subordinates toward their goals [40]. Leaders are influential individuals who should be positive, open-minded, and good listeners because they need to understand that even though they are leaders, they need to bring themselves down to the level of their followers [41]. Transformational leadership is a type of New Leadership style [42]. According to Kohan et al. [43] transformational leadership theory is one of the well-known theoretical frameworks on leadership. According to Odumeru & Ogbonna [44] transformational leadership is a theory of leadership where a leader works with teams to identify needed change, creating a vision to guide the change through inspiration, and executing the change in tandem with committed members of a group. According to Porter [45] transformational leadership is generally understood as a process whereby leaders take conscious action to develop followers into leaders, exhibit behaviors that elicit trust, display self-sacrificial perspectives to build commitment and influence, and demonstrate a moral compass towards mission and purpose. Northouse [46] stated that transformational leadership is the process whereby a person engages with others and creates a connection that raises the level of motivation and morality in both the leader and the follower. Therefore, transformational leadership involves an extraordinary form of influence that moves followers to accomplish more than what is usually expected from them. This type of leader is attentive to the needs and motives of followers and attempts to help followers reach their full potential [47].

2.3. *Organizational commitment*

So many definitions have been given to organizational commitment. Porter [48] defined organizational commitment as the relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization.

According to Mowday et al. [49] definitions, organizational commitment is characterized by three components: (1) a strong acceptance of and belief in the values and objectives of organizations, 2) Effort commitment: a willingness to exert considerable effort to an organization and 3) Retention commitment: a strong desire to maintain membership in the organization and to continue being a part of the organization.

Chow [50] defined organizational commitment as the degree to which employees are identified with the organization and its managerial objectives, and show a willingness to exert efforts to participate in decision making and internalize organizational values.

Organizational commitment is an individual's psychological attachment to the organization. According to an individual is considered as committed to an organization if he is willing to continue his membership in the organization and exerts considerable efforts to accomplish the objectives of the organization [51].

Kreitner & Kinicki [52] stated that organizational commitment is a state in which an employee identifies with a particular organization and its goals, and wishes to maintain membership in the organization.

Meyer & Allen [53] defined organizational commitment as a psychological link between the employee and his or her organization that reflects three broad themes: Affective, Continuance, and Normative. Thus commitment is viewed as reflecting an affective orientation toward the organization, recognition of the costs associated with leaving the organization, and a moral obligation to remain with the organization. Robbins [54] defined organizational commitment as the situation where the individual identifies with the organization and its objectives and his desire to continue his membership in the organization. Arnold [55] defined organizational commitment as the relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in the organization.

2.4. *Organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB)*

OCB is described as an "individual behaviour, which, in an overall way, promotes effective functioning of an entity, is discretionary, not expressly or specifically acknowledged by a formal system of compensation." OCB applies, naturally, and of its own free will, to anything workers choose to do, often beyond their specific contractual obligations [3]. Since then, researchers have distinguished between two dimensions of employee behaviour, namely; general compliance, and altruism [56, 57]. However, later, the concept of OCB has undergone several transformations. There are five different aspects to the literature defined by the OCB as discussed by Organ [3] namely altruism (helping to particular others); civic virtues (conscientiousness) (compliance with standards), courtesy (consulting certain individuals before taking action) and sporting (not complaining of trivial affairs). However, further divided OCB'

dimensions into three parts: assistance, compassion and understanding. Williams & Anderson [58] classified OCB from a different perspective into two kinds: (1) behaviours which are oriented towards certain people in the organisation, such as courtesy and altruism (OCBI), and (2) behaviours which are related to how to benefit all people in the organization. This latter type of behaviours includes, for example, conscientiousness, sportsmanship and civic virtue (OCBO).

Organizational citizenship behaviour refers to a behaviour that is taken as an immediate means to benefiting certain or particular people in a given organization. Such behaviours play a role in contributing to organizational effectiveness [59, 58]. According to Podsakoff et al. [60], it is called as a helping behaviour since it underlies any voluntary help or assistance provided to others to solve their problems relevant to work. Furthermore, previous studies show that high organizational citizenship behaviour is important in preserving the striving of public universities toward offering a high quality of education [30–32]. Furthermore, this behaviour refers to these behaviours that are intended to benefit the entire organization without taking any actions that specifically target any certain members of that organization (e.g., adhering to informal rules, volunteering for committees). As the context of this study are academic staff at Malaysian research universities, who are qualified, and have freedom to pursue excellence and have chance to participate in decisions making in relation to research and curriculum, understanding how to enhance their positive behaviour is an essential managerial need.

Moreover, few researches about the organizational citizenship behaviours has been conducted in the Malaysian higher educational sector which were focus more in private higher learning institutions [61, 62]. Few studies, however examine the Organizational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB) among academic staff in Malaysian research universities [63, 64].

3. Hypotheses development

3.1. *Relationship between transformational leadership (TFL) and organizational commitment (OC)*

What is referred as transformational leadership is a form of leads that is employed to transform followers and make them rise above their self-interest. This is achieved by shifts in culture, morals, interests and values and by inspiring them to do more

than expect. This is also seen as a leadership that generates awareness and acceptance among subordinates, enables its followers to grow, inspire them to go beyond their own needs to achieve the organizational goals and to empower them through leading actions [5]. The transformational leaders' positive and evolutionary essence will overcome neuroticism and introversion, and direct workers to be more committed. Besides, Jha [15]; Zacher & Jimmieson [65]; and Koh et al. [66] asserted that transformation leadership behaviours have a stronger positive effects on organizational citizenship behaviour. Furthermore, transformational leadership plays a critical role in building positive feelings in their followers which enhance favourable attitudes and behaviours and encourage them to perform their work effectively to behave in their organization as a good citizen [16–18, 67].

Furthermore, the literature has confirmed the existence of the relationship between transformational leadership and organizational commitment [68–73]. Rahmawati & Tobing [74] contended that transformational leadership promotes greater feelings of organizational commitment among employees of Tax Service Office (KPP) in Banjarmasin which numbered 89 people that help them to increase their commitment to their organization. Besides, Jain & Duggal [71] revealed that, all four dimensions of transformational leadership had a significant effect on organizational commitment. Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 1: Transformational leadership has a direct effect on organizational commitment.

3.2. *Relationship between organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior*

The word “organizational commitment” is characterized as “attachment” of the employee to the business [53]. The most commitment distinctive from between is presented by Meyer & Allen [53] Meyer & Allen [75] who adopted three forms of interaction. Affective commitment: This form of commitment has to do with understanding and engaging with the organizations' emotional attachment. This feeling improves the desire of employees to stay with one company. Continuing commitment: this dedication is related to the high costs associated with leaving the company and creates a sense of need for more jobs. Normative commitment: it is a kind of sense of an

obligation of the individual to his organization and a sense of continued work. Meyer et al. [75] point out that emotional commitment is positively related to the willingness of the employee, in relation to the ability of the employee to share and gain know-how, to make an extra effort in his job. As Baumann et al. [76] stated, people are willing to share their knowledge with others if they are certain that doing so is useful. Hinds & Pfeffer [77] sum up factors affecting knowledge sharing, one of which is the organizational commitment. In literature, there are a number of evidence reveals that organizational commitment positively correlated with organizational citizenship behaviour. Hence, it is hypothesized as follows:

Hypothesis 2: Organizational commitment has a direct effect on organizational citizenship behavior.

3.3. *Organizational commitment as a mediator*

Previous research has confirmed the existence of the relationship between transformational leadership and organizational commitment. For example, Buda & Ling [78] found that transformational leadership had a positive impact on organizational commitment among the academic staff. Besides, Ahmad et al. [79] indicated that transformational leadership was significantly correlated with organizational commitment in public tertiary institutions. Further Pomper & Malbašić [73] found that transformational leadership had a positive impact on all three components of organizational commitment (affective, continuance, and normative). Another study conducted by Zacharo et al. [80] found that teachers feel substantial commitment to school goals when the school principal acts as transformational leader.

On the other hand, many studies have confirmed a positive relationship between organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behaviour. For example, Donglong et al. [24] reported that Affective organizational commitment is the most influential predictor for university faculty members' OCB. Further, a study was conducted by Grego-Planer [26] to demonstrate that organizational commitment positively affects organizational citizenship behaviour. Most positively correlated with OCBs is the affective dimension of organizational commitment. Besides, Jin & Hahm [81] argue that the higher the level of employees' commitment, the more motivated employees are to perform well at work and while employees have positive feelings about their

commitment toward their organization, they are motivated to demonstrate more organizational citizenship behaviour.

Based on previous studies, organizational commitment may have a role in the relationship between transformational leadership and the actions of organizational citizenry. The social exchange method will clarify such a relation. Social Exchange Theory suggests that perceptions, attitudes and behaviours interact. This kind of leadership can improve employee organization commitment, which can in turn motivate employees to show more when the leader in an organization demonstrates a transformational leadership approach (growing awareness and acceptance among subordinate people, empowering their followers to develop and encouraging them to exceed their organizational goals). This study argues therefore that organizational involvement mediates the effects of transformational leadership on organizational citizenship behaviour. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

Hypothesis 3: Organizational commitment mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and organizational citizenship behaviour.

The proposed hypothesis is demonstrated in Fig. 1.

4. Research method

4.1. *Sample*

This analysis employs a stratified sampling approach to choose the sample (academic staff in Malaysian research universities) from the population of the study. Sekaran & Bougie [82] stated that the stratified random sampling provides every person with the same opportunity to be chosen as the sample, although it can be either proportionate or disproportionate. Since the study samples are academics staff in Research Universities in Malaysia, the stratified sampling technique is suitable to the given situation since the researchers are in a position to divide the subjects into relatively homogeneous and non-overlapping sub-groups. It is the most efficient among all probability strategies and is consistently sampled by all population groups. The sampling frame for this study consists of academic staff that can be found through the staff directory of each university's website. The academics, from lecturers to professors are the sampling elements or the suitable respondents that

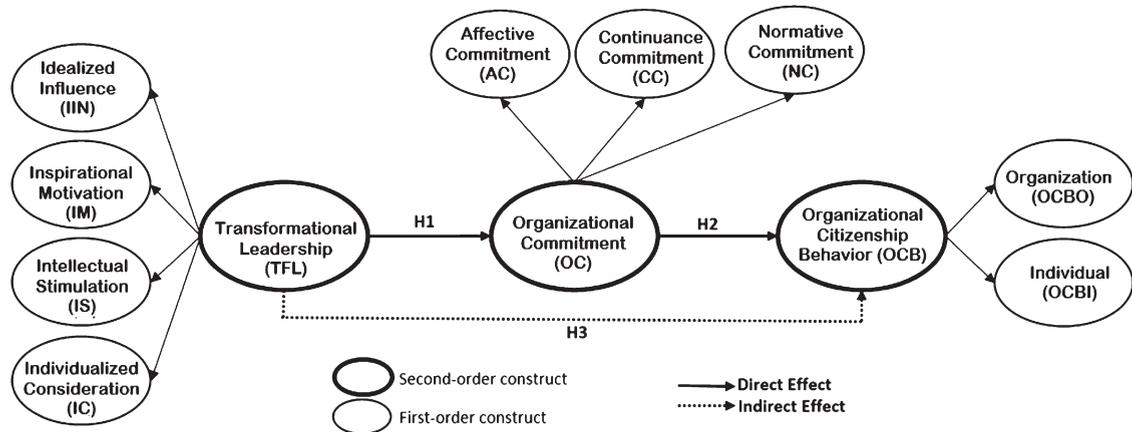


Fig. 1. The proposed model.

will take part in this study. As such, unit of the analysis for the present study is the individual academic staff.

The sample for this study consists of 250 academic staff working in the five Malaysian research universities. Among the academic staff surveyed, 61.2 per cent ($N = 153$) were female and 38.8 per cent ($N = 97$) were male. Regarding the age groups of the sample, 2.8% of them are in the age group less than 30, and 52% of total respondents are between 30 and less than 45, while 42.8% of them are in the age group of 45 to 60 years, and 2.4% of total respondents are in the age group of above 60. In terms of their marital status, 84% of the respondents are married, 14.4% are single, 0.8% are divorced, and 0.8% are widowed. In terms of education background, the majority of the respondents 92.8% have doctorate degrees. Meanwhile, 7.2% of the respondents have master degree qualifications. Furthermore, the majority of the respondents are senior lecturers who represent 61.6%, whilst 20% of respondents are associate professors, 13.6% of them are professors, and 4.8% of respondents are lecturers.

4.2. Procedures

The data of this study have been collected through questionnaires. An approval from the management of each research university in Malaysia has been required before distributing the questionnaires to the selected respondents. After getting the approval, the questionnaires directly distributed by enumerators to the respondents. Through visiting each university personally, the surveys were distributed to the

respondents alongside the enumerators. Help from the enumerators decreases the length of time the questionnaires are circulated and compiled. The Researcher explained the purpose of the interview to the respondents during the meeting and their participation is voluntary so that the questionnaire is complete and returned by interviewees on the same or the next day of the visit.

4.3. Measures

4.3.1. Transformational leadership

This research used the latest version of multifactor leadership questionnaire (MLQ) adopted from Avolio & Bass [83] to measure the transformational leadership. An example of these items is “My manager acts in ways that builds my respect”. A total of 20 items were included to address transformational leadership with each item rated on a five-point scale, ranging from ‘1’ “not at all” to ‘5’ “frequently, if not always”. Transformational leadership items covered idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration. Participants were asked to indicate how frequently each statement fits them. The twenty items have been empirically used in previous study by Raemah [84] among academic staff in public and private universities in Malaysia with a reliability of 0.92.

4.3.2. Organizational commitment

The measurement of organizational commitment with 12 items developed by Meyer & Allen [75] used in this study. According to Meyer & Allen [75], measurement of organizational commitment

Table 1
Mean, standard deviation, cronbach's Alpha, CR and AVE

Variables	M	SD	α (>0.7)	CR (>0.7)	AVE (>0.5)
Transformational Leadership	3.323	0.841	0.967	0.970	0.620
Organizational Commitment	3.965	0.741	0.915	0.930	0.534
Organizational Citizenship Behavior	3.709	0.541	0.935	0.943	0.511

Note: M = Mean; SD = Standard Deviation, α = Cronbach's alpha; CR = Composite Reliability, AVE = Average Variance Extracted.

questionnaire OCQ operationalized to three dimensions (affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment). OCQ consists 12 items and each dimension has 4 items. An example of these items is "I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this university". This measurement has been utilized in previous research and yielded a reliability of 0.96 in the study of [85].

4.3.3. Organizational citizenship behaviour

Organizational citizenship behaviour was measured using the 16-item self-report scale previously adapted by Lee & Allen [59]. Example of items used is "I always attend functions that are not required of me to attend, but would help in promoting the university image". It is operationalized in two dimensions, namely OCB directed towards fellow employees (OCBI) and OCB directed towards the organization (OCBO) [58]. Their study showed high reliabilities of 0.83 (OCBI) and 0.88 (OCBO).

5. Findings

5.1. Descriptive analysis

In the present study, Table 1 defines each variable as its mean and standard deviation. Organizational commitment with a standard deviation of 0.741, reported the highest mean score of 3,965 out of 5.0, suggesting that people are generally feel a connection with their organization. The study also indicated that transformational leadership expressed mean score of 3.323 out of 5.0, with a standard deviation of 0.841. The majority of respondents believed that their managers go beyond self-interest for the

Table 2
Results of discriminant validity by Fornell-Larcker criterion

	Factors	1 OCB	2 OC	3 TFL
1	OCB	0.893		
2	OC	0.548	0.871	
3	TFL	0.438	0.517	0.933

Key: TFL: transformational leadership, OC: organizational commitment, OCB: organizational citizenship behavior

good of the group; their managers discuss the future optimistically. They wanted different viewpoints when solving problems. Likewise, Organizational citizenship behavior expressed a mean score of 3.709 out of 5.0, with a standard deviation of 0.541, showing that the majority of academic staff agreed that to show genuine concern and courtesy toward colleagues, and defend the organization when other employees criticize it.

5.2. Measurement model assessment

Measurement model was assessed by construct reliability and validity (convergent and discriminant validity). In order to determine the reliability of the study variables, this analysis evaluated the individual Cronbach alpha coefficient. The result showed that values of Cronbach alpha coefficient ranging from 0.811 to 0.967, which are shown to be above the optional value of 0.7 [82]. The Cronbach's alpha and CR were therefore completely error-free for all constructs. Factor loading has been used to assess the reliability of the items. High loads on a structure suggest that there seems to be something popular in the related indicators that the structure collects [86]. Loading factor over 0.50 was considered significant. This analysis used the average variance extracted (AVE) for measuring convergent validity (the degree to which a variable positively correlates with other measurements of the same construct) and showed that all the values for AVE were above the suggested value of 0.50 [87].

The discriminant validity of the measuring model was assessed with two criteria, Fornell-Larcker and cross-loadings. The study of Hair et al. [86] stated that the cross-loading is an important method to measure the indicators' discriminant validity. The AVE square root in the diagonals was greater than the correlation between constructs, as shown by a bold value. It indicates that the constructs are related to their relevant

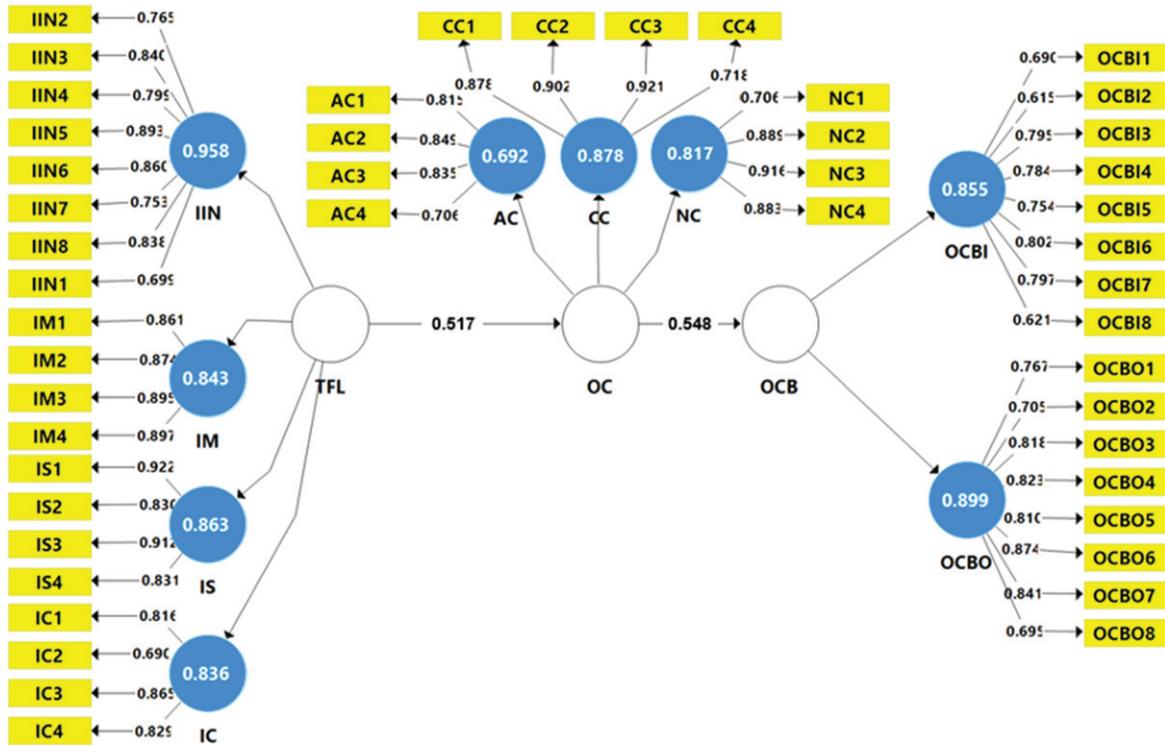


Fig. 2. PLS algorithm results. Key: TFL: transformational leadership, IIN: idealized influence, IM: inspirational motivation, IS: intellectual stimulation, IC: individualized consideration, OC: organizational commitment, AC: affective commitment, CC: continuance commitment, NC: normative commitment, OCB: organizational citizenship behavior, OCBI: individual, OCBO: organization.

Table 3
Structural Model Result

Hypothesis	Relationship	Std Beta	Std Error	t-value	p-value	LL	UL	Decision	R ²	f ²	Q ²	VIF
H1	TFL→OC	0.517	0.053	9.804	0.000	0.390	0.608	Supported	0.27	0.365	0.161	1.000
H2	OC→OCB	0.548	0.060	9.065	0.000	0.422	0.656	Supported	0.30	0.430	0.158	1.000
H3	TFL→OC→OCB	0.284	0.050	5.692	0.000	0.181	0.375	Supported				

Key: TFL: transformational leadership, OCB: organizational citizenship behavior, OC: organizational commitment.

indicators compared to other constructs. Good discriminant validity has been proposed [88]. There is therefore a correlation between independent variables of less than 0.85 [89]. Consequently, the discriminant validity of all constructs is fulfilled.

5.3. Assessment of structural model

Hair et al. [86] recommended measuring of the structural model with a resample of 5000 by observing the beta (β) value, R² and t-values. Furthermore, they suggested assessing effect sizes (f^2) and predictive relevance (Q^2).

6. Hypotheses tests and discussion

The structural model evaluation as shown in Fig. 2 and Table 3 shows hypothesis tests, supported by two direct hypotheses. Transformation management forecasts organizational engagement dramatically. Hence, H1 is accepted with ($\beta = 0.517$, $\tau = 9.804$, $\pi < 0.001$). Likewise, organizational commitment significantly predicts organizational citizenship behaviour. Hence, H2 is supported ($\beta = 0.548$, $\tau = 9.065$, $\pi < 0.001$).

In relation to the indirect Baron & Kenny hypothesis [90] it was stated that when the variable acts as mediator, it must (1) substantially foreshadow a

variable of outcome if the mediator excludes, (2) the mediator must significantly predict the mediators' variable; (3) the mediator has to consider significantly predict the variable in the outcome; and (4) the pre-determiners' variable. However in his paper 'Beyond Baron and Kenny: Evidence for the Statistical Mediation in the New Millennium,' Hayes [91] described the problems of the Baron and Kenny methodology and suggested full solutions Hayes [92] to test the mediation effect using the bootstrapping method by evaluating its indirect effect. The suggestion of Hair et al. [86] that researchers would follow the study of mediation effects [93]. This study is based on the Preacher & Hayes [93] method of boosting the indirect influence of transformative leadership on organizations' citizenship actions through organizational engagement. The results for bootstrapping analysis are shown in the table 6 which shows that the indirect impact $\beta = 0.284$ with a t value of 5.692 was important. Further, the Boot CI [LL = 0.181, UL = 0.375] do not straddle 0 between them suggesting mediation, Preacher and Hayes [93] show that the CI Boot is 95%. This research can therefore conclude that the mediation impact of corporate engagement between transformational leadership and organizational citizenship behavior is statistically significant and H3 has been endorsed too. Transformational management describes 27% of the gap in the company's dedication. Organizational engagement that explains 30% of the variation in actions in organizational citizenship. The R2 values were appropriate to Cohen [94] for their explanatory power, suggesting a relevant model. The study also evaluated the dimensions of the effect (f^2). f^2 decides whether a latent exogenous structure has a significant, moderate or poor impact on a latent endogenous structure. A proposed R2 value shift test was Hair et al. [86]. A guideline for calculating a f^2 magnitude of 0.35 (large effects), 0.15 (median effects) and 0.02 (small effects) was proposed by Cohen [94]. The consequence of f^2 as Table 6 reveals that the two are related to large effects. In addition, this study examined the reliability of the proposed research model in relation to the predictive significance by using the blindfolding method. The blindfolding technique should only use the endogenous constructs of reflective calculation as suggested by Hair et al. [86]. If the value of Q2 is greater than 0, then for some endogenous structure the predictive significance of the proposed model exists [86]. As Table 3 shows, the predictive significance for the proposed model is sufficient for all the Q2 values of between 0.158 to 0.161 (greater

than 0). For Q2, as a relative predictive measure of importance, the values suggested by Hair et al. [86] were 0.35 (large), 0.15 (medium), and 0.02 (small), and the outcome of this analysis showed that two exogenous ones had a medium predictive output. A multi-collinearity problem will occur in any study that is not optimal. This means that the exogenous variance constructs are superimposed on the endogenous structure and thus not every particular variance explanatory of the endogenous variable. The Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) is widely used to calculate and evaluate the multicollinearity. The highest VIF reaches 10 is of concern. And Hair et al. [86] suggesting that when the average VIF is greater than 5 a multilinearity problem occurs. In the exogenous structures of the experiment Table 6 indicates multilinearity VIF diagnostic, but does not suggest substantial multilinearity, since all VIF values are smaller than 5. This implies that heterogeneity does not converge in the endogenous framework of exogenous systems.

As can be seen in the study model, transformational leadership was hypothesized to have a significant effect on organizational commitment and organizational commitment was hypothesized to have a significant effect on organizational citizenship behavior. These perspectives are necessary and would be sufficient to demonstrate the mediation impact [95]. Hence, this study hypothesized that organizational commitment would mediate the transformational leadership and organizational citizenship behavior relationship.

The findings of this study have showed a significant influence of transformational leadership on organizational commitment, and also significant and positive effect of transfer of organizational commitment on organizational citizenship behavior among academic staff in Malaysian public universities. Specifically, the results structural path analysis suggest that organizational commitment, which is developed through motivating employees, self discipline improvement, and involving employees in related activities, which in turn will enhance workplace positive behaviours. These result of this study supported by social exchange based clarifications as to how organizational commitment enhances workplace positive behaviour, and are essential given the lack of research into how organizational commitment impact the evaluation of academic staff to transformational leadership.

These findings contribute in several ways to our understanding of the effect of transformational leadership on organizational citizenship behavior. This

study adds to the growing body of research that indicates organizational commitment play as a significance mechanism to increase the influence of transformational leadership on academics' organizational citizenship behavior. The findings of this investigation provide support for the social exchange theory, indicating that academic who are led by transformational leaders show higher level of commitment to their universities. As a result, they exceed their normal performance level. In other words, the influence of transformational leadership on Organizational citizenship behaviour is realized more through the indirect effect of organizational commitment.

These findings may help us to understand the relationship between transformational leadership and organizational citizenship behaviour. The present study provides empirical evidence that transformational leadership affect on organizational citizenship behaviour through the organizational commitment as a mediator variable in Malaysian higher education context.

7. Implications for organizations

Higher educational institutions strive to achieve high level of organizational citizenship behavior due to its importance in enhancing organizational effectiveness. The result of this study suggests that the relatedness of transformational leadership and academic staff commitment can encourage them to show more organizational citizenship behaviours in the workplace. Moreover, the study provides significant implications for academic staff. In order to maintain high levels of positive behaviour (i.e. organizational citizenship behavior) it is essential for them to maintain a high level of organizational commitment to their universities. The current study also suggests that leaders in Malaysian research universities could adopt a strategy that enhances the organizational commitment among academic staff in order to maintain the academics' high sense of citizenship behaviour to universities, which in turn, will enhance the performance and effectiveness of research universities in the Malaysian context.

8. Limitations and suggestions for future work

The current study is limited by the one-time-point-data collection through the use of a cross-sectional

research design. Therefore, a longitudinal study on this interesting research topic is needed to validate the current study findings. Another limitation of the study is its use of a quantitative research design including quantitative data collection through a survey. Enriching data should be collected in future research that would provide further insight into the topic. This may include conducting focus-group discussions and interviews in addition to the quantitative data. By so doing, future research will provide in-depth explanation of the perception of academic staff of their leaders

Besides, this study only concentrated on the higher education sector (specifically the research universities) and employees from other industries such as hospitality, service sector, and trading sector did not included. Thus, this study results may not be generalized to other industries as their employees in might have different characteristics and work culture which may require different types of leadership styles and different mediation variables to enhance organizational citizenship behaviour.

Therefore, a sector level study should consider in the future studies which include different domains to generalize the findings among different industries. Another limitation of the study is the sample of the study is limited to five research universities in Malaysia. So, the generalizability of this study needs to be beyond the existing sample. Accordingly, future studies could extend the sample by including all public universities in Malaysia for better generalization of the findings. In addition, to determine the generalisability of the research findings, further empirical studies in other geographical locations (e.g., Arab countries, United Kingdom, United State, and Australia) and cultural (e.g., Eastern, Western and Japanese culture) contexts are required to establish whether the research findings vary across countries and cultures.

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