



RESEARCH PAPER

**Impact of Transformational Leadership on Readiness for Change:
Mediating Role of Psychological Empowerment and Moderating Role
of Workgroup Support**

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this study is to investigate the impact of Transformational Leadership (TL) on Readiness for Change (RC) through the mediating role of psychological empowerment (PE) and the moderating role of workgroup support (WS). The study exhibited an innovative framework with direct impact of TL on RC and with mediation of PE, and with moderation of WGS, as the connection between PE and RC was never tested before and WGS is a significant element that promotes a supportive and collaborative environment and increases organizational efficiency for change, the study contributed to fill this gap in the context of the telecom sector. A self-administered questionnaire is scripted through online Google Forms and surveyed 289 targeted employees, using SPSS software for data analysis, time time-lagged approach and a snowball sampling technique for data collection in the telecommunication sector of Islamabad and Rawalpindi, Pakistan. The findings are extracted by Magnifying Self-Determination Theory (SDT) that significantly interpreted that transformational leadership positively impacted on readiness for change and psychological empowerment partially mediated the relationship between transformational leadership and readiness for change, whereas workgroup support moderated the syndication between psychological empowerment and readiness for change.

KEYWORDS Transnational Leadership, Psychological Empowerment, Work Group Support, Readiness for Change

Introduction

"Leadership Theory and Practice," is one of the books in which Northouse (1999) had interpreted leadership as an enactment of a person who inspired a group of people for a common cause. The leadership plays a vital role to develop organizational culture, encourage innovation, and lead teamwork for targeted achievements. Efficiency of leadership was established through communication skills, strategic thinking, motivation and delegation of authority by empowering others (Bass & Bass, 2008). Among the particular leadership styles, one was explored and found potentially capable to inspire and motivate its followers is transformational leadership. For a common cause the leadership is reviewed as the most beneficial for the organisational development because it performed beyond the self-interest and had the ability to inspire and motivate its followers (Bass, 1985). Generally, leadership was featured with a greater vision, charisma, psychological empowerment, personalised consideration and motivation (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Thus, in the organisational scenario, the features of transformational leadership were associated with some positive elements such as employee engagement, commitment, and satisfaction (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Bass (1985) and Bass and Riggio (2006) mentioned that in usual circumstances psychological

motivation, personalised consideration, inspirational inducement and idealised influence were intricated by transformational leaders. The overall organizational performance, employee satisfaction, organizational commitment was positively correlated with the leadership (Bass & Riggio, 2006). The leadership was reviewed as a critical factor for developing positive culture in the organizations and dealing with dynamically complex environments because this performed beyond regular leadership and influenced and motivated their followers to chase extraordinary goals (Bass, 1985). Transformational leaders portrayed the characteristics of charisma, extended a compelling vision, vitalised intellectual curiosity, recommended individualized consideration, and inspired motivation (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

Psychological empowerment is one of the multidimensional developments that got exceptional attention in the study of organizational psychology. This is the perception of individuals through which they identify themselves as competent to perform the tasks with confidence and create impact on the working environment. In order to increase well-being and empower the employees for performance enhancement, it is a multi-dimensional significant construct in organizational psychology. The construct unveiled four key dimensions; "meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact" (Spreitzer, 1995). It was further explained by Spreitzer (1995) the meaning referred to individual values and beliefs aligned with his work, which created a perception of meaningfulness and a sense of engagement to achieve the goals and empowered his cognition, next explained the competence a perception of individual capacity about himself to cope with the challenges, which demonstrated a proactive behaviour to skilfully perform the tasks by learning new skills and getting involved into training, next explained the self-determination an individual perception about autonomy and to control on the decision making process, which established a working culture where individual felt that he is at liberty to evaluate the options, moving further explained the impact an individual belief about how own abilities to differentiate himself with better performance that ultimately enhance the overall organizational productivity.

Spreitzer (1995) stated that employees who were more psychologically empowered, participated in the decision-making process, exhibited proactive responsive behaviour to learn new skills, faced challenges with commitment, and had greater job satisfaction. This was found in a number of studies that positive outcome was connected with psychological empowerment; as Thomas and Velthouse (1990) explored, employees who were psychologically empowered were found well-determined, committed and had greater job satisfaction. Thus, in another study, there was found a positive relationship between psychological empowerment and job performance (Seibert et al., 2011).

Readiness for change establishes the employee's willingness, participation and abilities to get in the process of change (Armenakis et al., 1993). For successful implementation of change in the organization, it was utmost important to recognise the concept of readiness for change (Armenakis et al., 1993). Mindfulness and the perception for transformation were explored as contributing key factors for change, as stated in the Study of Holt et al. (2007) that the employees acceptance of change is important because this cultivated supportive behaviour and enhanced engagement in the transformation. Change model of Curt Lewin (1951) exhibited the significance of human perception for the need for change to begin the process by unfreezing the state. The model revealed the greater value of readiness for change was linked with efficiency, so psychologically empowered employees were found adaptive, participative and engaged in the change process as well as shown less resistance and contributed to overall organizational success (Armenakis et al., 1993; Holt et al., 2007).

Work group support was explored as an extent of employees working in an organization, encouraging each other through sharing knowledge and skills to understand the change process. Employee well-being was mostly found correlated with a mutual cooperative culture, explored as less resistant to change and increased productivity. During the implementation of change, a noticeable impact on employee perception and behaviour was significantly noted because of work group support (Armenakis & Bedeian, 1999). Research by Eby et al. (2000) found that work group support was screwed with the change process because it created an emotion of belongingness and depleted the extent of uncertainty. In order to diminish the resistance against the change, work group support was found impactful to enhance the overall well-being of employees. The role leadership was found influential to develop employee perception on having work group support. Transformational leadership being more influential to transform the behaviour of the employees and keeping them rigorously motivating contributed to develop a positive culture with work group support (Bass, 1985). The teams' leadership was discovered as a tone setter for support, cooperation and organizational culture (Armenakis & Bedeian, 1999).

The study exhibited a novel structure with the impact of TL on RC and with PE and with enhanced role of WGS in moderation because the connection between PE and RC was never tested. As the WGS is a significant element which promotes a supportive and collaborative environment and increases organizational efficiency for change, the study contributed to fill this gap in the context of the telecom sector. This study contributes to the theoretical advancement of organizational psychology and change management by examining the interrelationships among transformational leadership, psychological empowerment, readiness for change, and workgroup support. It provides a comprehensive framework that integrates these constructs, offering valuable insights for both scholarly inquiry and practical application. The findings demonstrate that transformational leadership significantly enhances psychological empowerment, which subsequently facilitates employees' readiness for change. Furthermore, the moderating role of workgroup support underscores its critical function in promoting employee adaptability and engagement during organizational transitions. These insights have important implications for leadership development initiatives, suggesting that cultivating transformational leadership and fostering supportive work environments can enhance organizational resilience and adaptability in the face of continuous change.

Literature Review

Transformational leadership got significant attention in industrial psychology and managerial studies due to its patient recognition and investigation in change. In the beginning, Bass (1985) established a concept of defining transformational leadership that inspired and motivated followers to perform for collective interests instead and beyond their personal capacity. "Transformational leadership incorporated four core components; idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration" (Bass, 1985). The demonstration of leadership exerted influence on organisational innovation (Naguib & Naem, 2018). In the research of Eliyana et al. (2019), it was revealed that transformational leadership had an outstanding impact on both job satisfaction and organisational commitment whereas the leadership found insignificantly influential on job performance even in the particular condition when intervened by organisational commitment. Top et al. (2020) stated that transformational leadership was positively correlated with performance of the employees and individual consideration and inspirational motivation were found significantly influential on employee performance as well. Henceforth, transformational leadership on one hand

positively influenced the employee readiness for change and employee motivation however on the other side readiness for change positively affected the employee performance and work motivation but the mediation role of readiness for change and work motivation between transformational leadership and employee performance created a positive effect, then the leadership, readiness to change and work motivation collectively created a positive impact on performance of employees (Hariadi & Muafi, 2022). As employee performance was not significantly impacted by TL; whereas readiness for change was impacted by TL, so the result exhibited that RC had a significant and positive impact on the relationship between both the TL and employee performance, it worked as a full mediator between them (Novitasari et al., 2020).

In a number of studies within the group, positive impact of transformational leadership was found on employee creativity, psychological capital, team reflexivity, and innovative culture and with moderating role of environmental dynamism, the relationship was strengthened with psychological capital and team reflexivity and employee creativity (Xu et al., 2024). Job autonomy was significantly enhanced by the transformational leadership, as it created a positive impact through job engagement with online knowledge sharing, in addition to it organisational innovation mediated the relationship between transformational leadership and job autonomy (Nguyen & Sharma, 2024).

Readiness for change refers to the emotional and substantial preparedness of employees and teams to embrace the change and participate in its process. The preparedness involved provocation and physical participation in adapting new procedures in the change process. In broad understanding it means to get the employees enhanced readiness for change, it is significant to motivate them to implement change initiatives, build individual and team capacities, and develop clear communication ways to demonstrate the reason for change (Armenakis et al., 1999). Holt et al. (2007) stated that the confidence of employees was found in; (a) implementing change initiatives (a measure of change efficacy), (b) ensuring the initiatives were appropriate for the organization (measuring appropriateness), (c) commitment of leaders in change process (a measure of management support), and (d) ensuring the benefits for group members (a measure of personal benefit).

Holt et al. (2007) specified the indicators for analysing the employees readiness for change; (1) Employees perception - perceiving that the change was apposite for organization, (2) Employee belief - believing that the implementing change was advantageous for organization, (3) Employee acceptance - realising the need of prospective change with logical justifications, (4) Employee focused - the change process was ultimately focused on employees well-being, (5) Employee confidence - confidence about the capabilities of employees in implementing change, (6) Leadership intelligibility - perceiving that the leaders were skilful, committed and adaptable to change, (7) Employee optimism - reassuring employees benefits in implementing change. Implementation of change was positively impacted by the process of Knowledge management, in mediation analysis, its strategies were found partially mediated by the readiness for change while some interactions were also found between employee cynicism and readiness for change during successful implementation of change (Imran et al., 2017).

Roemer et al. (2021) presented the findings of two contradictory situations: well-being and distress with the impact of mindfulness on readiness for change. Eventually,

it was explored that distress was low in the situation of high well-being whereas mindfulness had a positive and significant impact of readiness for change.

Innovative work behaviour was significantly impacted by digital learning orientation, and at times, this impact was conditional and was mediated by readiness for change. This was affected by the moderator organisational learning culture, so when the moderation level was low but incongruent with optimal organisational learning culture, the innovative behaviour was greatly impacted by digital learning due to the orientation of increased adaptability to change. But aside from this particular strategy, organisational learning culture had no discernible impact on result prediction (Aboobaker et al., 2021). Abdul-Nasiru (2024) explored that the effective implementation of change was expedited by learning organisations and readiness for change. Moreover, effective implementation of change and organizational learning culture were linked by the readiness for change and developed a significant mediating mechanism. So, on the basis of above arguments we develop our 1st hypothesis;

Spreitzer, (1995) actuated the concept of psychological empowerment. The psychological empowerment worked as an intrinsic motivational factor to perform the tasks (Al-Madadha et al., 2019). Waheed et al. (2018) explored that psychological empowerment was an element of employee autonomy and control of performing tasks affected by the company and environmental factors, so, the organizations developed productive and constructive psychological resources by creating a supportive environment and fulfilling the psychological needs. Theoretically, psychological empowerment was explored as a perception about a supportive environment where employees felt compatible and relatable to his personal value as well as organizational value (Spreitzer, 1995, p. 1444). The values were found four-dimensional: (1) Meaning; value of tasks, (2) Competence; value of performance; (3) Self-determination; value of autonomy to perform the tasks, and (4) Impact; value of cognitive experiences that empower to contribute (Spreitzer, 1995). Moreover, Spreitzer (1995) stated that the organizations enhanced the value of four-dimensions significantly by developing psychological empowerment and work design. Thomas & Velthouse, (1990) demonstrated that autonomy and competence were the two recognised factors among the three psychological instincts described in Self-determination Theory (STD), worked for psychological empowerment. It was explored that psychological capital and psychological empowerment both were positively and significantly influenced by readiness for change of employees, hence, it was also explored that the impact of psychological empowerment was higher than psychological capital on readiness for change (Lizar et al., 2015).

Javed et al. (2017) found that when ethical leadership nurtured creativity in the organization, psychological empowerment mediated this relationship, the other elements such as work meaning, competence, impact, self-determination, and job performance developed substantial relationships with each other, moreover, a significant correlation was also found among psychological empowerment, job performance, job satisfaction, and organisational effectiveness. Sun (2016) found that the elements of psychological empowerment and job performance were mediated by job satisfaction. Muduli (2017) stated the main indications of an agile organizational culture were special bonuses, employee engagement, organisational learning and training, and information systems, additionally, it is found that psychological empowerment supported to enhance competence, self-determination, meaning, and agility. In the organization those employees who were psychologically empowered perceived themselves to be more

influential on others and considered themselves to be more autonomous, proactive, and creative (Kustanto et al., 2020; Prabowo et al., 2018).

In several studies, psychological empowerment was related with proactive work behavior and found similar to proactive work behavior (Kawasaki, 2019), innovative work behavior (Wang et al., 2021), voice behavior (Wei et al., 2020), the autonomy of the task's performance, and routine affected the innovative work behavior (Takaishi et al., 2019). According to Singh and Singh (2019) organizational justice significantly and positively impacted psychological empowerment, then psychological empowerment and corporate citizenship behaviour also positively and significantly impacted job satisfaction, in the same way organizational citizenship behaviour impacted on job satisfaction through the effect of psychological empowerment and organizational justice. It was found that the employee felt competent to control over the tasks with his mental disposition and the psychological empowerment enhanced this disposition during job performance (Ibrahim, 2020). Open, balanced and supportive communication which promoted the sense of autonomy, competence and control over the tasks increased psychological empowerment, and it significantly impacted the attitude and behavior of the employees (Iqbal et al., 2020). According to Stanescu et al., (2021) in the mediation between attitude and behavior of employees and communication style of management, psychological empowerment played its prime role. Then, Boonyarit, (2023) found that psychological empowerment was an instrumental element to develop proactivity in employee performance, and attributed as an element that shaped employee role and workplace environment. It was explored that work engagement was uninfluenced on emotional intelligence even with the mediation of self-efficacy; however, in concurrent analysis psychological empowerment and self-efficacy significantly mediated the relationship between emotional intelligence and work engagement and in the same way psychological empowerment significantly mediated the relationship emotional intelligence and self-efficacy (Hameli et al., 2023). Human resources practices such as job satisfaction that impacted on employee engagement were impacted by psychological empowerment, employee engagement neither impacted by HR practices nor by job satisfaction, then employee engagement did not mediate the relationship between psychological empowerment and job satisfaction, next, employee involvement did not mediate the relationship between job satisfaction and human resources practices (Haryanto et al., 2024). It was found that lower burnout significantly connected with dispositional mindfulness, with perceived social support, psychological empowerment mediating the relationship in both perspectives of employee and team, through which it was analysed that psychological empowerment and perceived social support mediated with multiple effects (Qi et al., 2024). Mangundjaya & Martdianty, (2023) found that PE significantly created a positive relationship with RC for employees' adaptability, and individual RC also strongly mediated the relationship between TL personal enthusiasm for change, whereas it had not any direct impact on RC too; however indirectly affected the role of PE. Based on the arguments, our second, third and fourth hypothesis are as follows:

The work group support was defined as a contextual factor for exchanging mutual assistance and getting resources and information in order to increase combined performance (Cohen et al., 1997). This support was exemplified with various forms including, equipment, technology, hierarchy, and interpersonal communication (Thompson, 2017). It was explored as an element that most of the time created an impact on employee satisfaction and well-being, because as a member of a team perceived himself supported, the level of satisfaction increased which led to a higher level of employee commitment and lower turnover ratio (Eisenberger et al., 2011). According to

Schein, (2010) an organizational culture played a decisive role in organizational performance, prioritization of individualist culture over teamwork clogged in developing workgroup support. It was explored in another study that when individuals considered each other as corrival instead of collaborators, higher levels of competition among the employees lessened the intention of extending support to colleagues (Fletcher & Nusbaum, 2010). Based on the arguments, our last hypothesis is as follow:

Hypotheses

- H1: There is a positive association between transformational leadership and Readiness for change.
- H2: There is a positive association between transformational leadership and psychological empowerment.
- H3: There is a positive association between psychological empowerment and readiness for change.
- H4: Psychological empowerment mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and readiness for change.
- H5: Work group support moderates the relationship between psychological empowerment and readiness for change.

In Figure 1, a model of the study exhibits the impact of transformational leadership (independent variable) on readiness for change (dependent variable) through the mediation of psychological empowerment and moderation role of workgroup support.

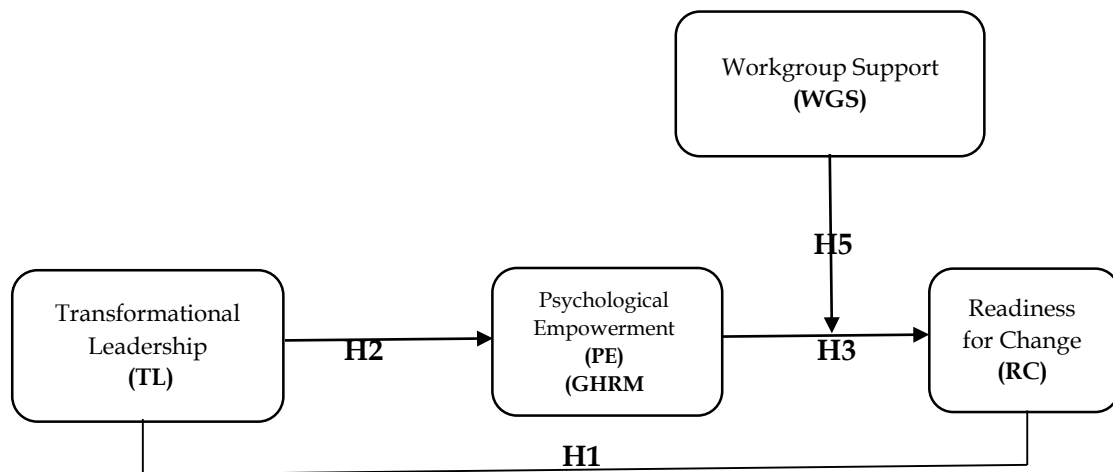


Figure 1 Hypotheses

Theoretical Framework

Self-determination Theory (SDT) that exerted a psychological framework developed by Deci and Ryan (1985) that focuses on intuitive psychological needs of humans for autonomy, competence, and relatedness of individuals. In the SDT it was assumed that the satisfaction of the above-mentioned needs promotes ideally the human elements of motivation and well-being. The SDT theory describes the variation between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation; intrinsic motivation of an individual is the element through which an individual engages himself in the activities of inherent satisfaction

whereas extrinsic motivation is the element of external rewards that drive the motivation of humans. The SDT has three core dimensions named as “autonomy, competence and relatedness”. The theory underscored the primary thoughts of human motivational factors based on needs. The term autonomy refers to the need for self-determination and the experience of performing tasks as volitional as harmonised the personal values which involves the desire to engage in activities voluntarily and with a perception of determination, then the term competence involves the need to effectively interact with the environment, cope with the challenges, and experience a sense of efficacy and competency in performing the tasks, thus, the term encompasses the desire to feel competent and efficient in performing the tasks (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Relatedness pertains to the need of developing a network through interpersonal connections with others, social belonging, and meaningful relationships. It involves the desire to feel connected, cared for, and supported within social contexts (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

Material and Methods

A quantitative method was used to investigate the relationship of the elements of the study through data analysis. According to Creswell and Creswell, (2017), quantitative research was one of the best-justified methods. Employees from the telecom industry of telecom Islamabad and Rawalpindi were considered as a population of the study. With snowball sampling techniques, a time-lagged approach was used to target the audiences via online google forms. Questionnaires were distributed in 390 employees of the telecommunication industry, out of them 322 responded and recorded whereas 33 questionnaires were discarded as the employees recorded incomplete responses; however, 289 employees were finalized for data analysis using SPSS.

Measurement of the variables was done through the use of a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

1. *Transformational leadership*: A 12-items scale was adopted to measure the factors of transformational leadership (Vera & Crossan, 2004). The items resolute the following dimensions: idealized influence, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation and individualized considerations.
2. *Readiness for change*: A 6-items scale was developed by Holt et al. (2007) assess employee readiness for change. An Item from the scale is “I am willing to put in extra effort to make the change work.”
3. *Psychological Empowerment*: A 12-item scale was developed by Spreitzer, S. C. (1995) to measure psychological empowerment. The items measured the following dimensions: Meaning, Competence, Individual self-determination and autonomy, and Impact.
4. *Workgroup Support*: Work group support was the dimension of KEYS: A 4-items scale was developed by Amabile et al. (1996) to assess the climate for creativity through work group support. One item from the scale was “Within my work group, we challenge each other’s ideas in a constructive way.”

Results and Discussion

Table 1
Gender

Gender	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
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Male	88.2	83.2	83.2
Female	11.8	11.8	100.0
Total	100%	100%	

The majority of the respondents who recorded their responses were male, 88.2%, while 11.8% were female

Table 2
Marital Status

Marital Status	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Single	53.3	53.3	53.3
Married	46.7	46.7	100.0
Total	100%	100%	

Out of 289 respondents, 53.3 % are single, and 46.7% are married

Table 3
Age

Age	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
18 - 25	27.1	27.1	27.1
26 - 40	66.0	66.0	93.1
41- 60	6.9	6.9	100.0
60 above	0.0	0.0	100.0
Total	100%	100%	

Four age demographic groups are identified in this research: 18 to 25, 26 to 40, 41 to 60, and above 60. Of the 289 responders, the majority are in the following age ranges: between 18 to 25, 27.1%; between 26 to 40, 66%; between 41 to 60%, 6.9%; and above 60, 0%.

Table 4
Work Status

Work Status	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Full Time	94.1	94.1	94.1
Part Time	5.9	5.9	100.0
Total	100%	100%	

In the analysis the work status demographics are categorised in two parts; one is full-time and other is part-time. From the feedback, 94.1% responses were full-time, whereas 5.9% were part-time.

Table 5
Position

Designation	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Supervisor/Management	67.0	67.0	67.0
Maintenance	8.4	8.4	75.4
Customer Service	22.1	22.1	97.5
Clerical	2.5	2.5	100.0
Total	100%	100%	

In the research 67.0% are the majority of respondents who have been in the position of Supervisor/Management, 8.4% are from Maintenance, 22.1% are from the customer service position, and 2.5% are from clerical positions

Table 6
Job Experience

Job Experience	Percentage	Valid Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
0 - 5	65.4	65.4	65.4

6 - 10	19.9	19.9	85.4
11 - 20	13.4	13.4	98.8
21 - 30	1.2	1.2	100.0
Total	100%	100%	

The majority of respondents are from 0 - 5 years' work experience which are 65.4%, then, 6 - 10 years' work experience which are 19.9%, 11 - 20 years' work experience which are 13.4% and 21 - 30 years' work experience which are 1.2%.

Table 7
One-Way ANOVA

Demographics	Readiness for Change	
	F statistics	P value
Gender	.066	.797
Marital Status	.137	.712
Age	.046	.955
Work Status	.584	.445
Position	.812	.488
Job Experience	.217	.885

To control the differences in employee readiness for change based on the demographic parameters investigated by conducting a one-way ANOVA. The investigation indicated that there were no significance differences in the readiness for change, the dependent variable, via gender ($F = .066$, $P = 0.797$), marital status ($F = 0.137$, $P = 0.712$), age ($F = 0.046$, $P = 0.955$), work status ($F = .584$, $P = 0.445$), position ($F = 0.812$, $P = 0.488$), and job experience ($F = 0.217$, $P = 0.885$).

Table 8
Data Normality

Research variables	Skewness	Kurtosis
Transformational Leadership	-.767	2.561
Psychological Empowerment	-.957	3.742
Workgroup Support	-.444	2.318
Readiness for Change	-1.104	5.228

According to Hair et al. (2006) and (Bryne, 2010), data is classified as normal with the skewness in between -2 and +2 and with the kurtosis in between -7 and +7.

Table 9
Mean, Standard deviation, Correlation, and Reliabilities

	Mean	S. DV	1	2	3	4
TL	3.26	.48	(.95)			
PE	4.33	.46	.577**	(.93)		
RC	4.38	.47	.524**	.747**	(.89)	
WGS	4.33	.46	.510**	.661**	.658**	(.87)

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 (2-tailed).

Table shows that the statistical relationship of the data shows transformational leadership is moderated positively related to psychological empowerment ($r = 0.577$, $p = 0.01$), readiness for change ($r = 0.524$, $p = 0.01$), and workgroup support ($r = 0.510$, $p = 0.01$). Psychological empowerment is strong positive correlated with readiness for change ($r = 0.747$, $p = 0.01$), and moderate positive correlation with workgroup support ($r = 0.661$, $p = 0.01$). And workgroups support moderate positives related to readiness for change ($r = 0.658$, $p = 0.01$). The moderator was not needed to have a strong relationship with the variable which was being studied (Sauer & Dick, 1993). Acceptable composite reliability of all items was 0.7 and above. AVE less than 0.5 indicated that items might have a greater

chance of error, so, the minimum threshold was required to be established (Hair et al., 2017).

Table 10
Mediation Regression

Hypotheses	Path	β	SE	T-Value	95% confidence interval		
					P-Value	LLCI	ULCI
H1	TL \rightarrow RC	0.2308	0.451	4.5907	0.0000	0.1183	0.2957
H2	TL \rightarrow PE	0.6134	0.0518	11.1607	0.0000	0.4760	0.6798
H3	PE \rightarrow RC	0.5321	0.0414	13.1735	0.0000	0.4634	0.6261
H4	TL \rightarrow PE \rightarrow RC	0.3262	0.717			0.1878	0.4633

N=289, *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001; TL=Transformational Leadership, PE=Psychological Empowerment, RC=Readiness for Change

A regression analysis for mediation was performed using SPSS software to explore the quantitative relationships among the variables, as shown in Table 10. The results for Hypothesis 1 indicated a significant connection between transformational leadership and readiness for change ($\beta = 0.2308$, p-value = 0.0000, 95% CI [0.1183, 0.2957]), supporting Hypothesis 1 and suggesting that transformational leadership has a significant direct effect on readiness for change without the influence of mediators. In line with Hypothesis 2, transformational leadership positively impacts psychological empowerment. The findings in Table 10 showed a significant positive association between transformational leadership and psychological empowerment ($\beta = 0.6134$, p-value = 0.0000, 95% CI [0.4760, 0.6798]), thus supporting Hypothesis 2 and establishing a strong positive relationship between the two variables.

Similarly, the analysis of the direct and positive association between psychological empowerment and readiness for change concerning Hypothesis 3 revealed a strong positive relationship ($\beta = 0.5321$, p-value = 0.0000, 95% CI [0.4634, 0.6261]), supporting Hypothesis 3. As a result, Hypothesis 3 is validated and accepted. Additionally, the analysis of Hypothesis 4, which posits that psychological empowerment mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and readiness for change, demonstrated partial mediation. As shown in Table 10, the mediation value was 0.3262, with a 95% confidence interval of 0.1878 to 0.4633, indicating that zero does not exist within this interval. Consequently, Hypothesis 4 is confirmed, revealing that psychological empowerment partially mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and readiness for change.

Table 11
Moderation Regression

DV: Readiness for Change			
Predictors	β	R ²	P-Value
Step 1			
PE	.645	.500	.000
WGS	.674	.432	.000
Step 2			
PE x WGS	.093	.550	.000

The readiness for change (dependent variable) is influenced by transformational leadership (independent variable), psychological empowerment (mediator), and workgroup support (moderator). The moderation effect of workgroup support between psychological empowerment and readiness for change was examined using SPSS regression analysis. The results of this analysis are presented in Table 11. A bootstrap procedure with a 95% confidence level was employed. Hypothesis 5 was tested by

including the independent and moderator variables in a moderated regression analysis. The interaction term (psychological empowerment and workgroup support variables) was added at the end of step two. If this interaction term is significant, it confirms moderation.

The findings of the moderated regression analysis are presented, confirming Hypothesis H5. As shown in Table 11 (Step 2), workgroup support moderates the relationship between psychological empowerment and readiness for change ($\beta = 0.93$, $P = 0.000$, $R^2 = 0.550$). Therefore, the data supports the moderation hypothesis, indicating that workgroup support strengthens the relationship between psychological empowerment and readiness for change.

Table 12
Hypotheses Test Results

H	Hypotheses Stetements	Remarks
H1	Transformational leadership has a positive influence on readiness for change.	Supported
H2	Transformational leadership has a positive influence on psychological empowerment.	Supported
H3	Psychological empowerment has a positive influence on readiness for change.	Supported
H4	Psychological empowerment partially mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and readiness for change.	Supported
H5	Workgroup support moderate the relationship between psychological empowerment and readiness for change.	Supported

The primary goal of the research is to investigate the association among the variables such as transformational leadership, psychological empowerment, workgroup support, and readiness for change. The five hypotheses in the research work are shown in Table 12 below, which shows the results of the regression analysis for each hypotheses

Discussion

In fact, Self-Determination Theory (SDT) predicated intrinsic motivation of individuals upon fulfilment of fundamental psychological needs; autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Deci & Ryan, 2000). in this study, the theory is aligned with Transformational leadership that promoted such environment where these need are met, and leadership becoming able to create an impact because of shared vision - autonomy, intellectually inherit a motivation in the followers (competence) and developing individual consideration (relatedness) (Ryan & Deci, 2021). According to Spreitzer (1995) these motivational factors psychologically empowered the employees to perform the tasks by embedding meaningfulness, competence and self-determination. Armenakis & Harris, (2009) demonstrated that since the employees feel empowered, they willingly adopt change in the organization and evolve in readiness for change. The element relatedness of the theory aligned with workgroup support due to which a collaborative culture and social support increased and created a positive impact that motivated the employees for change (Baard, Deci & Ryan, 2004).

The results of regression analysis between transformational leaders and readiness for change showed the positive and significant relationship, hence the TL impacted RC. As the telecom industry is ever evolving to implement new technologies, upgrade infrastructure, and respond to growing customer requirements. So, in this situation the role of Transformational leaders becomes essential to promote a culture of change. The result of the study validates the earlier research works done to explore the relation. Bass

& Riggio, (2006) articulated Transformational leadership as a logical factor that has compelling vision, inspiring innovation, and motivation for the employees to pursue collective goals and increase readiness for change. By that way, as a telecommunication organization steps in to change the process of 5G technology. In a particular event transformational leaders may motivate the employees to participate enthusiastically in the change process (Avolio & Yammarino, 2013). This aligns with our result that transformational leadership can create a positive impact on the change process and can effectively motivate the human resources to adopt change through developing a supportive culture and psychologically empowered environment.

Finding of the regression analysis of the relationship between TL and PE remarkably showed the existence of significance. As the telecommunication organizations mostly depend on the skills and expertise of their employees to drive technological innovation and improve the efficiency of the services, there the role of transformational leadership is significant to psychologically empower the employees. Spreitzer, (1995) highlighted the same factor by mentioning that for the development of an environment where employees feel valued and skillful to a meaningful contribution, TL impacts on PE. Hence, the employees are empowered, they become custodian of their tasks and exercise new ideas, participate in problem solving. It is similar to that when a technical team proactively finds a new solution to increase the value of collective performance, it maintains the competitive edge of the organization (Conger & Kanungo, 1988). In a study Wang et al. (2022) stated that through psychological empowerment TL significantly increased employee engagement and effective organisational commitment. This is similar to our findings that transformational leadership positively affects psychological empowerment, when employees are psychologically empowered, they feel confident and competent in their roles.

There upon the finding of the regression analysis of relationship between PE and RC reveals the significance of both. In the telecommunication industry the PE develops the confidence of employees on their skills and expertise to manage and implement change. When employees are aware of the “meaning, competence, self-determination and impact” they perceive the change, understand its denotations, become adeptive to new technology, and show their willingness to indulge into its process. This factor was also stated by Thomas & Velthouse, (1990) that perception of meaning, competence and self-determination created an impact on employees to view overall change, adopt new technologies, and find opportunity for growth. It is essential for the employees of such types of industries where changes are continuous and employees need to be involved in adopting new things to survive successfully. Employees who are regarded as cognitive intellectuals, feel competent and determined show more diligence to participate in the change process.

Psychological empowerment works as a bridge between transformational leadership and readiness for change and findings clearly demonstrate the mediation effect of it. So the results of the study are supported by Bartram and Casimir (2007) who found that psychological empowerment mediated the relationship between leadership and readiness for change. This highlights the crucial impact of successful change management initiatives. It was defined by Spreitzer (1995) that psychological empowerment referred to motivational factors developed in organizational culture and reflect the role of employees to actively participate in change, it was added that psychological empowerment was identified in four elements: “meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact”; Meaning is to valuably developing the role of the employees by aligning it with the tasks, Competence is believing on the ability of

employees to perform the tasks skilfully, Self-determination is perceiving the autonomy of employees to initiate and manage the tasks, and Impact is the proportion of employee influence due to strategic, managerial and operational outcome while performing the tasks (Spreitzer, 1995). The partial mediation of PE between TL and RC demonstrates significant enhancement of the emotional pneumonia of employees.

In the moderating impact of perceived workgroup support, the results of the study shows that it has significance in the relationship between PE and RC, which means the moderation is not only crucial but also creates an impact on RC. This also demonstrates that it has increased the impact of mediation and strengthened the relationship between PE and RC. So this is evident that both psychological empowerment and workgroup support are the elements of employee confidence building and increasing motivation. As Spreitzer, (1995) stated that psychological empowerment imparted intrinsic motivation to perceive the employee's competence, autonomy and impact in performing their tasks. whereas, Tjosvold, (1998) stated that workgroups support extended extrinsic motivation to develop collaboration in the tasks, cooperation from the peers. Similarly, Seibert et al. (2011) described that workgroups support enhanced employee perception of competence with knowledge sharing and collaborative problem-solving, and increased motivation to ensure a purposeful outcome for the organization. According to Mathieu et al. (2006) workgroup support developed a culture where employees perceived psychologically empowered and augmented the readiness for change due to collaboration and trusted environment. Moreover, Rafferty and Griffin (2006) demonstrated the same factors that extension of workgroup support from peers and managers positively impacted the perception of employees for change and increased the impact of psychological empowerment. Finally, Gigliotti et al. (2019) talked about perceived organizational support that boosted employee readiness for changes, particularly the workgroup support enhanced the impacts of psychological empowerment on readiness for change.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the study was conducted focusing on the industrial context factor of the telecommunication sector of Rawalpindi and Islamabad; however, reciprocation and additions are required. In this study few significant approaches are used to understand how transformational leadership is related with the outcome of readiness for change in the telecommunication industry, then explored components of psychological empowerment as a possible element to relate and increase characteristics of transformational leadership for readiness for change, next found the moderation of workgroup support strengthened the relationship between psychological empowerment and readiness for change.

Recommendations

The study is focused within the industrial boundaries of the telecommunication sector of a particular geography of twin cities Rawalpindi and Islamabad, which limits the generalizability of the results for various other geographies because the study comprehensively covers the role of leadership, psychological empowerment, team dynamics for the purpose of change within the specific industry while the use snowball sampling has limitation. According to Etikan, Alkassim & Abubakar, (2016) choosing snowball sampling restricted the generalizability of the results because of its application on a single network population rather than the random sampling. So, it is suggested that future studies should be done with a diverse portfolio of many other regions and

industries, this would be the best course of action to validate the results. Secondly, data analysis is done over a specific period of time by using a time-lagged approach, scholars may opt for a longitudinal approach which was ideally recommended for mediation by Maxwell and Cole (2007). The foundation of the study laid on transformational leadership that greatly impacted readiness for change, it is recommended that scholars should focus on other types of leadership such as transactional or servant leadership, this would provide a comprehensive ability of leadership dimensions. In the study psychological empowerment tested as a meditative factor whereas workgroup support as a moderative factor, the prospective researcher can choose from other variety of elements like employee resilience, organizational culture etc. Additionally, researchers can opt for other factors that can create impact on readiness for change. A quantitative approach is to collect the responses from the targeted audience of the industry; however mixed methods may also be used for this purpose. Moreover, by doing so the researcher can dynamically go through a vital perception of how transformational leadership, psychological empowerment, and workgroup support can create a great impact on readiness for change.

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