

Exploring the Influence of Leadership Styles on Organizational Commitment: A Quantitative Study

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Abstract

The relationship between leadership styles and organizational commitment is examined, focusing on how different leadership approaches influence employees' commitment levels. Organizational commitment is considered a critical factor in employee retention, job satisfaction, and overall organizational performance. A sample of 220 participants from the services sector was drawn and a quantitative analysis was employed to explore the impact of leadership on commitment. Data was collected using validated scales for leadership styles (e.g., ethical, authentic, and inclusive leadership) and organizational commitment. Statistical analyses, including Cronbach's alpha, correlation, regression, and t-tests, were conducted to test the hypotheses. A significant positive relationship between ethical and authentic leadership styles and organizational commitment was established while a moderate impact was shown by inclusive leadership. The growing body of literature on leadership and organizational behavior benefits from this study. Practical implications proposed that leadership development programs emphasizing ethical and inclusive practices should be prioritized by organizations to enhance employee commitment and ensure organizational success.

Keywords: *Authentic leadership, ethical leadership, inclusive leadership, organizational commitment*

JEL Classification: M12, M54, L20

Introduction

Employee performance, retention, and job satisfaction are all considered to be significantly influenced by organizational commitment (OC), which is the psychological bond that employees have with their respective organizations (Haque & Aston, 2016). This commitment is seen to be significantly shaped by leadership, which is a major factor affecting employee behavior and corporate culture (Javed et al., 2018). A plethora of studies investigated the effects of many leadership philosophies, including inclusive, authentic, and ethical leadership on organizational outcomes (Haque et al., 2021; Younas et al., 2022). Nonetheless, little is known about the precise

processes that explain how different theories of leadership affect organizational commitment, especially in culturally and organizationally diverse settings of service sectors.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the linkage between ethical, authentic, and inclusive leadership styles and organizational commitment. It seeks to give comprehensive knowledge about how considered leadership methods affect employees' organizational commitment levels. The study is carried out in a multicultural service sector, which ensures that the findings are applicable across regions.

Organizations aiming to increase employee engagement and lower employee turnover need to recognize the connection between organizational commitment and leadership. Positive organizational outcomes, such as higher level of job satisfaction and lower or manageable occupational stress, have been associated with ethical and genuine leadership styles (Haque et al., 2020; Haque & Yamoah, 2021). However, inclusive leadership promotes psychological empowerment and a sense of belonging, both of which are critical for employee engagement and commitment (Javed et al., 2018). This study contributes to literature by providing empirical evidence on the impact of these leadership styles on organizational commitment.

The aim is to investigate the relationship between organizational commitment and leadership styles, which is the main goal of this study. The study specifically aims to:

- Analyze how ethical leadership affects organizational commitment.
- Examine how commitment is fostered by authentic leadership.
- Evaluate how inclusive leadership affects employees' levels of commitment.

Literature Review

According to Haque and Yamoah (2014), several scholars from behavioral science fields have identified and described organizational commitment (OC). According to Sheldon (1971), OC is the constructive (positive) intent that employees exhibit by ensuring that organizational objectives are accomplished. According to Becker's "Side-Bet" theory (1960), which forms the basis of an earlier definition, "when the person and his performed activities are in a steady line, it creates a side-bet, as the interest of a person develops towards the assigned activities, reflecting commitment" (Becker, 1960; p.32). Since it assumes that it is a characteristic of people's behavior, therefore Becker's side-bet theory has received harsh criticism from theorists. Instead, OC may be viewed as a "trade" between the organizations and its employees in exchange for compensation or benefits (Sheldon, 1971; Buchanan, 1974; cited Porter, Steers, and Mowday, 2005; Haque, 2018). Even this is far from qualifying as a comprehensive theory.

Bateman and Strasser (1984) argue thus, "a worker's desire to be...affiliated with their...organization [causes them] to...demonstrate efforts to achieve organizational goals and remain loyal" (p. 97). This is tautological. Worse, it is not always the case that efforts to achieve goals represent loyalty to the organization. Employees may not be loyal to the organization but faithful to their responsibilities and tasks. Task commitment is far from organizational commitment. Porter et al., (1974) claimed that organizational commitment is commitment shown by individuals towards their organization reflected in voluntary effort, accepting organization's norms, while being willingness to stay with the same organization. Mowday et al., (1979) identified three attributes of organizational commitment (OC), naming them affective commitment (AC), normative commitment (NC) and continuance commitment (CC) (Haque and Yamoah, 2014).

According to several researchers, there are three different attributes of organizational commitment: affective commitment (AC), normative commitment (NC) and continuance commitment (CC) (Allen and Meyer, 1996; Boehman, 2006; Canipe, 2006; Haque and Yamoah, 2014). Additionally, sentiments and intent that workers demonstrate when they view company's goals as their own is affective commitment (Haque and Yamoah, 2014). The claims made by Haque and Yamoah (2014) that NC is an obligatory feeling that workers have for a company, AC is linked to the work itself while CC is a feeling that encourages employees to remain with the same organization.

However, there are other schools of thought. According to Kanter (1968), continuous commitment can be treated as a "rational choice" - cost-benefit analysis, in which continuing to stay with the same company is viewed as advantageous while departing could be costly. This provided an explanation of affective commitment using an internalized pressure. Later, Wiener (1982) described normative commitment as a demand that is internalized (norm) while emotional attachment is 'affective' and choosing not to quit is continuous commitment. Interestingly, distinctive types of relationship are demonstrated by the different dimensions of organizational commitment (Mathieu and Zajac, 1990; Steers, 1997) Haque and Yamaoh (2014) stated:

- In the banking sector, normative commitment is lower among employees, and it is evident that they have moderately negative job satisfaction, while a positive association is found between job satisfaction and AC and NC (Madi & Jarad, 2012). Furthermore, Hassan et al., (2014) found that bank employees, who have appropriate organizational support, report a higher level of organizational commitment and tend to perform better, irrespective of whether the bank is a public or private institution.
- Non-monetary benefits clearly improve employee performance in the IT industry (Tan and Lau, 2012). In this case, there is a positive correlation between work satisfaction and organizational commitment since both are often increased when employees get non-monetary benefits.
- Low affective commitment and normative commitment and high continuous commitment are seen in public healthcare.
- Employees in private healthcare demonstrate high affective and normative commitment linked to organizational support, but low continuation commitment (Halepota and Irani, 2010). Furthermore, organizational assistance is given through job training, procedural justice, and incentives and recognition (Halepota and Irani, 2010).
- All three forms of organizational commitment—AC, NC, and CC—have a positive correlation with work satisfaction in the hotel industry and are favorably correlated with POS (Hemdi, 2009).
- Although it is evident that POS is strongly connected with AC and NC in the healthcare industry, it is also strongly and positively associated with CC in the private sector, and vice versa in the public sector.

Ethical Leadership

Integrity, fairness, and moral behavior are traits of ethical leaders that build commitment and trust among staff members (Brown, Treviño, & Harrison, 2005). Accountability, transparency, and moral decision-making are given top priority by ethical leaders, and they have a positive impact on organizational outcomes including employee commitment, performance, and satisfaction (Haque & Yamoah, 2021). According to studies, ethical leadership fosters creative work practices and lowers occupational stress, which in turn increases organizational commitment (Haque et al., 2021). For example, ethical leadership drastically lowers stress levels among workers, increasing

commitment and job satisfaction (Haque and Yamoah, 2021). Additionally, moral leaders foster an environment of fairness and trust, which motivates workers to return the favor by becoming more engaged and loyal (Javed et al., 2018).

Authentic Leadership

Relational transparency, self-awareness, balanced processing, and an internalized moral viewpoint are characteristics of authentic leadership (Walumbwa et al., 2008). Employee trust and psychological safety are fostered by authentic leaders who are sincere, open, and consistent in their behavior (Haque et al., 2020). By giving workers more authority and a stronger sense of purpose, authentic leadership has been found to have a positive impact on organizational commitment (Haque et al., 2020). For example, Haque et al. (2020) discovered that authentic leadership considerably enhances psychological capital, which in turn increases organizational commitment. Authentic leaders also foster a positive work environment by connecting their behaviors with their actions and values, which resonates with workers and further strengthens their emotional attachment to the organization (Javed et al., 2018).

Inclusive Leadership

According to Carmeli et al. (2010), inclusive leadership places a strong emphasis on appreciating diversity, encouraging teamwork, and establishing a work atmosphere where all staff members feel valued and empowered. According to Younas et al. (2022), inclusive leaders ensure that everyone feels included in decision-making processes and actively consider the feedback from a variety of team members. Higher levels of psychological empowerment - a major factor in organizational commitment, have been associated with this leadership style (Javed et al., 2018). According to Younas et al. (2022), inclusive leadership increases employee voice behavior, which in turn promotes commitment and a sense of belonging. Furthermore, by utilizing a variety of viewpoints, inclusive leadership fosters creativity and innovation, which further enhances organizational effectiveness (Haque et al., 2021).

Theoretical Framework

The study is based on the social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), which holds that workers are more engaged and committed when they get favorable treatment from their leaders. Furthermore, inclusive leadership encourages commitment by enabling staff members to accept responsibility for their job, as explained by the idea of psychological empowerment (Spreitzer, 1995, Javed et al., 2018).

Hypotheses

The following are the hypotheses developed from existing literature:

H1: *Ethical leadership is positively related to organizational commitment.*

H2: *Authentic leadership is positively related to organizational commitment.*

H3: *Inclusive leadership is positively related to organizational commitment.*

Figure 1: *Theoretical framework (author's own illustration)*

Research Methodology

To investigate the correlation between organizational commitment and leadership styles, this study used a cross-sectional quantitative method. A structured survey was used to gather data from 220 participants in a variety of sectors. To ensure a sufficient and representative sample, the study used a purposive sampling approach, choosing workers from a range of service sectors with different degrees of expertise and organizational responsibilities.

The survey included validated scales for:

- Leadership Styles - Ethical Leadership Scale (Brown et al., 2005), Authentic Leadership Questionnaire (Walumbwa et al., 2008), and Inclusive Leadership Scale (Carmeli et al., 2010).
- Organizational Commitment - Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (Allen & Meyer, 1996; Haque, 2018).

Harman's single-factor test was used to identify any common technique bias. Since, results showed the items of all variables included in the study were confined to a single factor explaining 35% of the total variance, which was considerably below the 50% cut-off mark, hence, this study avoids common method bias.

Data was analyzed using SPSS version 27. The following are the steps used in the analysis process explained in Table 1:

Table 1: Steps and Descriptions in Present Quantitative Analysis

Key Components	Descriptions
Reliability and Validity	Cronbach's alpha was used to assess internal consistency, with values above 0.70 indicating reliability. Construct validity was evaluated using factor analysis.
Correlation Analysis	Pearson's correlation examined relationships between leadership styles and organizational commitment.
Regression Analysis	Multiple regression analysis tested the predictive power of leadership styles on organizational commitment.
T-Tests	Independent samples t-tests were used to compare the effects of different leadership styles on organizational commitment.

Source: *authors' illustration of present quantitative analysis*

Prior to the gathering of data, ethical permission was acquired. All participants gave their informed consent, guaranteeing their voluntary involvement. Respondents were free to leave at any time without facing any repercussions, and confidentiality and anonymity were maintained.

Findings and Discussions

This section contains findings and discussion based on quantitative analysis.

Table 2: Reliability Statistic

Construct	Cronbach's alpha
Ethical Leadership	0.85
Authentic Leadership	0.88
Inclusive Leadership	0.83
Organizational Commitment	0.87

Source: *Results obtained from SPSS*

With Cronbach's alpha values over 0.70 (set threshold), all scales showed high internal consistency. Construct validity was validated by factor analysis as factor loadings was above 0.50.

Correlation Analysis

Table 3: Correlation between Variables of Interest

Variables	Ethical Leadership	Authentic Leadership	Inclusive Leadership	Organizational Commitment
Ethical Leadership	1	0.58**	0.52**	0.65**
Authentic Leadership	0.58**	1	0.60**	0.72**
Inclusive Leadership	0.52**	0.60**	1	0.58**
Organizational Commitment	0.65**	0.72**	0.58**	1

p < 0.01**

As evident in Table 3, all leadership styles (ethical, authentic, and inclusive) are positively and significantly correlated with organizational commitment (p < 0.01). Detailed analysis revealed that authentic leadership shows a strong correlation (r = 0.72). Interestingly, ethical leadership also has the strongest correlation with organizational commitment (r = 0.65). However, ethical leadership has lesser stronger than authentic leadership. Moreover, inclusive leadership has a moderate correlation with organizational commitment (r = 0.58). It is important to note that the correlations between the leadership styles themselves are also significant, indicating that these leadership styles may overlap in some respects but are distinct constructs. It is also important to note that ethical leadership style and authentic leadership style have a high impact on organizational commitment while inclusive leadership style has moderate impact on organizational commitment.

Regression Analysis

To test the hypotheses, a multiple regression analysis is performed to determine the impact of each leadership style (authentic, ethical, and inclusive leadership style) on organizational commitment.

Table 4: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square Adjusted	R Square Std.	Error of the Estimate
1	.681 ^a	.489	.483	.456473

- a. Predictors: (Constant), authentic leadership, ethical leadership, and inclusive leadership
- b. Dependent Variable: Organizational commitment

Table 5: Anova*

Model	Sun of Squares	DF	Mean of Square	F	F-Statistic	
1	Regression	34.61	1	12.41	67.35	.000 ^a
	Residual	33.25	219	1.97		
	Total	67.86	220			

- a. Dependent Variable: Organizational commitment
- b. Predictors: (Constant), authentic leadership, ethical leadership, and inclusive leadership

The model summary above reflects that R² is approximately .48 indicating that the 48% variation in organizational commitment is due to variation in authentic, ethical, and inclusive leadership

(Table 4). Moreover, the ANOVA model above showed that $F = 67.35$, confirming that this table is highly acceptable because there is 67% explanatory power of this table (Table 5). The model is good fit for the data because F-Statistic is significant ($=0.000$; $p < 0.01$).

Regression Model

Table 6: Results from Regression Model

Predictors	β (Coefficient)	Standard Error	t-value	p-value	Decision
Ethical Leadership	0.74	0.12	7.43	0.000	Fail to Reject
Authentic Leadership	0.61	0.08	5.76	0.000	Fail to Reject
Inclusive Leadership	0.41	0.07	2.13	0.001	Fail to Reject

Source: *Results obtained from SPSS*

Regression model revealed that all three leadership styles are significant predictors of organizational commitment ($p < 0.01$). Interestingly, the results showed that ethical leadership has the strongest impact ($\beta = 0.74$; Table 6), meaning a one-unit increase in ethical leadership is associated with a 0.74-unit increase in organizational commitment. On the other hand, authentic leadership also has a strong impact ($\beta = 0.61$; Table 6), indicating that a one-unit increase in authentic leadership is interlinked with a 0.61-unit increase in organizational commitment. Lastly, inclusive leadership has a moderate impact ($\beta = 0.41$; Table 6), which means that a one-unit increase in inclusive leadership is associated with only 0.41-unit increase in organizational commitment.

Table 7: Hypotheses Testing

Hypotheses	B	Standard Deviation	t-value	P-value	Decision
H1: Ethical leadership → Organizational Commitment	0.74	0.12	7.43	0.000	Fail to Reject
H2: Authentic leadership → Organizational Commitment	0.61	0.08	5.76	0.000	Fail to Reject
H3: Inclusive leadership → Organizational Commitment	0.42	0.07	2.13	0.001	Fail to Reject

Note: *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, ns= non-significant ($p > 0.05$) (Two Tail)

The t-values for all three predictors are greater than 1.96 (critical value for $p < 0.05$), indicating that the predictors are statistically significant. The p-values are all less than 0.05, which means we fail to reject the null hypothesis for all three hypotheses. In other words, there is strong evidence to support the claim that ethical, authentic, and inclusive leadership styles are positively related to organizational commitment.

Notable implications include that ethical leadership has the strongest impact on organizational commitment ($=7.43 > 1.96$; $0.000 < 0.05$, $p < 0.05$; Table 7), suggesting that leaders who demonstrate fairness, integrity, and ethical behavior are more likely to foster commitment among employees. Thus, our findings to some extent support the work of Javed et al. (2020) and Haque and Yamoah (2021). Furthermore, from results we confirm that authentic leadership also plays a significant role, indicating that leaders who are self-aware, transparent, and genuine can enhance

employee commitment ($=5.76 > 1.96$; $0.000 < 0.05$, $p < 0.05$; Table 7). Hence, our studies support to a larger extent the work of Haque et al. (2020). The results also confirmed that inclusive leadership has a moderate impact, suggesting that leaders who promote diversity and inclusivity can also contribute to higher commitment levels, though to a lesser extent than ethical and authentic leadership ($=2.13 > 1.96$; $0.000 < 0.05$, $p < 0.05$; Table 7). Therefore, this study supports the work of Javed et al. (2018) and Younas et al. (2022).

Conclusion and Recommendations

The impact of inclusive, authentic, and ethical leadership styles on organizational commitment has been confirmed by this study. The results show that organizational commitment is significantly positively correlated with all three leadership styles. It is concluded that inclusive leadership has a moderating effect while ethical and authentic leadership having significant strong effect. Additionally, the regression analysis verified that the most significant predictors of organizational commitment are authentic leadership ($\beta = 0.61$) and ethical leadership ($\beta = 0.74$), with inclusive leadership ($\beta = 0.42$) having a lesser but still significant impact. In other words, Ethical Leadership leads to significantly higher commitment while authentic leadership also drives the highest commitment. Interestingly, inclusive leadership has a moderate effect but is still important

The findings highlight the value of ethical leadership in encouraging employee commitment that are consistent with the work of Javed et al. (2020) and Haque and Yamoah (2021). Likewise, the results support the findings of Haque et al. (2020), emphasizing how authentic leadership is improving organizational commitment. The study also supports the findings of Younas et al. (2022) and Javed et al. (2018), which highlight the importance of inclusive leadership in fostering commitment, albeit to a lower degree than ethical and authentic leadership.

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are proposed:

Organizations should prioritize ethical leadership development. Organizations should train leaders to practice integrity, fairness, and ethical decision-making, that could significantly increase organizational commitment. Furthermore, create ethical leadership training programs to help leaders inspire employee engagement and commitment.

In addition to that, it is recommended that organizations should enhance authentic leadership practices. To foster stronger commitment, leaders should emphasize relational transparency, self-awareness, and consistency between values and actions. To increase trust and engagement, organizations should encourage leaders and employees to promote genuine relationships and open communication.

It is also recommended that organizations should promote an inclusive leadership culture. Despite its moderate impact, inclusive leadership is nevertheless essential for commitment. When making decisions, organizations should ensure inclusivity and diversity.

It is important to support leaders in recognizing and valuing diverse perspectives, creating a sense of belongingness and involving employees in key decisions. Structured training courses should be designed by organizations for leaders that integrate inclusive, authentic, and ethical leadership components. Initiatives for mentoring and coaching can assist leaders in developing behaviors that enhance employee commitment.

Future studies should explore other leadership factors (e.g., situational or servant leadership) and

their relationship with commitment. There should be longitudinal studies to ensure the magnitude of impact in different time lags. Moreover, in-depth interviews with the experts should be considered to find hidden embedded truth.

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