Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology (2018) 34(3) 195-201

Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology

http://journals.copmadrid.org/jwop

Leadership Styles and Work Attitudes: Does Age Moderate their Relationship?

Aharon Tziner and Or Shkoler

Netanya Academic College, Israel

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:
Received 30 July 2018
Accepted 6 September 2018

Keywords:
Organizational justice
Work commitment
Transformational leadership
Transactional leadership
Age group

ABSTRACT

The current study was conducted among employees in several organizations ($N = 260$). We investigated the relationships between the two leadership styles (the predictors) and several individual and organizational work outcomes among two age categories. For the young-to-adults age group, both transformational and transactional leadership associated positively with organizational justice; organizational justice associated positively with work commitment and work motivation; both transformational and transactional leadership associated positively with work motivation; and only transformational leadership associated positively with work commitment. Transactional leadership and work commitment were not significantly correlated. For the older group, transformational leadership associated positively with organizational justice; however, transactional leadership linked to it negatively. Organizational justice associated positively only with work commitment. Organizational justice and work motivation were not significantly related. Important implications are discussed.

Estilos de liderazgo y actitudes en el trabajo: ¿modera la edad su relación?

Palabras clave:
Justicia organizacional
Compromiso de trabajo
Liderazgo transformacional
Liderazgo transaccional
Grupo de edad

RESUMEN

Este estudio se llevó a cabo en empleados de diversas empresas ($N = 260$). Investigamos las relaciones que había entre los dos estilos de liderazgo (predictores) y diversos resultados laborales tanto individuales como de la organización en dos categorías de edad. En el grupo de edad de joven a adulto, tanto el liderazgo transformacional como el transaccional se asociaron positivamente con la justicia organizacional; la justicia organizacional se asoció positivamente con el compromiso de trabajo y con la motivación de trabajo; el liderazgo tranformacional y el transaccional se asociaron positivamente con la motivación de trabajo, y únicamente el liderazgo transformacional se asoció positivamente con el compromiso de trabajo. El liderazgo transaccional y el compromiso de trabajo no correlacionaron signficativamente. En el grupo de más edad, el liderazgo transformacional se asoció positivamente con la justicia organizacional; sin embargo, el liderazgo transaccional se relacionó con ella negativamente. La justicia organizacional se asoció positivamente solo con el compromiso de trabajo. La justicia organizacional y la motivación de trabajo no se relacionaron significativamente. Importantes implicaciones se discuten.

Leadership Styles – Transformational and Transactional

Leadership styles, of course, vary among leaders. Of particular note, however, is that recent literature on the subject has distinguished between two specific styles of leadership that have been labeled, respectively, transformational and transactional.

Transformational leadership operates through an entire spectrum of mechanisms – affect, cognitions, and behaviors. Thus, a transformational leader inspires subordinates (or followers) and entire collectives by influencing and managing their behaviors via shared belief systems (cognitions) and positive emotions (affect), and through the mutual expression of a collective vision (Bass, 2007; Jung & Avolio, 1999; Kark, Van Dijk, & Vashdi, 2018; Perilla-Toro & Gomez-Ortiz, 2017; Xenikou, 2017; Yaffe & Kark, 2011). The transformational leadership paradigm is essentially a two-dimensional framework (Hernandez, Eberly, Avolio, & Johnson, 2011), so that there is an extant reciprocal dyadic process rather than a leadership pattern that is unidirectional. Although commands filter down the hierarchy, the leader is open to debate and may also be influenced by the followers.

In contradistinction, the locus of transactional leadership is the persona who is the (traditional) leader. The source of the leadership initiative originates from the leader and the leader alone. Commands

Cite this article as: Tziner, A. & Shkoler, O. (2018). Leadership styles and work attitudes: Does age moderate their relationship? *Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology, 34,* 195-201. https://doi.org/10.5093/jwop2018a21

Correspondence: atziner@netanya.ac.il (A. Tziner).

ISSN:1576-5962/© 2018 Colegio Oficial de Psicólogos de Madrid. This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC-ND license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/).

thus go down the hierarchy and are unidirectional or even unilateral. The leader will more likely invoke a mechanism that is authoritative and direct in order to influence followers' behaviors. This style has been conceptualized in terms of an exchange process, in which rewards are offered for compliance and punishment for noncompliance (Bass, 2007; Jung & Avolio, 1999; Yaffe & Kark, 2011). The transactional leader sets standards and norms and highlights obligations, while directing subordinates to perform tasks in the "correct and expected way", which encourages conformity and compliance (Bass, 1985; Gorman et al., 2012; Kark, Katz-Navon, & Delegach, 2015; Kark et al., 2018).

Heeding repeated calls to shed further light on the mechanism through which transformational and transactional styles of leadership convey influence upon subordinate behavior (Avolio, Walumbwa, & Weber, 2009), we elected to examine the construct of organizational justice and its relation to work motivation and work commitment as possible significant mediating variables impinging on subordinates' responses (outcomes) to the respective leadership style (input), constructs that we consider to have reasonable explanatory potential.

Organizational Justice

The overall construct of 'organizational justice' can generally be broken down to three specific components, namely, distributive justice, procedural justice, and interactional justice (Colquitt, 2001). Traditionally, the notion of distributive justice is based on a general theory of fairness (Adams, 1965) which offers a broad explanation of the motives underlying the actions of individuals. Thus, an individual worker needs to believe that fairness exists in the allocation of rewards in the organization, such as an acceptable balance between employees' contributions and their compensation (Leventhal, 1980) in comparison to peers whose jobs are equivalent to theirs (Cropanzano, Prehar, & Chen, 2002). In a similar fashion, procedural justice relates to perceived fairness in the processes through which decisions are reached (Folger & Cropanzano, 1998). The third component of justice perception, interactional justice, is defined by the degree to which employees are treated fairly and respectfully, and given proper explanations regarding decisions reached (Tyler & Bies, 1990).

Leadership Styles and Organizational Justice

Although transformational leadership and transactional leadership vary significantly in style, we nevertheless posit that (a) each leadership style promotes perceptions of justice – albeit that the perceptions emerge from different perspectives – and (b) that both styles consequently induce higher work motivation and enhanced work commitment. Thus, transformational leaders strive to empower and mentor their employees by providing them with abundant opportunities, challenges, and inspirational drives in a reciprocal dyadic exchange relationship between the leader and the followership. Subordinates' sense of organizational justice is thus developed through the mutual interaction with the leader (e.g., Reb, Chaturvedi, Narayanan, & Kudesia, 2018; Sindhu, Ahmad, & Hashmi, 2017). Transactional leaders, on the other hand, affirmatively set the goals and procedures by which the subordinates act and react, and set systems of (positive and negative) reinforcements. The sense of organizational justice among the followers thus emerges if reinforcements are delivered proportionately to the level of attainment of work requirements imposed from above, requirements that should apply equally to all the subordinates (e.g., Adams, 1965).

On the basis of these observations, we arrived at the following hypothesis:

$H1$: Both transformational and transactional leadership styles will associate with organizational justice.

Work Motivation

As indicated, both leadership styles can be expected – through an enriched sense of organizational justice – to induce higher work motivation. Consequently, in this study, we concurrently opted to investigate work motivation as an outcome of the predictor-outcome relationship. Work motivation is defined as the psychological force that generates complex cycles of goal-directed thought and behavior. Motivation is what animates individuals to persist in the pursuit of courses of action until their completion. Accordingly, scholars studying work motivation intend to unveil the processes by which an individual's internal, psychological forces – in tandem with external, environmental forces – determine the direction, intensity, and persistence of personal behavior aimed at goal attainment (Kanfer, 2009; Kanfer, Frese, & Johnson, 2017).

However, a more currently accepted working definition of the construct indicates that work motivation is "a set of energetic forces that originate within individuals, as well as in their environment, to initiate work-related behaviors and to determine their form, direction, intensity, and duration" (after Pinder, 2008, p. 11). It follows that work motivation results from the interaction of an individual's inner characteristics and outward environment components, both societal and organizational (Latham & Pinder, 2005). In brief, we can regard motivation as the force which drives a person to engage in an activity.

Work Commitment

As indicated, a further outcome investigated in this study was work commitment. Work commitment refers to a psychological state that characterizes an employee's relationship with the organization. Based on empirical research, Allen and Meyer (1990) contended that work commitment incorporates three dimensions, namely, affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative/moral commitment (Allen & Meyer, 1990).

Strong affective commitment evolves with the increase of consistency between employees' goals, values, and expectations and their positive experiences in the organization. A state of continuous commitment develops as employees come to realize that they have accumulated investments or benefits that would be lost if they quit. Normative/moral commitment emerges as a result of (a) socialization experiences that emphasize the appropriateness of remaining loyal and (b) the receipt of benefits that create a subjective need to reciprocate. Empirical research has corroborated the outcomes of this form of attachment: from a positive perspective, employees with strong affective commitment identify and voluntarily stay with the organization, those with a strong continuance commitment stay because they need to, and those with a strong normative/moral commitment remain because they feel they ought to stay (Allen & Meyer, 1990).

Organizational Justice, Work Motivation and Work Commitment

Research has shown that employees who perceive the workplace as fair are more satisfied with their work, more committed to the organization, and more likely to rely on their superiors and to display a greater desire to retain their jobs (e.g., Loi, Yang, & Diefendorff, 2009). In contrast, employees who perceive injustice at work engender negative attitudes toward their organizations, suffer from reduced personal welfare, and achieve lower levels of daily functioning (Bobocel & Hafer, 2007). Specifically, research has pointed constantly to a positive association between perceptions of organizational justice and work commitment (e.g., Andrews, Kacmar, Blakely, & Bucklew, 2008; Jiang, Gollan, & Brooks, 2017; Lee & Wei, 2017), so that

employees who perceive that they are treated fairly reciprocate: they express higher work motivation by investing higher efforts at work. These observations thus lead to the following hypothesis:

*H*2: Organizational justice will link to work motivation and work commitment.

Leadership Styles, Organizational Justice, Work Motivation, and Work Commitment

Following this line of discussion, we now posit that despite their unique leadership styles, both transformational and transactional leadership not only promote perceptions of justice (albeit from different perspectives), but also that both styles consequently induce higher work motivation and enhanced work commitment. Thus, work commitment may stem from either motivational or mentoring support (i.e., transformational leadership) or from monitoring compliance (i.e., transactional leadership). From the transformational style because it fosters employee empowerment (that provides subordinates with ample opportunities to grow psychologically and professionally), because that approach guides subordinates to face challenges, and because it inspires them constantly to seek achievement targets (Bass, 2007; Jung & Avolio, 1999; Kark et al., 2018; Xenikou, 2017; Yaffe & Kark, 2011).

Although conventional wisdom would lead us to believe that employees would resist authoritarian style leadership, it is interesting to note that the transactional leadership style, characterized by conformity, compliance, and contingency reward systems is not only acceptable to employees but can also lead to gains in the workplace. Clearly, rewards-for-efforts may be perceived as just, especially if resources are seen as being distributed fairly (Carter, Mossholder, & Harris, 2018; Dai, Dai, Chen, & Wu, 2013; Pillai, Schriesheim, & Williams, 1999). Moreover, where greater effort is rewarded with greater rewards (such as bonuses and overtime), this approach to leadership is likely to promote higher work motivation, which we assume strengthens the commitment of the workers to their organizations through the mechanisms of normative and continuance reasoning, as we have described. Thus, although the sources of influence differ, based on these suppositions we are led to hypothesize that:

*H*3: Both transformational and transactional styles of leadership will relate directly to work motivation and work commitment, additional to the mediated relationship via organizational justice.

Age Groups

Do personal attributes affect preference for one leadership style over another? For instance, does the age of an employee create a greater tolerance for top-down leadership or does age bring with it a desire for greater participation in decision-making? Consistent with the desire to investigate mechanisms that impinge on the relationship of leadership styles, organizational justice, and work outcomes we have described, we chose "age group" as a personal-level mediator. Indeed, Fein, Tziner, and Vasiliu (2010) have shown the existence of age cohorts' differences in leadership style preferences. In their paper, conducted with Romanian subjects, the researchers observed that those senior in age had a clear higher preference for the transformational style than the younger age group. However, no effect of age on transactional leadership style preference was found. The authors argued that seniors' preference for the former leadership style reflected the Romanian post-communist culture, whereby there is a tendency to distance oneself from autocratic leadership. Notably, however, in contrast to Fein et al.'s (2010) nationally-bound study, the literature (e.g., Arsenault, 2004; Yu & Miller, 2005) suggested that differentiated preferences in leadership styles based on age or generation reflect the notion that "generations create their own traditions and culture by a shared collective field of emotions, attitudes, preferences, and dispositions…[There are] significant differences in how these generations rank admired leadership characteristics, which correlates to their preferred leadership style and favorite leaders" (Arsenault, 2004, p. 20).

On the basis of these latter findings (and in the spirit of the exploration of the mechanisms of the leadership styles, as recorded above), we advocate that age preferences exist regardless of economy transition – and to further this rationale, we treated the preference of leadership styles as a moderating effect. In other words, we posited that our hypothesized model (see Figure 1) would "look different" if tested between different age groups, so that,

*H*4: Age groups moderate the associations depicted in the model (Figure 1), so that the model incorporating age groups will vary, respectively, per age group.

The model for this study is presented in Figure 1.

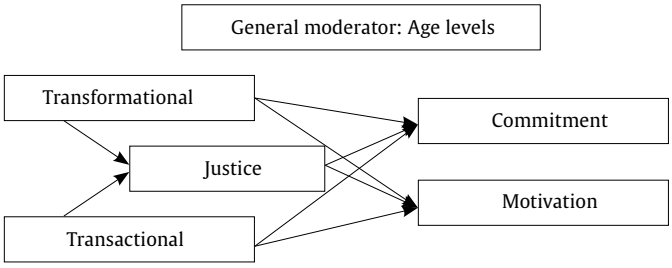

Figure 1. Research Model.

Method

Participants

Data were collected from 260 employees in various organizations in Israel, 52.7% males and 47.3% females, aged between 20-29 years (33.1%), 30-39 (37.3%), 40-49 (13.5%), and 50-65 (16.2%); 61.9% were married, 31.2% single, and 6.9% divorced. The majority held an academic degree (58.1%), 30% had only a high-school education, and 11.9% had other diploma-related education. Tenure in their current jobs ranged from 1 year (13.8%), 1-3 years (26.2%), 3-6 years (23.5%), to 6 years and above (36.5%). The majority were permanent employees (60%), 17.7% were on temporary-term contracts, and the rest were outsourced workers. Only 18.5% were in managerial positions.

Measures

Leadership style was gauged using the 36-item Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire

(MLQ; Avolio & Bass, 1991), on a Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 6 (*strongly agree*). Transactional leadership was gauged by 12 items, e.g.:, "Your leader assists you based on effort". In the present study, we found adequate reliability (α = .70, *M* = 3.25, *SD* = 0.65). Transformational leadership was measured by 24 items, e.g., "Your leader teaches and coaches". In the present study, there was high reliability (α = .96, *M* = 4.06, *SD* = 1.13).

Organizational justice was gauged by the Justice Scale (Niehoff & Moorman, 1993), consisting of 20 Likert-type items, ranging from 1 (*completely disagree*) and 6 (*completely agree*), e.g., "The procedures in our organization are equally and consistently applied to everyone". The mean reliability coefficient of the questionnaire was .84 (Niehoff & Moorman, 1993). In the present study, reliability was α = .76 (*M* = 3.95, *SD* = 1.01).

Work motivation was gauged by the Work Extrinsic and Intrinsic Motivation Scale (WEIMS; Tremblay, Blanchard, Taylor, Pelletier, &

Villeneuve, 2009), consisting of 18 Likert-type items ranging from 1 (*does not correspond at all*) to 6 (*corresponds exactly*), e.g., "The reason for being involved in my job is the satisfaction I experience when I am successful at doing difficult tasks". In the present study, the measure had high reliability (α = .91, *M* = 4.10, *SD* = 1.09).

Work commitment was gauged by the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ; Allen & Meyer, 1990) consisting of 24 Likert-type items ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 6 (*strongly agree*), e.g., "I would accept almost any job in order to stay with my work unit". In the present study, the measure had high reliability (α = .91, *M* = 4.10, *SD* = 1.09).

All these inventories were distributed in their Hebrew version.

Age groups is represented as a binary variable recoded from the original item (via median-split procedure), so that group 1 (young-to-adults) ranges between 20-40 years of age and group 2 (adults-to-seniors) ranges between 40-60 years of age (see Table 1 for the descriptive statistics of the variables by the different age groups).

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics between Different Age Levels

	Young-to-Adults[1]			Adults-to-Seniors[2]			Cohen's *d*
	M	*SD*	α	*M*	*SD*	α	
Transactional leadership	3.08	0.53	.67	3.15	0.63	.73	0.12
Transformational leadership	3.99	1.00	.94	3.97	0.99	.95	0.02
Commitment	3.96	0.73	.84	4.25	0.56	.79	0.45
Justice	4.13	0.86	.93	4.13	0.73	.91	0.00
Work motivation	3.87	0.96	.72	4.20	0.64	.61	0.41

Note. α = Cronbach's alpha coefficient of internal consistency; [1]age group of 20-40 (*n* = 183); [2]age group of 40-60 (*n* = 77); fit = person-organization fit.

Procedure

The survey (pencil-paper) was given to working people in various organizations to complete voluntarily. After we collected all the data, analysis was performed using SPSS (v. 22) and AMOS (v. 22) software packages.

Common-method bias (CMB). Harman's single-factor test (Podsakoff, Mackenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003) was used to assess the extent to which inter-correlations among the variables might be an artifact of common method variance (CMV). The first general factor that emerged from the analysis accounted only for 25.64% of the explained variance. While this result does not rule out completely the possibility of same-source bias (i.e., CMV), according to Podsakoff et al. (2003) less than 50% (R^2 < .50) of the explained variance accounted for by the first emerging factor indicates that CMB is an unlikely explanation of our investigation's findings.

Results

First, in order to describe the network of associations among the study's variables, a Pearson correlation matrix was derived, as presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Correlation Matrix for Young-to-Adults (*n* = 183) and Adults-to-Seniors (*n* = 77; above the diagonal)

	1	2	4	5	6
1. Transactional leadership	-	-.13	-.34***	-.36***	-.21*
2. Transformational leadership	.14*	-	.52***	.68***	.20*
3. Commitment	.05	.40***	-	.73***	.24*
4. Justice	.04	.67***	.70***	-	.07
5. Work motivation	.18**	.43***	.43***	.38***	-

*p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001.

In the next step, we employed Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) in order to capture the multivariate relationships as proposed in our hypotheses and model (see Figure 1). This allows for both the assessment of the model's fit and the examination of our hypotheses, as can be seen in Figure 2.

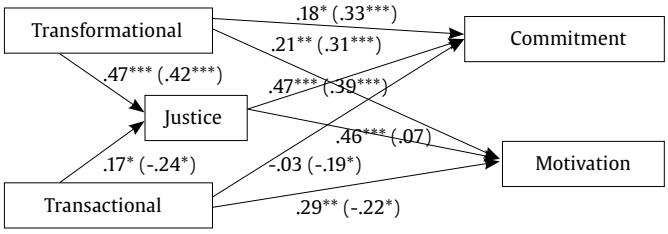

Figure 2. Path Diagram for Young-to-Adults Group (*n* = 183), and Adults-to-Seniors Group (*n* = 77; in parenthesis)
Note. Young-to-adults group = age of 20-40 years; adults-to-seniors group = age of 41-60 years; $\chi^2(df)$ = 4.75(4), *p* = .093; χ^2/df = 1.19, SRMR = .04; CFI = .99; GFI = .98; NFI = .96; RMSEA (90% CI) = .07 (.00-.16), *p*-close = .241.
*p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001.

The fit of the model, based on the SEM analyses, is in the absolute sense (see Byrne, 2010): $\chi^2(df)$ = 4.75 (4), *p* = .093, χ^2/df = 1.19, SRMR = .04, CFI = .99, GFI = .98, NFI = .96, RMSEA (90% CI) = .07 (.00-.16), *p*-close = .241.

Based on the results, which are depicted in Figure 2, we concluded as follows:

For the young-to-adults age group we found that both transformational and transactional leadership styles associated positively with organizational justice such that, irrespective of style, the more profound the leader's style, the higher the perceived justice in the organization. For this age-group, hypothesis *H*1 was validated.

Organizational justice associated positively with work commitment and work motivation, so that the higher the perceived organizational justice, the higher the consequent levels of employee work commitment and work motivation. Consequently, for this age-group, hypothesis *H*2 was validated.

Both transformational and transactional leadership styles associated positively and directly with work motivation. Thus, the more rigorously the leader maintains one or another leadership style, the greater the level of work motivation among the younger employees. The transformational leadership style associated positively with work commitment so that the more 'transformational' the leader, the greater the commitment of the employee. However, the link between the transactional leadership style and work commitment was not significant. Consequently, hypothesis *H*3 was only partially validated for this age group.

For the adults-to-seniors age group we found that the transformational leadership style associated positively with organizational justice; however, the transactional leadership style linked to it negatively. Thus, the more 'transformational' the leader (and the less 'transactional'), the higher the perceived justice in the organization. Consequently, for the older age group, hypothesis *H*1 was only partially validated.

Organizational justice positively associated only with work commitment, so that the higher the perceived organizational justice, the higher the work commitment. The link between organizational justice and work motivation was not statistically significant. Consequently, for the older age group, hypothesis *H*2 was only partially validated.

Transformational leadership style positively associated with work commitment and work motivation, implying that the more transformational the leader, the greater the commitment and motivation of the employee. Transactional leadership style negatively associated with work commitment and work motivation, meaning that the more transactional the leader, the less committed and motivated the employee.

Notably, these differentiating results support the notion that age moderates the associations depicted in our model (Figure 1), as proposed by our fourth hypothesis.

In addition, as can be seen in Figure 2, in terms of mediation effects, not all the mediation conditions were met in each model. Notably, the significant effects of: (1) predictor → criterion, (2) predictor → mediator, (3) mediator → criterion, and (4) the direct effect (path c) should be less ("weaker") than the total effect (path c) (for further reading see Baron & Kenny, 1986; Frazier, Tix, & Barron, 2004; Hayes, 2013). Therefore, when testing for the significance of the mediation effect via bootstrapping (see Preacher & Hayes, 2008), we chose only the paths that actually met all of the aforementioned mediation conditions and whose indirect effects were statistically significant. The findings are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. SEM Bootstrapping (95% CI) for the Standardized Indirect Effects

Path	Lower bound	Upper bound	Sig.
Young-to-adults age group[1]			
Transformational → Justice → Commitment	.09	.32	.011
Transformational → Justice → Motivation	.13	.29	.007
Transactional → Justice → Motivation	.03	.38	.026
Adults-to-seniors age group[2]			
Transformational → Justice → Commitment	.08	.17	.000
Transactional → Justice → Commitment	-.21	-.05	.039

Note. [1]Age group of 20-40; [2]age group of 40-60.

As can be seen in Table 3, the hypothesized mediation of organizational justice between leadership styles and work motivation and commitment was only partially supported, as not all of the mediation effects were significant.

Discussion

The present research can be considered exploratory and aimed at identifying possible roles of leadership styles as important predictors of individual and organizational outcomes in the organizational context. To this end, we drew upon the recent locus-mechanism model of leadership (Eberly, Johnson, Hernandez, & Avolio, 2013; Hernandez et al., 2011) to investigate two different loci of leadership, namely, the transformational leadership style and the transactional leadership style, with particular emphasis on potential differences between younger and older age-levels.

Transformational Leadership

One of the results of the current study indicates that the transformational style of leadership relates positively and significantly to both organizational justice and work commitment, irrespective of the age group. Transformational leadership is characterized by leaders' efforts to empower and mentor employees by providing them with abundant opportunities, challenges, and inspirational drives (Garcia-Guiu, Moya, Molero, & Moriano, 2016; Hermosilla, Amutio, daCosta, & Paez, 2016). In practice, we recall, this style nurtures self-confidence, promotes upgrading knowledge and skills, facilitates a climate of respect, and manifests appreciation of employees' achievements (Godoy & Breso, 2013). And, as noted above, subordinates' sense of organizational justice is thus developed through the mutual interaction with the leader and the sense of being treated fairly (e.g., Reb et al., 2018; Sindhu et al., 2017).

With respect to the positive link of transformational leadership with work commitment, we are reminded that normative/moral commitment emerges, inter alia, as a result of the positive experiences that transformational leadership tenders, including socialization encounters that engender loyalty to the organization, and the receipt of benefits that create a subjective need to reciprocate (Allen & Meyer, 1990). Thus we are not surprised that the results of this investigation corroborate the many research findings that point constantly to a positive association between perceptions of organizational justice and work commitment (e.g., Andrews et al., 2008; Jiang et al., 2017; Lee & Wei, 2017).

Likewise, and drawing upon the same reasoning, we posit that the caring transformational style is conducive to high work motivation, findings corroborated by previous research (e.g., Masi & Cooke, 2000), although only partly by this investigation, in which transformational leadership was found associated with work motivation singularly among the younger age group but not among the older group of respondents (see below).

Transactional Leadership

The transactional style of leadership – that capitalizes on the principles of allocation of reinforcements (rewards) in exchange for fulfilling goals assigned by the manager – emanated positively linked to organizational justice in both age groups. In contrast to transformational leadership, however, among the younger set, transactional leadership was found linked to work motivation and insignificantly correlated with work commitment. The younger set, in the present investigation, could be regarded as the X generation (born between 1965 and 1981; Shragay & Tziner, 2011). They seek self-satisfaction, independence, and their loyalty primarily serves self-interest. As such, the transactional style constitutes a perfect fit for them. Leaders employing this style value order and structure, and focus mainly on goal attainment and the reward-penalty system. Thus, these younger employees, pursuing self-interests, function well with managers who spell out clear rules, expectations, work goals, and commensurate attainment with reward-penalty compensation. Therefore, these millennials perceive organizational justice and display work motivation comfortably under transactional leadership. The lack of connection with commitment (namely, loyalty to the organization: normative/moral commitment), is also easily understandable. As indicated, employees of the X generation (the younger age group in our study) do not develop attachment and loyalty to their workplace.

Conversely, the older participants of this study disliked a leadership style that imposes order, structure, and regulation that focuses solely on results, and that links conformity to the principles of reward-penalty compensation. Therefore, their overall reaction to a transactional leadership style was negative. Despite the fact that there is a positive link between organizational justice and work commitment in this age-group, there is nevertheless an overall negative relationship between transactional leadership and organizational justice, which produces an overriding result of totally negative correlations between transactional leadership and all of the three studied individual/work outcomes of organizational justice, commitment, and work motivation.

Of interest, this finding contradicts the findings of the Romanian study (Fein et al., 2010), mentioned above, whereby the seniors in that study preferred a transformational style of leadership over a transactional style, attributed to the presumed post-communist antipathy to autocratic leadership. With respect to the research findings concerning age groups cited above, we might clearly note that they concur with the trends reported in Shragay and Tziner's (2011) study.

In any event, we may clearly conclude from our investigation that hypothesis $H4$ was validated. Thus, age groups moderate the associations depicted in the model (Figure 1), so that the model incorporating age groups will vary, respectively, per age group.

Theoretical Implications

Our findings stress the importance of examining different loci and mechanisms of leadership styles (see Eberly et al., 2013;

Hernandez et al., 2011), because these styles, respectively, may – under specific circumstances or within particular contexts – produce varying outcomes, as observed in the results of the current study.

We should note, however, that although the literature has opted to dichotomize leadership into two somewhat opposing ends of a leadership scale – and our subjects responded to the leadership questionnaire accordingly, isolating, as it were, their supervisors' tendencies to adapt one style of leadership over the other – based on the proposition that modifiers such as 'age-group' can alter the effects of the style, we might nevertheless argue that there is no "one best leadership style". We would develop this line of argument by asserting that the "correct" exercising of the leadership style is actually dependent on several factors, including (1) the type of work setting ,(2) the followers' individual differences (e.g., age levels), and (3) the context in which the skills are utilized.

Additionally, if we take this conclusion seriously, we can then bring to mind that, despite the dichotomy of styles presented in the model, we can understand that leadership styles are not necessarily mutually exclusive. From this perspective, effective leadership is like a river: a river flows as the current takes it – but with clear boundaries. By contrast, leadership that is less effective is like a mountain: it struggles against the wind of change, unmoving and uncompromising.

Practical Implications

While, in some instances, both leadership styles indicated the same positive outcomes (independently of the styles each represented), from a managerial standpoint, our findings indicate that each of the two styles, when interfaced with an explicit moderator (age group), produced outcomes specific to that combination. Extrapolating, we could deduce that any number of additional moderators, as mentioned above, singly or in combination, may similarly influence the outcomes of leadership styles in the workplace. When the relationships will have been discovered as reliable and valid through further research in this direction, managers, supervisors and other "loci" could be expected (a) to adjust their styles according to the specific outcomes that they favor or, at least, (b) to exert a leadership style most suited to the moderating influences extant at any one time, such as the age of the employees in question (older vs. younger).

Limitations

The use of self-reporting measures may prove a limitation. While our 'age groups' variable is cross-sectional, we measured leadership only from the point of view of leader/giver, but not from the perspective of the follower/receiver. And since, as far as transformational relationships are concerned, we are discussing dyadic relationships, we may yet have missed some further intriguing aspects of the mechanisms of leadership in the workplace, for instance, the effect that "followers" (the locus) have on their leaders and consequently (and mutually) on the managers' leadership styles and decision-making processes. Additionally, we investigated a delimited number of outcomes, but we did not tap into several other work outcomes that are surely affected by the leadership styles of managers and supervisors, such as OCBs, CWBs, and de facto turnover intentions.

Conflict of Interest

The authors of this article declare no conflict of interest.

References

Adams, J. S. (1965). Inequity in social exchange. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology, 2*, 267-299. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0065-2601(08)60108-2

Allen, N. J., & Meyer, J. P. (1990). The measurement and antecedents of affective, continuance, and normative commitment to the organization. *Journal of Occupational Psychology, 63*, 1-18. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.2044-8325.1990.tb00506.x

Andrews, M. C., Kacmar, K. M., Blakely, G. L., & Bucklew, N. S. (2008). Group cohesion as an enhancement to the justice—affective commitment relationship. *Group & Organization Management, 33*, 736-755. https://doi.org/10.1177%2F1059601108326797

Arsenault, P. M. (2004). Validating generational differences: A legitimate diversity and leadership issue. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal, 25*, 124-141. https://doi.org/10.1108/01437730410521813

Avolio, B. J., & Bass, B. M. (1991). *The full range of leadership development.* New York, NY: Bass, Avolio & Associates.

Avolio, B. J., Walumbwa, F. O., & Weber, T. J. (2009). Leadership: Current theories, research and future directions. *Annual Review of Psychology, 60*, 421-448. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.60.110707.163621

Baron, R. M., & Kenny, D. A. (1986). The moderator-mediator variable distinction in social psychological research: Conceptual, strategic and statistical considerations. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 51*, 1173-1182. https://doi.org/0022-3514/86/$00.75

Bass, B. M. (1985). *Leadership and performance beyond expectations.* New York, NY: Free Press.

Bass, B. M. (2007). From transactional to transformational leadership: Learning to share the vision. In R. P. Vecchio (Ed.), *Leadership: Understanding the dynamics of power and influence in organizations* (2nd ed., pp. 302-317. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press.

Bobocel, D. R., & Hafer, C. L. (2007). Justice motive theory and the study of justice in work organizations: A conceptual integration: Commentary on the special section dealing with strain in the workplace: A just world perspective. *European Psychologist, 12*, 283-289. https://doi.org/10.1027/1016-9040.12.4.283

Byrne, B. M. (2010). *Structural equation modelling with AMOS: Basic concepts, applications and programming* (2nd ed.) New York, NY: Taylor & Francis Group.

Carter, M. Z., Mossholder, K. W., & Harris, J. N. (2018). Congruence effects of contingent reward leadership intended and experienced on team effectiveness: The mediating role of distributive justice climate. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology, 91*, 465-485. https://doi.org/10.1111/joop.12210

Colquitt, J.A. (2001). On the dimensionality of organizational justice: A construct validation of a measure. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 86*, 386-400. https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.86.3.386

Cropanzano, R., Prehar, C.A., & Chen, P.Y. (2002). Using social exchange theory to distinguish procedural from interactional justice. *Group & Organization Management, 27*, 324-351. https://doi.org/10.1177/1059601102027003002

Dai, Y. D., Dai, Y. Y., Chen, K. Y., & Wu, H. C. (2013). Transformational vs. transactional leadership: Which is better? A study on employees of international tourist hotels in Taipei City. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management, 25*, 760-778. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJCHM-Dec-2011-0223

Eberly, M. B., Johnson, M. D., Hernandez, M., & Avolio, B. J. (2013). An integrative process model of leadership: Examining loci, mechanisms, and event cycles. *American Psychologist, 68*, 427-443. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0032244

Fein, E. C., Tziner, A., & Vasiliu, C. (2010). Age cohort effects, gender, and Romanian leadership preferences. *Journal of Management Development, 29*, 364-376. https://doi.org/10.1108/02621711011039169

Folger, R., & Cropanzano, R. (1998). *Organizational justice and human resource management.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Frazier, P. A., Tix, A. P., & Barron, K. E. (2004). Testing moderator and mediator effects in counseling psychology research. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 51*, 115-134. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0167.51.1.115

García-Guiu, C., Moya, M., Molero, F., & Moriano, J.A. (2016). Transformational leadership and group potency in small military units: The mediating role of group identification and cohesion. *Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology, 32*, 145-152. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.rpto.2016.06.002

Godoy, R., & Breso, E. (2013). Is transformational leadership determinant of intrinsic motivation of followers? *Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology, 29*, 59-64. https://doi.org/10.5093/tr2013a9

Gorman, C. A., Meriac, J. P., Overstreet, B. L., Apodaca, S., McIntyre, A. L., Park, P., & Godbey, J. N. (2012). A meta-analysis of the regulatory focus nomological network: Work-related antecedents and consequences. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 80*, 160-172. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2011.07.005

Hayes, A. F. (2013). *Introduction to mediation, moderation, and conditional process analysis: A regression-based approach.* New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Hermosilla, D., Amutio, A., da Costa, S., & Páez, D. (2016). Transformational leadership in organizations: Mediating variables and long-term

consequences. *Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology, 32*, 135-143. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.rpto.2016.06.003

Hernandez, M., Eberly, M. B., Avolio, B. J., & Johnson, M. D. (2011). The loci and mechanisms of leadership: Exploring a more comprehensive view of leadership theory. *Leadership Quarterly, 22*, 1165-1185. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2011.09.009

Jiang, Z., Gollan, P. J., & Brooks, G. (2017). Relationships between organizational justice, organizational trust and organizational commitment: A cross-cultural study of China, South Korea and Australia. *International Journal of Human Resource Management, 28*, 973-1004. https://doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2015.1128457

Jung, D. I., & Avolio, B. J. (1999). Effects of leadership style and followers' cultural orientation on performance in group and individual task conditions. *Academy of Management Journal, 42*, 208-218. https://doi.org/10.2307/257093

Kanfer, R. (2009). Work Motivation: Identifying use inspired research directions. *Industrial and Organizational Psychology, 2*, 77-93. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1754-9434.2008.01112.x

Kanfer, R., Frese, M., & Johnson, R. E. (2017). Motivation related to work: A century of progress. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 102*, 338-355. https://doi.org/10.1037/apl0000133

Kark, R., Katz-Navon, T., & Delegach, M. (2015). The dual effects of leading for safety: The mediating role of employee regulatory focus. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 100*, 1332-1348. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0038818

Kark, R., Van Dijk, D., & Vashdi, D. R. (2018). Motivated or demotivated to be creative: The role of self-regulatory focus in transformational and transactional leadership processes. *Applied Psychology: An International Review, 67*, 186-224. https://doi.org/10.1111/apps.12122

Latham, G. P., & Pinder, C. C. (2005). Work motivation theory and research at the dawn of the twenty-first century. *Annual Review of Psychology, 56*, 485-516. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.55.090902.142105

Lee, J., & Wei, F. (2017). The moderating effect of leadership on perceived organizational justice and affective commitment: A study in China. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 28*, 679-702.

Leventhal ,G. S.(1980). What should be done with equity theory? In K. J. Gergen, M. S. Greenberg, & R. H. Willis (Eds.), *Social exchange: Advances in theory and research* (pp. 27-54). New York, NY: Plenum.

Loi, R., Yang, J., & Diefendorff, J. M. (2009). Four factor justice and daily job satisfaction: A multilevel investigation. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 94*, 770-781. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0015714

Masi, R. J., & Cooke, R. A. (2000). Effects of transformational leadership on subordinate motivation, empowering norms, and organizational productivity. *International Journal of Organizational Analysis, 8*, 16-47. https://doi.org/10.1108/eb028909

Niehoff, B. P., & Moorman, R. H. (1993). Justice as a mediator of the relationship between methods of monitoring and organizational citizenship behavior. *Academy of Management Journal, 36*, 527-556. https://doi.org/10.5465/256591

Perilla-Toro, L. E. & Gomez-Ortiz, V. (2017). Relationship of transformational leadership style with employee health and well-being: The mediating role of trust in the leader. *Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology, 33*, 95-108. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.rpto.2017.02.005

Pillai, R., Schriesheim, C. A., & Williams, E. S. (1999). Fairness perceptions and trust as mediators for transformational and transactional leadership: A two-sample study. *Journal of Management, 25*, 897-933. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0149-2063(99)00031-8

Pinder, C. C. (2008). *Work motivation in organizational behavior* (2nd ed.) New York, NY: Psychology Press.

Podsakoff, P. M., MacKenzie, S. B., Lee, J. Y., & Podsakoff, N. P. (2003). Common method biases in behavioral research: a critical review of the literature and recommended remedies. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 88*, 879-903. https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.88.5.879

Preacher, K. J., & Hayes, A. F. (2008). Asymptotic and resampling strategies for assessing and comparing indirect effects in multiple mediator models. *Behaviour Research Methods, 40*, 879-891. https://doi.org/10.3758/BRM.40.3.879

Reb, J., Chaturvedi, S., Narayanan, J., & Kudesia, R. S. (2018). Leader mindfulness and employee performance: A sequential mediation model of LMX quality, interpersonal justice, and employee stress. *Journal of Business Ethics,* 1-19. Advance online publication. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-018-3927-x

Shragay, D., & Tziner, A. (2011). Ç+The generational effect on the relationship between job involvement, work satisfaction and organizational citizenship behavior. *Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology, 27*, 143-157. https://doi.org/10.5093/tr2011v27n2a6

Sindhu, M. I., Ahmad, H. M., & Hashmi, S. H. (2017). Leader-member exchange relationship and organizational justice: Moderating role of organizational change. *International Journal of Organizational Leadership, 6*, 276-282.

Tremblay, M. A., Blanchard, C. M., Taylor, S., Pelletier, L. G., & Villeneuve, M. (2009). Work Extrinsic and Intrinsic Motivation Scale: Its value for organizational psychology research. *Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science/Revue canadienne des sciences du comportement, 41*, 213-226. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0015167

Tyler, T. R., & Bies, R. J. (1990). Beyond formal procedures: The interpersonal context of procedural justice. In J. S. Carroll (Ed.), *Applied Social Psychology and Organizational Settings* (pp.77-98). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Xenikou, A. (2017). Transformational leadership, transactional contingent reward, and organizational identification: The mediating effect of perceived innovation and goal culture orientations. *Frontiers in Psychology, 8*, 1754. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2017.01754

Yaffe, T., & Kark, R. (2011). Leading by example: The case of leader OCB. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 96*, 806-826. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0022464

Yu, H. C., & Miller, P. (2005). Leadership style: The X generation and baby boomers compared in different cultural contexts. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal, 26*, 35-50. https://doi.org/10.1108/01437730510575570