ORIGINAL CONTRIBUTION
Impact of Authentic Leadership on Transformative Learning of Higher Education Institution (HEI) Employees, Interceded by the Moral Values of Employees.

Mohammad Ali Haider Chauhan [1*], Dr. Naveed Yazdani [2]

[1] Assistant Professor, Department of Management (HSM), University of Management and Technology (UMT), Lahore, Pakistan

[2] Dean, Hasan Murad School of Management (HSM)/ Professor, Department of Management, University of Management and Technology (UMT), Lahore, Pakistan

Abstract— This empirical study explains the correlation between Authentic Leadership (AL) and Transformative Learning (TL). In the recent history of corporations and the business world, corporate scandals have erupted, which have questioned the authenticity of the leaders. This empirical study undertaken by the researcher explores the construct of AL and its impact on the TL of followers. The Moral Values (MV) of the followers act as a mediator in this relationship, and the study finds that AL directly impacts TL. The study has its limitations as it was conducted in higher education institutes employees. It is recommended that this study be undertaken with more variables, mediators, and moderators to understand this extraordinary impact of AL on TL and enhance the two fields. This empirical study explains the correlation between AL and TL. Taken all together, based on empirical evidence, this research identifies that AL qualities perform a significant role in increasing TL. In addition, those employees have high MV their TL is high as compared to others. The study explores relational support through two theories, social learning theory, and social cognitive theory, that provide bases to generate arguments.

Index Terms— Authentic leadership, Transformative learning, Social learning theory, Moral values, Leadership, Followers
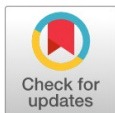
Introduction

Challenging times of today and the ongoing demand for leadership and management, which is responsible, have stakes in the organization; work towards a sustainable environment is incumbent. Especially higher education institutions need to develop those mindsets that future leaders need to lead their organizations ethically and morally; and with a sense of responsibility, keeping in mind the sustainable development goals that the United Nations set for the world (Brewer & Devnew, 2022). The current times of global business situation, especially in Pakistan, warrant a closer look at how the original leadership concept affects the TL process of the followers. Authentic authenticity, as expected in AL, prompts the leaders through internalized moral perspective to inspire and foster morality among followers (Gardner, Collier, Davis, & Dickens, 2011).

AL is a construct that revolves around the leader's transparency towards oneself and their followers – it is true to oneself and their followers. Authenticity is not a static form of behavior. It is, however, more dynamic and energetic. A progressive form of leadership

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*Email: abcchauhan@gmail.com

style, which, although criticized for its romanticism by many, still holds its appeal to the managers and executives in leadership positions (Gardner, 2018; Gardner, Karam, Alvesson, & Enola, 2021). It points to an uncertain environment for all the stakeholders -especially the follower/s, whose core moral value systems are tested and stretched. This offers a research challenge for contemporary intellectual thinkers globally (Crawford, Dawkins, Martin, & Lewis, 2020). Organizations worldwide are becoming more concerned about the authenticity and morality aspects of leadership and followers. The dilemma that most are faced with is related to the concept of authenticity and ethical behavior by the leader and the followers.

Moral perspective -values/morality- of leadership help followers foster positive self-development (Walumbwa, Avolio, Gardner, Wernsing, & Peterson, 2007), which this study investigated through an empirical study in the Pakistani Higher Education Institute (HEI) context. The moral value aspect is relevant to the value of life and value theory.

The learning concept of the employees can be better understood if the lens through which we look is TL. A phenomenon first introduced by Jack Mezirow in the 1970s - basically, a concept that outlined the steps that a learner undergoes in changing their picture of the world (Mezirow, 1978). Mezirow's work was influenced by others who had previously worked on constructs that helped structure his theory. Namely, it included the paradigms worked on (Kuhn, 1964) and Habermas's 1984 work on the domain related to critical theory and self-directed learning (O'Donnell, 1999) (Kitchenham, 2008). Scholars have used it to investigate training /learning for executives when they shift positions within an organization, where a leader, when promoted to a senior level and facing more complex responsibilities, often faces difficulties, leading to harmful results for colleagues, employees, and organizations (Terblanche, 2019).

TL also has its roots in the Social Learning Theory (SLT), developed by (Bandura, Albert, & Walters, 1977), which suggests that individuals strive to emulate the behavior (moral/ immoral) of role models (leaders) in their work environment. People learn through observing others' behavior, attitudes, and outcomes of those behaviors. "Most human behavior is learned observationally through modeling: from observing others, one forms an idea of how new behaviors are performed, and on later occasions, this coded information serves as a guide for action" (Bandura, Albert, & Walters, 1977).

SLT explains human behavior through continuous reciprocal interaction between cognitive, behavioral, and environmental influences. Using the SLT as the overarching theory for this study, an effort is to be made to investigate the proposed relationship.

Problem statement

The devastating result of having an organization managed by corrupt leaders is that the corruption does not remain closeted behind the boardroom door. The leaders' corrupt behavior tends to infiltrate and pollute the entire organization. This authentic style is there to fill the gap left because of the dishonest leadership of the past few decades (Rashid, Islam, Asif, & Ahmer, 2019). The latest research discusses that the prevalent crisis in the global business environment proposes a challenge for researchers and intellectuals to study further how authentic leaders, if focused on positive outcomes, can positively affect the moral fiber of the organizations (Crawford et al., 2020). However, of equal value is evaluating subcultures in Eastern and Western societies, and indeed subcultures of organizations (Crawford et al., 2020). Employees must not only learn the right theories and principles but must also be able to internalize them in their very own understanding. This includes growing their awareness about how they see themselves ethically and morally in the world. (Padan & Nguyen, 2020) . Moral decisions are usually made by individuals based on an existing perspective and what is their worldview and self-perception. Therefore, in changing these perspectives, the learning must be transformative and include the individual's belief systems. To change belief systems, TL theory suggests that one must go through a perspective transformation which cannot be achieved through cognitive learning but requires a TL experience (Padan & Nguyen, 2020).

Research gap

Researchers need to study the uncertain environment in the current business environment and understand how AL can affect the uncertain environment for all the stakeholders -especially the follower/s, whose core moral value systems are tested and stretched and this offers a research challenge for contemporary intellectual thinkers globally (Crawford et al., 2020). Building a healthy relationship among the followers, a positive relationship between the leaders and followers, and developing a productive social environment can be accomplished by adapting to AL (Avolio, Bruce, & Gardner, 2005). A healthy and strong relationship between the authentic leader with positive self-awareness positively affects the follower; As per SLT, it can help the observer to cognitively retain the positive impact of the higher moral ground of an authentic leader, hence helping them to change their moral value to learn (Rashid et al., 2019). To change belief systems, TL theory suggests that one must go through a perspective transformation which cannot be achieved through cognitive learning but requires a TL experience (Padan & Nguyen, 2020). The aspects of TL, research on AL, and the MV of leaders and employees warrant further research. Therefore, the current study aimed a responding to the calls of Crawford et al. (2020) and argued that AL develops the followers' MV and impacts TL. The novelty of this research is that although there is much research on AL and TL, the researcher did not find any research that looked at these two constructs together with the Social learning theory as an underpinning for the research. This

study attempted to address this gap in the knowledge of two important constructs in management studies.

Research questions

The study also echoes the early commentary on the variables researched and attempts to answer the following research questions.
1. Does AL impact the TL of followers in Higher Education Institute?
2. Does Moral Value of followers (MV) mediate the relationship between AL and TL of followers?

Literature Review

AL

Authenticity is being true to oneself in most situations in life (Avolio, Bruce, & Gardner, 2005), to act in conformity and accordance with our true beliefs, our true selves, and our own experiences, which give ground to our internal moral perspective and feeds our MV, thoughts, feelings, beliefs and having the strength to express what one thinks and practices (Kim, Park, & Park, 2022).

According to researchers, AL is defined by its positive core attributes with four dimensions - (self-awareness, relational transparency, balanced processing, and internalized moral perspective) - focusing on balanced processing of information, being aware of oneself and its impact on others, being transparent in our relationships with followers and always give more importance to the MV of oneself and followers. (Walumbwa, Avolio, Gardner, Wernsing, & Peterson, 2008). AL gained traction due to the worldwide and high-profile scandals in corporations like Tyco, Freddie Mac, Lehman Brothers, WorldCom, Enron, etc. World events such as wars and disasters also trigger many scandalous affairs in mega-corporations and create humiliation for big corporations and the leaders leading those organizations. These humiliations create anxiety and uncertainty for people and communities (Crawford et al., 2020).

AL is a complex process that is more difficult to describe but is easy to define on the surface. To understand AL, the researcher identified some parameters for clear conceptualization. Furthermore, its investigation continues today. AL is an interesting area for potential researchers and practitioners (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999; Burns, Looney, Casey, & O'Donnell, 1978). Furthermore, researchers have developed AL approaches that were not empirically investigated and need further investigation and clarification (Gardner, W. L., Lowe, Meuser, Noghani, Gulliver, & Collier, 2020). According to past researchers, there are no single aspects to define AL; instead, there are numerous definitions of AL with different phases and viewpoints(Gardner, W., Avolio, & Walumbwa, 2005).

The first viewpoint of AL is the "intrapersonal perspective," which explains what is going on within the leader since it focuses more closely on the leader. Another perspective of AL is the "interpersonal process" (Northouse, 2021). In this perspective, AL creates rationality between a leader and their followers. It includes not only the leader's effects but also a response from their followers (Eagly, 2005). In last, AL defines from the "development perspective," so this approach was introduced by Avolio and his team of researchers (Avolio, Bruce J. & Gardner, 2005; Gardner, W. et al., 2005).

Research done in 2011 - 2020 and over the past few decades analyzing and reviewing what has been done in the field of leadership attracted great attention and trust among potential researchers and practitioners (Gardner, W. L. et al., 2011; Gardner, W. L. et al., 2020). The research on AL is motivated by processing needs for a new type of value-based and genuine leadership to restore self-monitoring, self-consistency, integrity, a balance between internal emotions, and a psychological state of honor Businesses and organizations also have to display the highest MV in their actions. Therefore, they are role models to others (Datta, 2015; Gardner, B. J. a. T. W. W. L., 2018; Gardner, W. L. et al., 2011).

The literature shows that no learning or positive change can happen if the leadership process does not inspire MV, ethics, and the difference between right and wrong (Crawford et al., 2020). The leaders' corrupt behavior tends to infiltrate and pollute the entire organization. This phenomenon has its roots in the social learning theory (SLT), developed by (Bandura A & Hall, 2021), which suggests that individuals strive to emulate the behavior of role models in their work environment, and this moral behavior of leaders promotes TL and MV of followers mediate this relationship.

TL

TL is the extension of consciousness by which individuals can question their own experiences, assumptions, values, and beliefs regarding their purposes (Malik & Roberson, 2015). TL allows individuals to reflect upon their personal life experiences and learn from them to enhance the purposes for which they are striving. However, these assumptions, values, and beliefs that individuals working people, and followers possess can be sharpened to attain new goals and change our lives (Malik & Roberson, 2015).

The TL idea was initially proposed by Jack Mezirow when he was investigating women's re-entry into community colleges in the USA (Mezirow, 1978). He is the seminal author on this particular subject area. Over time his work has evolved, and the concept has been criticized, refined, and expanded through research by multiple authors (Müller, Scheffer, & Closs, 2020). TL is conceived and described as

a process that allows individuals to transform those taken-for-granted frames of reference, which are schemes, habits, of our mindsets, to make them inclusive, distinct, open, emotionally capable of change and reflective so that they can generate beliefs and opinions that prove more true or justified to guide actions (Mezirow, 2000).

TL, developed by Jack Mezirow in the 1970s, has 10 steps leading to a new perception of the world. These 10 steps are (a) a disorienting dilemma; (b) self-examination with feelings of guilt or shame; (c) recognition that one's discontent and the process of transformation are shared and that others have negotiated a similar change; (d) exploration of options for new roles, relationships, and actions; (e) a critical assessment of assumptions; (f) provisional trying of new roles; (g) planning of a course of action; (h) acquisition of knowledge and skills for implementing one's plans; (i) building of competence and self-confidence in new roles and relationships; and (j) a reintegration into one's life based on conditions dictated by one's new perspective ((Taylor, Edward W., 2018)

Mezirow, along with others, has identified four stages the authors had in common regarding the TL process: (a) a disruptive event in the learner's life challenges his worldview; (b) the learner critically reflects upon their beliefs, assumptions, and values that shape the perspective involved; (c) the learner develops a new perspective to deal with the discrepancies caused by the event; (d) the learner incorporates the new perspective into their life (Müller et al., 2020). Disorienting dilemmas can also be described as integrators of circumstances wherein an individual searches for something missing in one's life, the impact of which can vary widely depending on personality, experiences, age, or personal issues at the time (Coghlan & Gooch, 2011).

Social Learning Theory provides a platform and framework to understand how leaders and followers learn through observation and using their cognitive abilities and understanding. Their followers internalize and try to make sense of the authentic leader's behavior so that they can emulate the same behavior (Bandura, A & Hall, 2021; Bandura, Albert & Mcdonald, 1963; Bandura, Albert & Walters, 1977).

SLT states that this learning has four stages – attention, retention, reproduction, and motivation (Bandura, A & Hall, 2021). The first stage is attention, in which the learner needs to observe the behavior of the leader that they want to reproduce or that they are required to reproduce in the business environment. Secondly, they need to internalize and attempt to retain the aspects they have observed in the leader. The cognitive process of the followers allows for the observation to be rehearsed and emulated. Thirdly they need to convert the observation into action (reproduce the behavior they have observed), and followers can do this if given an opportunity. Lastly, a motivational needs to be provided to imitate the behavior they have seen in the leaders (Horsburgh & Ippolito, 2018). Motivation happens because of reinforcement, and bandura suggests three stages – direct reinforcement, vicarious reinforcement, and self-reinforcement (Bandura, A & Hall, 2021). Driving from the arguments of SLT and the presenting literature for TL and AL, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H1: AL positively impacts the TL of Employees in an organization.

MV

Psychologists have defined moral value as the ability to judge between right and wrong. Points out that values "serve as guiding principles in the life of a person or other social entity" (Schwartz, 1994) (Schwartz, 1992). Moral Value/s is defined by defining what value/s is and what the basic definition of value is and then combining it with the concept of morality/moral concept. Researchers have pointed out assertively that being moral is about creating moral codes for oneself and others. (Schwartz, 2012) A moral leader creates a persona that shows those moral codes and models themselves to be observed and replicated based on the results. Just like SLT (Bandura, A & Hall, 2021) talks about observation, retention, application, and motivation, the argument from the social learning theory applies here, saying that a moral person must be a role model, a person whom followers want to imitate, who shows traits of consistency, courage, integrity, sincerity, and honesty (Trevino, Hartman, & Brown, 2000). However, researchers introduce seven types of morality that seem global and time-changing. These seven morals seem global: family values, bravery, return favors, group loyalty, property rights, deferring to authority, and respect (Curry, Mullins, & Whitehouse, 2019). MV show human behavior, while morality is the practical activity and ethics denote theoretical systematic and rational reflection on human behavior (Carroll, 1978). Values are attached to beliefs and attitudes and guide human behavior (Small, 2002).

Researchers claim that management sciences cannot be spared from society (Chowdhury, 2018). The origin of MV is not contexted specific; e.g., western sciences have varied MV from other indigenous sciences' value sets (Corrigan, Cooper, Keast, & King, 2011). According to researchers' opinions, morality, MV, and ethics are combined and interlinked with society, attached to the society's culture (Benavot, Cha, Kamens, Meyer, & Wong, 1991). Since the 19th century, rapid science and management science have progressed. Society, science education, and teaching practice are influenced by globalization. Researchers argue current science practicing ideology is strongly active against individual inner MV, spiritual unfolding, and fulfillment (Witz, 1996). Current social sciences scholars faced challenges despite further education and substantial research undertaken over the last few years. Students decreasing motivation and interest in social sciences is a most important and alerting challenge (Sadler, Chambers, & Zeidler, 2004).

In recent years, practitioners' interest in social science, technology, and mathematics dropped throughout secondary education (Kilmer, Gröschner, Pehmer, & Seidel, 2015). At the same time, social life in a globalized world makes it more difficult for rapid technolog-

ical advancement. It enhances complexities in social life to emphasize MV and ethics, presenting them through improved curriculum and teaching practices. Embedding MV, ethics, and character education in social and management sciences. Society does not get full benefit because there is proof that this condition has an overarching effect on MV, ethics, and virtues (Gates, 2006). In the 21st century, ethical issues generated by science are surprisingly faced by many young students to a lack of science education (Rowley, 2014). People can achieve a clear vision of MV and ethical ramifications of social sciences with the help of integrated management activities.

AL and MV

Modern organizations have a morally complex environment that imposes significant demands on ethics and MV (Hannah, Avolio, & Walumbwa, 2015). An aspect of ethical cognition of principally focused on present empirical research and ethical values vs. judgment (Reynolds, 2006), as proved by the latest MV studies(Tenbrunsel & Smith-Crowe, 2008). The collected proof leaves more work necessary to find what factors originate people's MV to endorse real ethical behavior. As a result, past researchers investigate a philosophy named "moral conation," the stimulus interlinked with moral purposes, which these scholars suggest to stem from MV, moral efficacy, and moral and psychological behavior (Hannah, Avolio, & May 2011; Hannah et al., 2015). In the latest study, the researcher's goals are on the factor of MV and access to its backgrounds and behavioral consequence in social sciences literature. (Sekerka, Leslie E. & Bagozzi, Richard P., 2007); Sekerka, Leslie E and Bagozzi, Richard P (2007). MV are defined as "what is good for others by using the ability of inner principle, despite the danger of life, and practice matter." (Sekerka, Leslie E. & Bagozzi, Richard P., 2007). Researchers purpose MV "moral principle commitment, these principles supported by raised threat involved and danger endured (Kidder, 2005).

According to SLT (social learning theory), in this study's guiding framework connected to the examination, the researcher investigates the connection between follower MV, AL, and ethical pro-social behavior(Bandura, Albert & Walters, 1977). Researchers define AL as positive psychological capitates (resilience, hope, confidence, and optimism) (Luthans & Avolio, 2003) positive ethical climate promoted by a pattern of leader behavior to adoptive more self-awareness, moral perspective, information processing balance, relational transparency on researcher work with colleagues, showing positive self-development (Walumbwa et al., 2008). Society is developed by authentic leaders as they have huge moral perspectives and self-awareness, doing justice, opposition, and transparency (Longman, 2009). These parameters not only have social learning effects but can express framework in ways that sustain followers' MV (Bandura, Albert & Walters, 1977). Followers' ethical behaviors are influenced and anticipated by AL, as well as positive consequences such as well-being (Avolio, Bruce J., Gardner, Walumbwa, Luthans, & May 2004; Gardner, W. L., Avolio, Luthans, May, & Walumbwa, 2005; Ilies, Morgeson, & Nahrgang, 2005). Brown and Mitchell (2015) and Brown and Mitchell (2015) deduced that due to the powerful impact on the leader's ethical dimension, future scholars connect AL to encouraging required ethic-related results.

This phenomenon has occurred because authentic leaders expect a set of behavior through social learning, and followers develop a script for bravery (Hannah, Sweeney, & Lester, 2010; Sekerka, Bagozzi, & Charnigo, 2009). And ethical behavior leads toward a positive perspective if they face problems in the future (Gioia & Poole, 1984). Additionally, by SLT, leaders are observed by followers, and some inspiring qualities of leaders set an example, thoughts, and followers' moral cognitive structure through their demonstration and clear explanations of MV (Avolio, Bruce J. & Gardner, 2005; Bai, Lin, & Liu, 2019). Leaders inspire such qualities; it generates inspiration for followers to low differences interlink with their values and actions and role models (Lord & Brown, 2004).

Authentic leaders connect their followers in a clear, wide-balance deluge of MV (Avolio, Bruce J. et al., 2004; Gardner, W. et al., 2005). Researchers conclude important strong informative influence works between authentic leaders and their followers that tell us a type of behavior is compensated or demanded in a group; inauthentic behavior and offers can be rejected and be downcast and reprimanded (Bai et al., 2019). Authentic leaders proposed impact on the environment promotes moral agency in followers' central components of SLT (Bandura, Albert & Walters, 1977; Wren, 1982). It helps the organization in increasing its overall performance.(Schroeder, Chatfield, Singh, Chennells, & Herissone-Kelly, 2019). MV guide the moral behavior of the followers/employees of an organization.

An approach socio-cognitive model (Bandura, A & Hall, 2021) states that moral standards and self-regulation control any behavior. MV not only guide an individual but also affect the interaction of the individual with others. The same is true when interacting in a business environment with others, especially followers or employees. The MV of the leaders affect the business environment and particularly the moral value of the employees. The people running a business affect not only the society in which the business is operating but also the way the employees of the business make decisions (Jiang, D.-Y., Lin, & Lin, 2011; Jiang, K., Lepak, Han, Hong, Kim, & Winkler, 2012).

This study offers the first empirical proof to create future research examining the development and study of MV and AL relationships. Concerning the presented literature review and arguments presented in the theoretical justification for social learning theory (SLT), the following hypotheses are proposed:

H2: MV of follower (MV) mediates the relationship between AL and TL

H2a: AL positively impacts the MV of followers

H2b: MV of employees positively impact the TL of followers

Theory and Theoretical Framework

Theoretical justification

To understand the theoretical perspective in this study of AL construct triggering the TL process of the followers, the social learning theory (Bandura, Albert & Walters, 1977) provides a useful prototype.

"Learning can be exceedingly laborious, not to mention hazardous, if people had to rely solely on the effects of their actions to inform them what to do. Fortunately, most human behavior is learned observationally through modeling: from observing others, one forms an idea of how new behaviors are performed, and on later occasions, this coded information serves as a guide for action." (Bandura, Albert & Walters, 1977). Social cognitive theory (derived from Social Learning Theory) evolves from the seminal work of bandura 1963-68 – behavioral learning theory. Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) – (Bandura, Albert, 1991, 2001; Bandura, Albert & Mcdonald, 1963) claims that humans learn from others through observation actions and the result of action (Koutroubas & Galanakis, 2022). It also explains how different people perform and learn new skills and how they self-discipline and regulates themselves ((Koutroubas & Galanakis, 2022). The core concepts of modern social (cognitive) learning theory (SLT) is one of the most widely used concepts for understanding the workplace environment, human behavior, and its development in the organization (Koutroubas & Galanakis, 2022). When we talk about the environment, it primarily refers to the social fiber in which the person operates, the circumstances, the social context and influences, to organizational culture and environment Koutroubas & Galanakis, 2022).

Theoretical framework

The figure-1 shows that AL is an independent variable that affects the organization positively to increase the overall environment of the organization for employees and increases the trust in the Leadership (Avolio, B. J., Walumbwa, & Weber, 2009). The following figure (1) graphically shows the model this study is proposing to explore through a quantitative study.
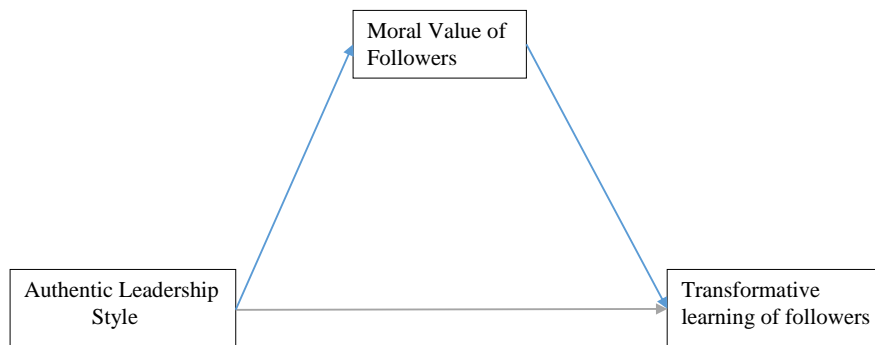

Fig. 1. Research model for the study

Research Methodology

They study an objectivist stance about reality and consider the social world real, existing independently of our knowledge. The stance of this study is positivist, which claims to support "tentative" knowledge, which means causes determine the effects in a probabilistic manner (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

Research design

A quantitative study was employed for the analysis and data collection and empirically examined the results to understand the relationship between AL, TL through mediating variables of the MV of followers to understand the causal effect (Bhattacherjee, 2012). In quantitative research design, we collect the data by employing instruments such as surveys or experiments (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Different statistical techniques are available for the researcher to analyze and verify the collected data (Amaratunga, Baldry, Sarshar, & Newton, 2002).

Sampling design process

The sampling design process essentially involves three steps mentioned below.

Research population and sampling technique

The population for this study is the higher education institutions (HEI) in Punjab, Pakistan. For this study stratified random sampling technique is selected, allowing the researchers to gain confidence that the sample selected showed similar characteristics, stratified sampling gives more comprehensive and reliable information (Kothari, 2020).

Unit of analysis

My analysis unit is the HEI employee selected from the sample. The data was collected from management and faculty both (male and female).

Determination of sample size

The sample size for this study is determined by using the formula recommended (Hair Jr, Babin, & Anderson, 2010 as they suggested three standards to calculate appropriate sample size - 5:1 considered as a minimum, 10:1 considered as most accepted, and 20:1 considered as most desired (Hair Jr, Babin, & Anderson, 2010). We opted for 5:1, and with 50 items from the scales of our variables, we got 250 as the sample size.

Data Collection Procedure

The survey approach was utilized, in which the researcher, through his network in HEIs, approached the randomly selected universities from the sample set and administered the surveys to them (Fowler Jr, 2013). The data was collected through self-administered and closed-ended questionnaires. Using questionnaires allows the researcher to gather the required information from many participants (Rowley, 2014). An English language-based questionnaire was distributed to collect data. 900 employees of different universities within the selected region were contacted. The questionnaire was shared with them electronically, via contacts, and by hand. The emails and other identification-related information removed, and privacy was secured. The sample size was 27% of the population contracted of 900. Multiple demographic and concepts related information were also gathered via close-ended questions.

Common method variance

The data was collected in two-wave approaches to remove (CMV) or common method variance bias. The research time horizon is a two-wave data approach. T-1 collected data on the independent variable (IV), and T-2 collected data on the dependent variable (DV). Based on the literature review and previous research, a structured survey was used to collect the required data. All items in the survey Likert scale – 5 point - The range is from 1 -5 and determined based on the cumulative merging of all the questions from different tools for the variables. The researcher opted for a 5-point Likert scale because it allowed respondents to give quality responses and did not make them feel frustrated. Also, the 5-point Likert scale generates reliable data by enhancing its originality and response rate.

As mentioned in the model above, the measuring tools for variables got selected through a literature review of various available tools. For AL Questionnaire – ALQ- is selected for measuring the IV and is taken with the proper authorization of the developers. This 16-item tool measures Self Awareness, Relational Transparency, Ethical/MV, and Balanced processing (Adil & Kamal, 2020; Avolio, B. J. et al., 2009). Self-awareness to look for the strengths, limitations, and how the leader impacts the followers in transparency to look for to what degree the leader reinforces this and how the leader impacts the followers. Relational transparency looks at what degree the leader reinforces the followers' levels of openness and how they see it in the leaders. Ethical/Moral Value looks if the standards are high enough that they can be retained and reproduced and provide the motivation to follow. Balanced processing looks to what degree the leader gives weight to the followers' opinions (Avolio, Bruce J. & Walumbwa, 2014).

For the DV - TL - the measure used is a 30-item survey developed by (Cox, R. C., 2017) - TL Outcomes and Processes Survey (TROPOS) - to measure TL based on its more unified definition. The survey included three TL process scales—social support, attitude toward uncertainty, and criticality—and one outcome scale. As part of the exercise, the author did an extensive literature review and identified social support, behavior to uncertainty, and criticality as the three common variables that underscore the TL theoretical perspectives. This means that Cox viewed TL (whether it occurs through a rational, extra-rational, or emancipatory process) as requiring support coming from others, a proactive attitude toward uncertainty, and criticality in examining one's way of knowing, doing, and being (Cox, Robert C, 2021; Kwon, Han, & Nicolaides, 2021). In this study, we employ Cox's TROPOS to measure TL and its relationship to AL in the workplace.

This study's MV as an intervening variable is complex and intricate. A tool developed by (Hunt, Wood, & Chonko, 1989) is used to measure MV. It is a 5-item scale used by (Jiang, D.-Y. et al., 2011) in their study on business MV. Participants rate the items on a scale ranging from 1(strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree). Two factors of moral regulations and organizational moral practice were identified (Jiang, D.-Y. et al., 2011). For this study, the researcher used this tool to measure the stakeholders' MV and how the followers' MV mediate the AL and TL link.

Proposed Data Analysis Techniques

Data is analyzed using SPSS statistics version 28. Descriptive and correlational results are presented. The researcher runs reliability tests to check the measurement scale's internal consistency or reliability and validity, respectively (Selvarajah & Meyer, 2008). Mediation and moderation analysis are done in this study using Preacher and Hayes process version 3.3 (Hayes, 2012). Regression analysis is run in SPSS to test direct relationships, i.e., to test the hypotheses claiming direct effects (Moore, Mayer, Chiang, Crossley, Karlesky, & Birtch, 2019). SPSS used run user-friendly and analyzes even larger data easily (Prabhakar & Lane, 2008).

Analysis

Although the model looks pretty simple, it is intricate from the construct combination aspect. It is an attempt to combine three different constructs as one model. The flow diagram of the analysis is shown in Figure 1
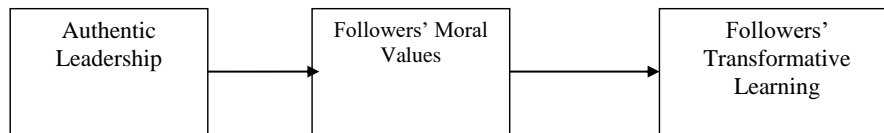

Fig. 2. Flow diagram of the analysis

The analysis was conducted in this study using SPSS v28 and simple drawing for the model. The whole construct is interesting, and the data collected and analyzed showed us that AL positively impacts the TL of the employee in an HEI. The regression and other tests on the collected data confirm that AL impacts TL. AL is the independent variable in this equation, and TL is the dependent variable. When analyzed, the data this study collected showed a direct positive impact of AL on the TL of the followers.

Table I
Descriptive statistics and correlation matrix

	Mean	Std. Deviation	1	2	3	4	5
1. AL	3.9515	0.56833	1				
2. MV	3.8625	0.90262	.219**	1			
3. TL	4.0458	0.61301	.434**	.734**	1		
4. Gender	1.3733	0.48477	0.001	0.014	0.063	1	
5. Age	1.9067	0.87383	.157*	-0.065	-0.091	-.160*	1

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Descriptive statistics is a statistics tool with several characteristics like mean, standard deviation, sample variance, max vs. min values, and range, and to describe the shape of data by kurtosis and skewness(Avolio, Bruce J. & Gardner, 2005). These characteristics summarize the data and are explained briefly(Khan, Anwar, & Husnain, 2021). In this data analysis, the researcher examined two main characteristics, which are mean and standard deviation. Table 1 shows the AL mean value is 3.95 with a 0.568 standard deviation, which means respondents give feedback in favor of AL. Besides that, most data lie on the central point. The mean value of MV is 3.86 with a 0.902 standard deviation, which shows the data is dispersed from the mean value, which means some extreme values exist in the data for MV data collection (Hannah, Lester, & Vogelgesang, 2005). The TL mean value is 4.04 with a 0.613 standard deviation which is also supportive of TL data collection. In this study, the researcher also elaborates demographic characteristics of respondents like Gender

and Age. The mean value of gender is 1.37 with a 0.484 standard deviation, while age shows 1.9 and 0.873, respectively. The results of descriptive statistics suggest that the data is averagely favorable and valid for this study; besides, these findings are also alien to post studies(Mehmood, Hamstra, Nawab, & Vriend, 2016; Woolley, Caza, & Levy, 2011).

The correlation analysis is another statistical technique demonstrating the relationship between two quantitative variables(Khan, Nawaz, & Mahmood, 2022). The value of correlation exists between -1 to +1, respectively. When the value shows +1, it displays a perfect positive correlation between the variable; besides that, -1 show a negative correlation between the two variables(Khan et al., 2022). The significance level is 0.01, shown with two stars, and 0.05, demonstrated with one for the 2-tailed association. The results show that AL has a positive and significant relationship between moral value and TL. These relationships clearly show that when individuals follow AL qualities, they enhance their MV and increase TL perfectly(Ebrahimi, Rezvani Chamanzamin, Roohbakhsh, & Shaygan, 2017). Moral value has a positive and significant relationship with TL; it means those persons have high MV that significantly cause TL. Intended for demographic characteristics, gender has a positive association with all variables, meaning males and females are not problematic for AL, MV, and TL, respectively(Cunliffe & King, 2018). Furthermore, age has negatively associated with MV, TL, and gender. Finally, the correlation matrix also displays the strength and direction of two quantitative variables.

Table II

Direct/indirect effect of AL (X) on TL (Y) through MV (M)

Effect	Coefficient	SE	t	p	LLCI (95%)	ULCI (95%)
Direct Effect of X on Y	0.3095	0.046	6.7247	0.000	0.2188	0.4003
Total Effect	0.4683	0.065	7.1804	0.000	0.3397	0.5968
Indirect Effect of X on Y	Coefficient	Boot SE			Boot LLCI (95%)	Boot ULCI (95%)
MCLEAN	0.1587	0.0602			0.0203	0.2528

N = 5000 Bootstrapping resample

This study analyzes the mediation analysis using Process Macro v3.5 model 4 for SPSS v28 developed by Preacher and Hayes process v 3.5(Hayes, 2012). Table 2 demonstrates the direct, indirect, and total effects of AL and MV on TL. In this table, X is the independent variable that is AL, Y is the dependent variable, TL and M is the moderator variable, MV. The coefficient of a direct effect of AL on TL is positive 0.3095 and significant (p<0.05) with verified from LLCI 0.2188 and ULCI 0.4003 values. The LLCI and ULCI do not occur at zero values, which means the relationship of AL to TL is significant.

On the other hand, AL has a significant and positive impact on TL(Cunliffe & King, 2018). So, this finding is strongly supportive of hypothesis 1. The beta value of the total effect shows 0.4683 with a significant p-value (p<0.05). The standard error for direct and total effect are 0.046 and 0.065, respectively. The indirect effect of AL through MV to TL is also positive, 0.1587, and significant. The value of LLCI is 0.0203, and ULCI is 0.2528 and did not contain to 0 value. According to Hayes (2012), if the value of LLCI and ULCI does not contain 0 value, it means the mediation significantly exists between the variables. Therefore, MV significantly mediates the relationship between AL and TL (Nelson, Boudrias, Brunet, Morin, De Civita, Savoie, & Alderson, 2014). So, according to these findings, hypothesis 2 was accepted successfully.

Discussion

In Pakistan, higher education institutions play a pivotal role in the education sector and greatly contribute to academia. The present study hypothesized the model with AL as an independent variable, transformative leadership as a dependent variable, and moral value as mediating variable by utilizing SLT and SCT as the basis of arguments(Walker, 2018). This study collected data from the education sector via two methods: hand and electronically(Jyoti & Dev, 2015). The study used different techniques to validate the research questionnaires and mediation analysis to analyze the data. The empirical results showed all hypotheses are accepted and supportive of this study. Details are also stated in the above paragraphs (Taylor, Edward W & Cranton, 2012). Moreover, this study has some methodological and theatrical strengths to increase the confidence of this study. First, the researcher collected the data from different sources (leaders and followers), which decreased the chance of bias. Second, the sample population is large and specific and addresses the issue of future generations (Kilmer et al., 2015). Third, most of the questionnaires were collected by hand, increasing the data's reliability and validity. Fourth, the audience response rate is 90% which confirms that self-selection does not exist in this data collection. Lastly, this is the first study of its kind that directly investigates the impact of AL on TL. In addition, to investigate the indirect relationship, the study applies MV as a mediator variable between AL and TL. Up to the researcher's knowledge, no study has been conducted to investigate the direct and indirect relationship between AL, TL, and MV in the context of Pakistani HEI employees.

Conclusion

Higher Education Institutes need to understand the importance of AL style as it affects how the staff and faculty respond to it. The leadership's transparency, morality, honesty, and balanced processing affect employees' MV and positively impact the TL process. The purpose of the research work was to provide an objective, comprehensive and integrated review of the field of V. In addition, the study investigated the indirect association between AL and TL through the MV of individuals. The researcher utilizing Process Macro v3.5 model 4 developed by Andrew F. Hayes (Hayes, 2012), identified and interpreted how HEI employees' TL process is started when employees practice AL qualities in leadership positions, how HEI employees' MV play a significant role in increasing the TL process, especially if affected by AL qualities.

Taken all together, based on empirical evidence, this research identifies that AL qualities perform a significant role in increasing TL, in addition, those employees have high MV their TL is high as compared to others. The study explores relational support through two theories like social learning theory and social cognitive theory, that provide bases to generate arguments. Furthermore, the study analyzed CMV common meth variance of CMB common method bias to overcome the behavioral biases by Harman's Single Factor test using SPSS v28 (Podsakoff, Mackenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003).

Finally, AL and followers identify the process of TL, which is the heart of this research understanding. Exploring leadership dynamics might be deserving much more theoretical and empirical investigation. Future Research

This study finds out several future directions that might be very helpful for potential researchers and practitioners. The current research themes are overdue for further inquiries. The current study only emphasized AL, and MV analyzes TL as a direct and indirect relationship. New researchers may utilize more variables and other leadership styles to investigate TL. Finally, this study collected the data in a cross-sectional way, future researcher also investigates through longitudinal study design to explore the causal association between AL and TL.

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