



# Transformational and Transactional Leadership Styles and Employee Turnover Intentions in Public Services Organizations. A Mediated-Moderation Model

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**Abstract.** The study examines the mediated –moderation relationship between leadership styles and employee turnover intentions through organizational commitment and general self-efficacy in the public sector organizations in Ghana. The data were collected from 330 cross-sectional full-time employees in the public sector organizations in Ashanti and Bono regions in Ghana. The data were analyzed by the use of SPSS Version 25 and Process Macro 3.5 to determine regression and correlational analysis to evaluate direct and indirect effects of the mediator-moderator variables under consideration. The study found that organizational commitment partially mediates transformational leadership and employee turnover intentions. Transactional leadership was also found to positively relates to employee turnover intentions while lower general self-efficacy was found to cause employee turnover intentions. The study findings bring to bear the need for leaders to adopt strategies that inspire trust and confidence in the employees through which higher commitment levels will be attained thereby reducing turnover intentions. Public sector organizations in the sub-Saharan Africa are experiencing actual turnover of its strategic employees to multinational companies. The study is the first to combine transformational leadership, transactional leadership, organizational commitment, general self-efficacy, and employee turnover intentions in a study model in the sub-Saharan African.

**Keywords:** Employee turnover intentions, General self-efficacy, Organizational commitment, Transactional leadership, Transformational leadership.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Employee turnover in public organizations has become a worrying situation across the globe. High turnover is a major competitive disadvantage for many organizations everywhere (Oh and Chhinzer, 2021). It is, therefore, essential to prejudge the intentions of the employees to be able to minimize its occurrences to reduce its impact in the organization ( Oi, et al., 2015; Lewin and Sager, 2010). This is because employee turnover intention (ETI) affects both the profitability and productivity of the enterprise if not managed well (Park and Shaw, 2013). The high cost of recruiting and replacing employees has necessitated the need to evaluate the cause of ETI in public sector organizations (Jung, 2010; Lee and Hong, 2011).

Recent studies have discovered that the major cause of high employee turnover is the lack of commitment and employee general self-efficacy (Firth et al., 2007). However, there is a dearth of study to explain the underlying mechanism that leads to ETI in most public sector organizations, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa. Even though studies prove that leadership practices do not directly predict turnover intentions (Ennis, Gong, and Okpozo, 2016), leadership plays varying roles in employee commitment and general self-efficacy (GSE), which in turn reduces attrition rates (Hamstra et al., 2011). Leadership builds trust and confidence among employees (Avolio, 2003), resulting in the feeling of belongingness, which helps employees to develop more substantial commitment, therefore, less likely to leave the organization (Garg and Ramjee, 2013; Hamstra et al., 2011). The current study seeks to examine the relationship between the most prominent leadership styles in the literature, transformational leadership (TFL) and transactional leadership (TSL) styles and employee turnover intentions (ETI) while considering the mediating role of organizational commitment (OC) and the moderating role of GSE in public service organizations. This has become necessary because most of the studies on employee turnover intentions and organizational commitment tilt towards transformational leadership, which has widely reported negative and significant relations with employee turnover intentions and organizational commitment (Abouraia and Othman, 2017; Caillier, 2016; Gyensare et al., 2017; Park and Pierce, 2020). These studies mostly used organizational commitment as a mediating variable in selected constructs. Second, transactional leadership is a proud style in public sector organizations that promotes rewards and punishment and enhances organizational commitment and self-efficacy if handled well for employee empowerment through teamwork and self-managed strategies (Caillier, 2014) . Again, the study attempts to aggregate the fragments of leadership literature that have investigated leadership styles and employee turnover intentions in the public sector with respect to GSE on OC. This will help to investigate the issues of administrative leadership in the bureaucratic culture. Several studies have reported a mixed finding, especially on transactional leadership style on its relationship with employee turnover intentions and organizational commitment (Koesmono, 2017; Naseer et al, 2016 ; Park and Pierce, 2020). General self-efficacy has seen very few studies on leadership styles and employee turnover intentions. This study may be the first to combine general self-efficacy and organizational commitment as

moderating and mediating variables, respectively, in public sector organizations in sub-Saharan Africa.

Accordingly, this study proposes two primary study outcomes: first, to examine the effects of transformational and transactional leadership styles on employee turnover intentions in the public service organizations, and second, the study proposes to test the moderating effect of GSE on OC and mediating role of OC on TFL and TSL styles and ETI

## 2. THEORY AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

The premise of the study objectives and hypotheses is based on the social exchange theory (SET). There is a psychological mechanism that stimulates employee's emotional attachment and strong desires for their job and influences them to remain in the organization for a more extended period. Social exchange theory (SET) is one of the most influential conceptual paradigms in organizational behavior. Even though there are different schools of thought, theories agree that SET involves a series of interdependent interactions that generate obligations. This interaction creates relationships that evolve over time into trust, loyalty, and commitment. The central debate in social exchange theory (SET) suggests that if the organization offers something valuable to employees, they will, in return, offer something valuable. This will create a psychological contract among the employees and the organization. (Latorre, et al., 2016) The implication is that there should be reciprocal gain sharing to improve commitment in the organization because committed employees will reflect in reduced labor turnover (Mahmood et al, 2019; Ugaddan and Park, 2017) Ineson, et al. (2013), contend that when leaders involve the employee in the day-to-day organizational affair, they are likely to feel committed. Specifically, research findings suggest that individuals with a strong exchange orientation are more likely to reciprocate a good deed than those in low exchange orientation (Loi et al., 2009). The study attributes this mechanism to general self-efficacy (GSE) and organizational commitment (OC) and, as such, adopt them as moderating – mediating variables. The question the study seeks to answer includes but is not limited to whether TFL and TSL styles impact the employee turnover intentions in public service organizations as widely reported in the private sector, moderated and mediated by OC and GSE.

### 2.1. Transformational Leadership and Employee Turnover Intentions

Transformational leaders use their vision, self-confidence, and conviction to raise awareness of issues of consequence and to argue for what is right and good (Bass., 1985). TFL and TSL styles have been at the forefront of the leadership literature in private and public organizations for a few decades now (Antonakis and House, 2014). However, TFL is seen to improve outcomes for employees as compared to transactional leadership (Ljungholm, 2014; Caillier, 2014) and remains a dominant paradigm in management literature as a force to inspire organizational effectiveness (Ghasabeh et al., 2015). For instance, TSL has a lesser impact on desirable consequences than TFL, which encapsulates intrinsic motivation (Bass and Riggio, 2006). Bass did not categorize transformational and transactional leadership as opposites (Krishnan, 2012; Leroy et al., 2012). Instead, Bass described them as simultaneously useful (Olafsen et al., 2015; Pandey et al, 2015). TFL is a type of normative theory of leadership that stimulates an idealistic, optimistic outlook on the future, communicates high expectations, promotes change, focuses employee attention, and encourages new ways of achieving objectives (Bass, 1985; Hamstral et al. 2011). TFL theory, according to Bass, consisted of leaders behaving ethically by inspiring and providing intellectual stimulation to followers to curtail their interests and focus on a higher purpose, which broadens the leadership scope (Pandey et al. 2015; Bass 1985). Studies found TFL and ETI as having inconsistent and inconclusive outcomes. Cheng et al, (2016) found TFL and ETI of nurses being mediated by social identity. Gyensare et al. (2017) also found TFL to be significantly influential in reducing ETI mediated by affective commitment. Again, Caillier (2016) identified that TFL had a direct negative relationship with ETI. Ariyabuddhiphongs and aKahn (2017) also found that TFL practices hinder ETI with trust and job performance as mediators. Sun and Wang (2017) conclude that TFL practices create an organizational culture with strong social bonding that prevents ETI in public sector organizations. We hypothesize that:

*H1: Transformational leadership negatively relates to employee turnover intentions in public services organizations.*

### 2.2. Transactional Leadership and Employee Turnover Intentions

In organizations, transactional leaders improve and maintain performance, substitute one goal for another, reduce resistance to change, and implement decisions (Pravichai and Ariyabuddhiphongs, 2018; p.3). This leadership is typically represented by setting objectives and closely monitoring and controlling outcomes. Burns (1978) asserted that transactional leaders' prime concerns are maintaining and improving the quantity of performance, reducing resistance to particular actions, and implementing effective decision-making. The focus is on quantity rather than quality, as the leader is mainly concerned with how much is achieved. The transactional leader does not individualize the subordinates' needs nor focus on their personal development (Book et al., 2019; Northouse, 2004). The exchange perspective of transactional leadership is widespread, and it prevails at different levels of the organization. Most research on transactional leadership is founded on the notion that the leader and follower's relations are based on a series of implicit bargains or exchanges. Bass and Riggio, (2006) similarly distinguished the levels at which transactions occur between the leader and the follower. The kinds of

transactions leaders and followers engage in range from the obvious to the less obvious. In Burns' 'Power of Vision' study, the obvious transactions include subsidies for campaign contributions and jobs for votes, whereas the less obvious entail the exchange of commitment, trust, and respect. In contemporary public sector organizations, a similar pattern can be observed, the apparent transactions being wages and salaries, employee benefits, and paid leave (Wenzel, 2007).

The less known transactions include promotions, end of year bonuses, and performance awards. Burns (1978) noted that transactional leaders have several transactions or exchanges available to them. Some of the transactions depend on the leader's control over resources, such as salary increases, promotions, and employee benefits. If these rewards are not under the leader's direct control, the bargaining power diminishes. Judge (2003) referred to these as lower-order transactions in that they involve promises or commitments rooted in exchangeable values. On the other hand, higher-order transactions rely on the exchange of non-concrete rewards to maintain the followers' performance. In this exchange, the leader has direct control over the transaction and has a higher bargaining power since they rely upon intangible rewards. The other set of transactions is based on the leader's knowledge of the actions followers must take to achieve desired outcomes, for example, working overtime for a paid vacation (Judge and Ronald, 2004). In these exchanges, the leader clarifies the task and how followers will accomplish it while simultaneously reaching their personal goals. A few studies in leadership literature have considered TSL and organizational outcomes like employee turnover intentions (Gul et al., 2012; Koesmono, 2017; Razzaq, et al., 2019; Tse and Huang, 2013;). Similarly, we test the hypothesis that:

*H2: Transactional leadership style positively relates to employee turnover intentions in public services organizations.*

### 2.3. The Mediating Role of Organizational Commitment

Organizational commitment (OC) leads to adequate performance founded on values, behaviors, and how the leaders' function. As the case may be, organizational or employee commitment is an attachment or employees' intention to identify and participate in an organization that results in loyalty, morale, needs satisfaction, and a positive commitment (Kumasey, et al., 2017; Brown, 2016). Sani (2013) opines that OC is an employee's willingness to be part of an organization. OC enhances many workplace-related outcomes and attitudes such as leader-member exchange (LMX), turnover intention, organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), and job satisfaction (Dechawatanapaisal, 2018; Lee, and Reade, 2018). This aspect of OC influences the relationship between employees and the organization (Schultz and Schultz, 2015). Ellenbecker and Cushman (2012) define OC as the attachment one has and the desire to be with an organization. Dey (2012) argues that OC is the level of employee attachment, willingness, and the likelihood to work and remain in the organization. Dey (2012) also suggests that several factors influence organizational commitment among employees. Committed employees are unlikely to change jobs (Dechawatanapaisal, 2018; Abouraia and Othman, 2017). They attend to work more regularly (Meyer, et al., 2002), perform duties satisfactorily (Cooper-Hakim and Viswesvaran, 2005) and will remain good citizens in the entity (Meyer et al., 2002; Schultz and Schultz, 2015;). Farjad and Varnous (2013) conducted a study among the staff and deputies of communication companies and revealed that health, security, work conditions, and human capabilities development were the highest on organizational commitment. Gallato et al. (2012) also argued that leadership and organizational culture significantly influence job satisfaction, which increases organizational commitment among employees. In the same vein, Khan et al. (2012) conclude that leadership style and organizational commitment are positively related. This in sum suggests that behavior and leadership style can significantly influence the commitment of the employees (Abouraia and Othman, 2017; Atta and Khan, 2016). It further proposes that leaders who do not develop and professionalize the functions of the employees are likely to see them less committed to the job, which can lead to a high turnover intentions and actual turnover.

The various conceptions of OC fall into one of three kinds, according to Allen and Meyer (1990). These are emotional or affective attachment to the organization, perceived costs of leaving the organization, and the felt obligation to stay with the organization – thus affective, normative, and continuance commitment. These three kinds of organizational commitment amount to three kinds of reasons an individual may have for continuing with an organization (Kell and Motowidlo, 2012; Nagar, 2012). Prominent articles have also found that the leadership style exhibited within the enterprise influences organizational commitment. So, when leaders portray a more flexible style, it will increase organization commitment (Donkor and Zhou, 2020); Park and Pierce, 2020; Abouraia and Othman, 2017; Atta and Khan, 2016; Butler, Stanton and Soane, 2015) and in turn reduce ETI (Caillier, 2016; Ennis et al., 2016; Gyensare et al., 2017). Our hypotheses therefore are:

*H3: Transformational leadership positively relates to organizational commitment*

*H4: Transactional leadership has negative relationship with organizational commitment.*

*H5: Organizational commitment positively mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and employee turnover intentions.*

*H6: Organizational commitment positively mediates the relationship between transactional leadership and employee turnover intentions.*

#### 2.4. The Moderating Role of General Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy is the belief in a person's competence to confront difficult or novel tasks and cope with adversity in demanding situations. Self-efficacy makes a difference in how people act based on their feelings and thought (Bandura, 1997). People with high self-efficacy choose to carry out more difficult tasks, and they set themselves more challenging goals and stick to them. Actions are pre-shaped in thought, and once a person takes action, highly self-efficacious people invest more effort and persist longer than those low in self-efficacy. When setbacks occur, they recover more quickly and remain committed to their goals.

The understanding is that self-efficacy is task-specific or domain-specific. However, some researchers have also conceptualized a generalized sense of self-efficacy that connotes a global self-confidence in coping abilities spanning a wide range of demanding or novel situations (Schwarzer and Jerusalem, 1995). General self-efficacy (GSE) goals are broad with an unchanging sense of self-competence to deal effectively with several stressful situations. It also reflects various domains and tasks where people judge how efficacious they are. Although perceived self-efficacy's conceptualization should be situation-specific, general self-efficacy may elucidate a broader scope of human behaviors and coping outcomes when the context is varied.

The four sources of self-efficacy are mastery experiences, which are indicative of previous experiences; vicarious experiences, which influence perceptions of competence through comparison; verbal persuasion, which influences perceptions of competence through social influence; and physiological and affective states, from which people partly judge their capability, strength, and vulnerability to dysfunction (Bandura, 2010). Among the four sources of self-efficacy, mastery experiences prove to be the most dominant since they convey to the individual evidence of his/her ability to fulfill a task. Recurrent accomplishments increase and shape a strong belief in personal efficacy, while continuous failure diminishes the individual's efficacy (Bandura, 2010). However, changes in the perception of efficacy result from a cognitive process concerning the individual's self-diagnosis of personal capacity for a task. Thus, the personal perception of what constitutes achievement is more relevant to self-efficacy than the task's level of difficulty. That is to say that definitions of success are subjective so that what constitutes an underachievement for one individual can represent an outstanding achievement to another, and vice-versa. The realization of a sense of achievement depends on the individual's perception of their capabilities (Bandura, 1997), which could influence the turnover or intention to leave a job.

In a study of nurses, self-efficacy did not influence turnover intention or intention to leave (Peterson, McGillis Hall, O'Brien-Pallas, and Cockerill, 2011). Another study that employed structural equation modeling analysis showed self-efficacy, job stress, and teaching context as influential in the intention to quit and occupational commitment of pre-service teachers (Klassen and Chiu, 2011). Similarly, Park and Jung (2015) used workers from various industries, and through structural equation modeling, revealed that occupational self-efficacy through career and organizational commitment influenced turnover intention. These studies show that self-efficacy directly or indirectly influences the turnover intention of employees (Vignoli, et al., 2018). Since self-efficacy influences turnover intention, external factors such as leadership is also known to influence self-efficacy.

According to researchers, contextual factors (Bandura, 1997) and the social environment (Skaalvik and Skaalvik, 2007) are critical in developing and enhancing an individual's self-efficacy. Leadership as a contextual factor contributes to self-efficacy sources, such as vicarious experience, verbal and psychological persuasion. Studies have established a positive relationship between transformational leadership and self-efficacy. This is because TFL has been shown to influence employee self-efficacy, as it enhances the confidence of the employee in their capabilities and shapes the behavior and motivational patterns of these employees. In the study by Salanova et al. (2011), nurses' self-efficacy was positively influenced by transformational leadership. Liu et al. (2010), also found that transformational leaders boosted both private and public sector employees' self-efficacy. Mehdinezhad and Mansouri (2016) confirm that idealized influence and intellectual stimulation are the dominant transformational leadership features that influence self-efficacy. Also, through contingent rewards and sanctions, leaders who adopt transactional styles influence followers' self-efficacy. Among teachers, principals' transactional leadership positively influences their self-efficacy through the use of contingent rewards and sanctions (Jacobsen et al., 2017). Self-efficacy also mediates the relationship between transactional leadership and the performance of trainee resident physicians (Deng et al., 2019). Even though transformational and transactional leadership styles largely influence self-efficacy, there are exceptions. For instance, Caillier, (2016) did not find a statistically significant link between transformational leadership and self-efficacy of employees in public agencies in the United States. Also, there is a high tendency of transactional leadership practices not to correlate with teachers' self-efficacy (Nir and Kranot, 2006; Walker and Slear, 2011). One of the transactional leadership traits that negatively affect self-efficacy is passive management by exception (Hoxha and Hyseni-Duraku, 2017). We, therefore, hypothesize that:

*H7: General self-efficacy positively moderates the relationship between transformational leadership style and organizational commitment.*

*H8: General self-efficacy positively moderates the relationship between transactional leadership style and organizational commitment*

We illustrate the relationships, as shown by the hypotheses in a theoretical model in Figure 1.



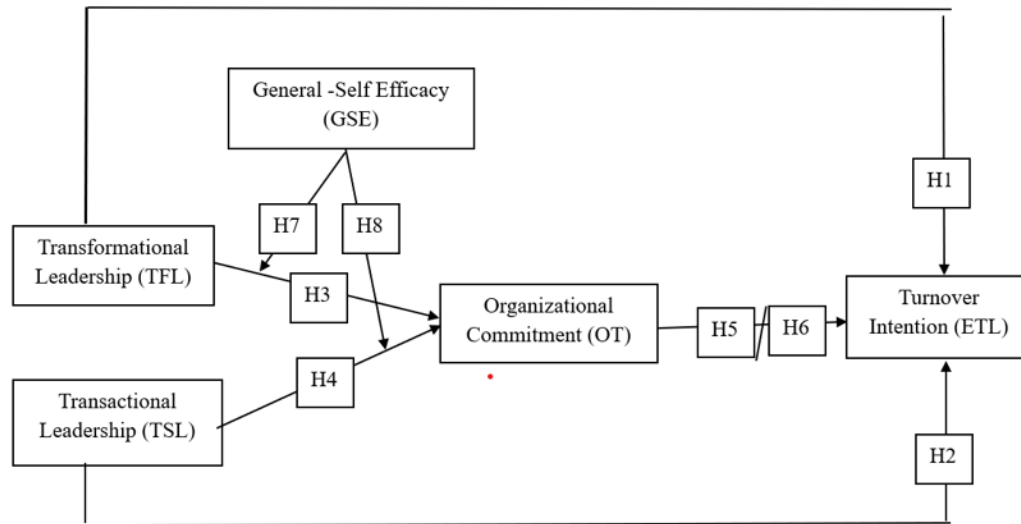


Figure 1: The Hypothesized Model.

### 3. METHODS

#### 3.1. Participants and Procedures

The study was quantitative research, designed to analyze the effects of organizational commitment and general self-efficacy in the correlation between TFL and TSL styles and employee turnover intentions. The target population was the public sector employees under the civil service bracket in two key regions in Ghana. Public service employees were selected based on their full-time status and their city of work being Kumasi and Sunyani. These two regions were selected based on convenience and accessibility to the researchers.

A total of 420 questionnaires were distributed to these employees in various units, and staff were required to complete and return. The valid questionnaires returned were 330, representing (78.6%). The information on leadership was adopted from the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) revised by Bass and Avolio (2004).

The descriptive statistics reveal that 58.5% of the total valid response came from male employees. The majority of the respondents fall within the age bracket 30- 39 (43.0%), and 25% . Their average age was 35.5 (SD = 0.796), and they had been in their various departments, on average 4 years (SD = 1.39), and 57% of the employees hold a bachelor's degree (SD = 1.91). Employees with the highest tenure (24.5%) had been employed for 6 – 10 years. More than 50% of these respondents again has been under the same supervisor for 1 to 3 years. This suggests that internal transfer is a common phenomenon in the public sector of Ghana. On educational qualification, 57% of the respondents hold a bachelor's degree. It further suggests that public sector organizations can boast of well-qualified personnel as far as formal education is concerned. Table 1 is a summary of the demographics of the sample.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Respondents (N=330).

| Variable                       | Labels             | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|-----------|----------------|
| Gender                         | Male               | 194       | 58.8           |
|                                | Female             | 136       | 41.2           |
| Age                            | Below 30           | 115       | 34.8           |
|                                | 30- 39             | 155       | 47.0           |
|                                | 40 – 49            | 47        | 14.2           |
|                                | 50 and above       | 13        | 3.9            |
| Highest Educational level      | Secondary          | 22        | 6.7            |
|                                | Diploma            | 72        | 21.8           |
|                                | Bachelor's         | 197       | 59.7           |
|                                | Master's and above | 39        | 11.8           |
| Marital status                 | Single             | 154       | 46.7           |
|                                | Married            | 166       | 50.3           |
|                                | Others             | 10        | 3.0            |
| Position                       | Management         | 1         | .6             |
|                                | Non-management     | 328       | 99.4           |
| Tenure                         | Below 1 year       | 73        | 22.1           |
|                                | 1 – 3years         | 62        | 18.8           |
|                                | 4 – 5years         | 62        | 18.8           |
|                                | 6 – 10years        | 81        | 24.5           |
| Years under current supervisor | Above 10years      | 52        | 15.8           |
|                                | Below 1 year       | 94        | 28.5           |
|                                | 1 – 3years         | 88        | 26.7           |
|                                | 4 – 5years         | 79        | 23.9           |
|                                | 6 – 10years        | 51        | 15.5           |
|                                | Above 10years      | 18        | 5.5            |

### 3.2. Measures

*Transformational and transactional leadership styles* were measured with the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ-5X Short, by Bass and Avolio). The MLQ consists of two forms: leader form and rater form. The leader form is used for self-evaluation and is completed by leaders. The rater form is used by the subordinates to assess their leader (Bass & Avolio, 2004). Because the study was based on employees' perceptions about their leader's style, the rater form was appropriate. According to Bass and Avolio (2004), MLQ can measure transformational, transactional, and passive/avoid behavior, and performance of leadership. Transformational leadership factors consist of Idealized Attributes (IA), Idealized Behaviors (IB), Inspirational Motivation (IM), Intellectual Stimulation (IS), and Individual Consideration (IC). Transactional leadership factors consist of Contingent Reward (CR), Management by Exception (Active) (MBEA), and Management by Exception (Passive) (MBEP). The MLQ is the most commonly used instrument to measure leadership styles (Sahaya, 2012). The sample population from 330 respondents validated the instruments through the analysis of ( $M = 2.83$ ,  $SD = 0.52$ ,  $\alpha = 0.734$ ) for TFL and ( $M = 2.77$ ,  $SD = 0.674$ ,  $\alpha = 0.718$ ) for TSL which was a means for testing the reliability of a survey instrument (Yunus, 2010).

*Organizational commitment (OC)* as a mediating variable was assessed by adopting Meyer & Allen's (2004) revised three-Component Model – employee commitment survey. This instrument is valid and is used to measure affective, continuance, and normative commitment (Bressler, 2010). It consists of 18 items, measured on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1= strongly disagree and 5= strongly agree. Examples of statements used included: *I find that my values and the organisation's values are very similar*, *It will be very hard for me to leave my organization right now, even if I wanted to*, *I feel that I owe this organization quite a bit of what it has done for me*. The average internal consistency for this scale in this research is ( $M = 2.75$ ,  $SD = 0.668$ ,  $\alpha = 0.696$ ).

*General self-efficacy (GSE)* as a moderating variable was assessed using a scale developed by Schwarzer & Jerusalem (Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 1995), which has been used extensively and in various work domains. Participants of the study respond to 10 statements measured using a 5-point Likert scale from (1) not at all true to (5) Exactly true. Examples of statements used are: *I can always manage to solve difficult problems, and if I try hard enough, I can solve most problems*. The composite scale in this study is ( $M = 3.64$ ,  $SD = 0.977$ ,  $\alpha = 0.727$ ).

*Employee turnover intention (ETI)* was taken from Mobley's theory (1978). This involves a three-item measure with a 5-Likert scale response ranging from 1= strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. Sample items include: (1) *I think a lot about leaving the public sector organization* (2) *I am actively searching for an alternative job elsewhere* and (3) *As soon as it is possible, I will leave public sector organization*. The reliability statistics obtained for ETI were  $M = 3.62$ ,  $SD = 0.543$ ,  $\alpha = 0.96$ . Table 2 presents the confirmatory factor analysis, the Cronbach's alpha, critical ratio, and average variance extracted.

## 4. RESULTS

**Table 2:** Confirmatory Factor Analysis of the Measurement Model.

| Construct | Factors | Loadings | $\alpha$ | CR   | AVE  |
|-----------|---------|----------|----------|------|------|
| TFL       | TFL_1   | .657     | 0.734    | .823 | .484 |
|           | TFL_2   | .744     |          |      |      |
|           | TFL_3   | .731     |          |      |      |
|           | TFL_4   | .735     |          |      |      |
|           | TFL_5   | .601     |          |      |      |
| TSL       | TSL_1   | .792     | .718     | .842 | .641 |
|           | TSL_2   | .849     |          |      |      |
|           | TSL_3   | .758     |          |      |      |
| GSE       | GSE_1   | .645     | .684     | .808 | .513 |
|           | GSE_2   | .734     |          |      |      |
|           | GSE_3   | .773     |          |      |      |
|           | GSE_4   | .706     |          |      |      |
| OC        | OC_1    | .711     | .683     | .807 | .513 |
|           | OC_2    | .703     |          |      |      |
|           | OC_3    | .731     |          |      |      |
|           | OC_4    | .723     |          |      |      |
| ETI       | ETI_1   | .930     | .918     | .946 | .854 |
|           | ETI_2   | .948     |          |      |      |
|           | ETI_3   | .892     |          |      |      |

Table 3 presents means, standard deviation, and correlations among the study variables. It reveals that the means range from 2.75 to 3.64. It further shows that TFL is significantly correlated with GSE ( $\beta = .33$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and also correlated significantly with OC ( $\beta = .42$ ,  $p = .001$ ). TSL was also found to significantly correlates with GSE and OC ( $\beta = .19$ ,  $p < .001$ ), ( $\beta = .21$ ,  $p < .001$ ) respectively. GSE is also significantly correlated with OC ( $\beta = .89$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Establishing a relationship among the variables is the first step in conducting mediation and moderation analysis. Therefore, the study satisfies the basic requirement for testing moderation and mediation.

**Table 3:** Correlation Analysis.

| S/N | Variable | alpha | Mean | SD   | 1      | 2      | 3      | 4     | 5 |
|-----|----------|-------|------|------|--------|--------|--------|-------|---|
| 1   | TFL      | .734  | 2.83 | .515 |        |        |        |       |   |
| 2   | TSL      | .718  | 2.77 | .674 | .532** |        |        |       |   |
| 3   | GSE      | .727  | 3.62 | .543 | .332** | .198** |        |       |   |
| 4   | OC       | .696  | 3.75 | .668 | .420** | .211** | .888** |       |   |
| 5   | ETI      | .960  | 3.64 | .977 | .054   | .096   | .001   | -.027 |   |

**Note:** TFL=Transformational leadership; TSL=Transactional leadership; OC=Organizational Commitment; GSE=General Self-efficacy; ETI=Employee Turnover Intentions  
Significance level \*\*p<.05

## 5. HYPOTHESES TESTING

### 5.1. The Direct Effect

Linear regression analysis was used to determine the direct effect of leadership style on OC. The independent variables (TFL and TSL) were regressed on OC. The results show that TFL has a negative but nonsignificant effect on OC ( $\beta = -.020$ ,  $t = -.339$ ,  $p = .735$ ). TSL on the other hand has a positive and significant effect on OC ( $\beta = .558$ ,  $t = 7.247$ ,  $p = .000$ ).

**Table 4:** The Direct Effect.

| Hypothesis | Path    | $\beta$ | t      | SE    | p value | Remarks |
|------------|---------|---------|--------|-------|---------|---------|
| H1         | TFL<ETI | -0.20   | -0.339 | 0.059 | 0.735   | Accept  |
| H2         | TSL<ETI | 0.027   | 0.205  | 0.133 | 0.838   | Reject  |
| H3         | TFL<OC  | 0.558   | 7.247  | 0.077 | 0.000   | Accept  |
| H4         | TSL<OC  | -0.020  | -0.339 | 0.059 | 0.735   | Accept  |
|            | OC<ETI  | -0.036  | -0.400 | 0.089 | 0.690   | N/A     |

Table 4 revealed that TFL does relate to ETI ( $\beta = -.20$ ,  $t = -.339$ ,  $p < .735$ ). This does support the H1. Transactional leadership was also predicted to have significantly positive relationship with ETI in H2. The table again found it otherwise ( $\beta = .027$ ,  $t = .205$ ,  $p < .838$ ). This, however, does not support our hypothesis and therefore, rejected. H3 and H4 however, were both accepted. While TFL positively relates to OC ( $\beta = .558$ ,  $t = 7.247$ ,  $p < .000$ ). TSL was also found to have negative relationship with OC ( $\beta = -.020$ ,  $t = -.339$ ,  $p < .735$ ).

To determine whether the mediation by OC was full or partial, the direct relationships between TFL and TSL on one hand and the outcome variable (ETI) on the other were considered. A full mediation occurs when the indirect effects are significant and the direct effects are not, while partial mediation occurs when both direct and indirect effects are significant. In this study, the direct effect of both TFL and TSL and ETI are not statistically significant. Whereas indirect effect of TFL and ETI was significant, TSL and ETI was not. Therefore, OC fully mediated TFL and ETI. On the contrary, OC does not mediate TSL and ETI as both direct and indirect effects were not statistically significant.

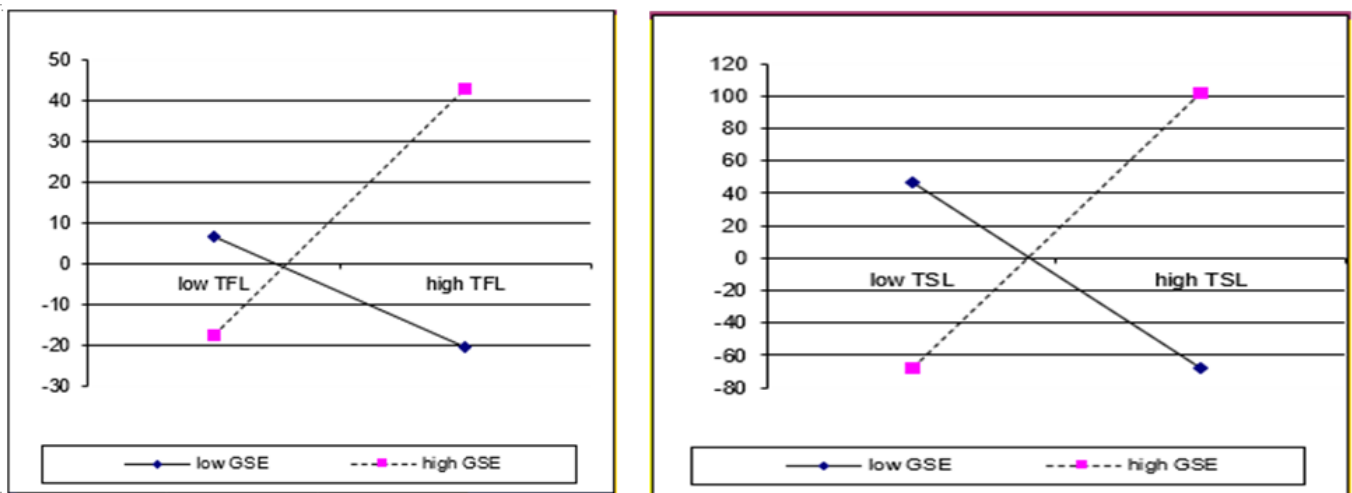
### 5.2. The Indirect Effect

The hierarchical regression analysis was used to test the moderated hypothesized relationship between TFL, TSL, GSE, and OC. Initially, control variables were entered, and then a regression of OC with both control variables and independent variables was evaluated. Again, GSE was added to the equation. In the later part of the analysis, the interaction terms of TFL and GSE and TSL and GSE were used to test hypotheses 7 and 8.

In the first instance (step 1), no control variable had a statistically significant effect on OC. To test the hypotheses, we regressed the independent variables (TFL and TSL) with OC. In the last step, we regressed the moderator and mediator on OC. The results indicate that TFL was positively related to OC ( $\beta = .43$ ,  $p < .001$ ), supporting hypothesis 5 of the study. TSL, however, does not relate to OC and therefore supports our hypothesis 6. Hypotheses 7 and 8 provide GSE's moderating effects on the relationship between TFL and TSL on OC. Therefore, we entered the interaction terms (TFL and GSE and TSL and GSE) on OC, which indicates a significant moderation in the relationship. The addition of interaction terms rendered TFL, which hitherto was significant no longer significant but GSE remained significant ( $\beta = .76$ ,  $p < .001$ ). GSE was positively and significantly related to OC, with a significant increase in variance ( $\Delta R^2 = .624$ ,  $p < .001$ ). For employees with high GSE, the relationship between TFL and OC was positive and significant ( $\beta = .43$ ,  $p < .05$ ). On the contrary, no significant relationship was found between TFL and OC for employees with low GSE. However, the interaction of TSL and GSE was negatively related to OC ( $\beta = -.29$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Therefore, we could not find any significant relationship between TSL and OC for employees with a perceived low level of GSE. **Table 5** summaries the moderated and mediated analysis while Figure 2 demonstrates a picture of the moderation effect.

**Table 5:** Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Organizational Commitment (N = 330).

| Variable   | B      | SE     | t      | p      | LLCI   | ULCI   | R <sup>2</sup> | F              |
|--|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|----------------|----------------|
| Direct effect on OC  |        |        |        |        |        |        |                |                |
| TFL  | .5778  | .0699  | 8.2699 | .0000  | .4625  | .6930  | .1867          | 68.3913        |
| TSL  | .2395  | .0585  | 4.0964 | .0001  | .1430  | .3359  | .0533          | 16.7802        |
| Direct effect on ETI   |        |        |        |        |        |        |                |                |
| OC   | -.0658 | .0864  | -7.606 | .4475  | -.2084 | .0769  |                |                |
| TFL  | .1198  | .1257  | .9539  | .3411  | -.0875 | .3272  |                |                |
| TSL  | .2095  | .0897  | 2.3364 | .0201  | .0615  | .3574  |                |                |
| Mediation  |        |        |        |        |        |        |                |                |
|  |        | Effect | SE     | t      | p      | LLCI   |                | ULCI           |
| TFL->OC->ETI   |        | .2095  | .0897  | 2.3364 | .0205  | .0615  |                | .3574          |
| TSL->OC->ETI   |        | .1198  | .1257  | .9535  | .3411  | -.0875 |                | .3272          |
| Conditional Effect of the focal predictor at values of the moderator |        |        |        |        |        |        |                |                |
|  | GSE    | Effect | SE     | t      | p      | LLCI   | ULCI           | R <sup>2</sup> |
| TSL->OC->ETI   |        | -.4883 | .1551  | .0431  | 3.6023 | .0004  | .0841          | .2261          |
|  | .0957  |        | .2161  | .0371  | 5.8272 | .0000  | .1549          | .2772          |
|  | .3957  |        | .2474  | .0467  | 5.2947 | .0000  | .1703          | .3245          |
| TFL->OC->ETI   |        | -.0658 | .0090  | .0165  | 3.6023 |        |                | .0032          |
|  | .0000  |        | -.0125 | .0228  | 5.8572 |        |                |                |
|  | .2095  |        | -.0143 | .0264  | 5.2947 |        |                |                |

**Figure 2:** Interaction Terms of the Moderated Variables.

## 6. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The purpose of the current study was to explore both direct and indirect effects of both TFL and TSL as perceived by employees in PSOs on ETI. To be able to investigate direct and indirect effects of TFL and TSL, we tested the relationship through a mediating variable, OC and a moderating variable, GSE. A structural path model was also evaluated. This study, to the best of our knowledge is the first of its kind to combine these variables in the public sector leadership research. One of the essential findings of this current study was that TFL of PSOs had a negative effect on the turnover intentions of public sector employees. Again, OC fully mediated the relationship between TFL and ETI. This is in tandem with previous studies and leadership theories of the relationship with between leadership, especially, TFL and work outcomes such as OC and ETI (Park and Pierce, 2020; Gyensare et al, 2017; Callier, 2016).

Another significant finding of the study was that the study found OC to have a full mediation between TSL and ETI. That is, the study found TSL to have a direct relationship with ETI. This finding may be attributed to the culture of the public sector in Ghana where employees in PSOs rarely get rewards and appreciations of the work they do. This sometimes result to strikes and unrests. This therefore, affect their appreciation of the usefulness of their leaders by the use of contingent rewards. In view of this, the use of external motivators to enhance OC to achieve organizational objectives should move a step forward in PSOs cause increased in loyalty and satisfaction (Khan, 2017). Therefore, contingent reward leaders should be encouraged to recognize the needs of its employees through agreement with the employees to determine how these rewards are distributed among them according to their performance evaluation outcomes. This will motivate employees to show high level of OC because reciprocal gain sharing is found to be one of the possible retention strategies in business organizations (Raziq et al, 2018). This maybe the underlying reason for positive relationship between TSL and ETI in PSOs.

In addition, the study also focused on the analysis of GSE as a moderating variable. According to Bandura (1977) general self-efficacy results in a competent self-view and a longing for favorable outcomes, such as recognition, praise, and positive evaluation. Wood and Bandura (1989) observed that “in most social, intellectual,



and physical pursuits, those who judge themselves highly efficacious will expect favorable outcomes” (p. 25). Supervisor support provides caring treatment and recognizes, values, and praises the good performance and contributions of subordinates. Supervisor support signals that subordinates are valuable and competent, and confirms the mastery self-view of efficacious subordinates. The study confirms that employees under transformational leaders tend to have high self-efficacy which influences the level of OC and low ETI. In support of social cognitive theory, this study shows that self-efficacy interacts with the internal organizational environment to determine employees’ career, determining the extent of the opportunities and experiences they will be exposed to (Bandura, 2012). Employees with high occupational self-efficacy tend to have high occupational commitment which reduces their intentions to leave their job. This implies that employees who believe in their abilities to accomplish outcomes in their current jobs may choose to remain in their job, due to their high career commitment (Park et al., 2014). Therefore, we confirm that self-efficacy does not positively correlate with ETI (Han, Sohn, and Kim, 2009). Employers should cultivate transformational styles of leadership in order to enhance the self-efficacy of employees in order to increase their OC and reduce turnover intentions. In summary, employees with low self-efficacy “may elect to initially call in sick and then later quit, rather than face the frustration of a job they feel unable to do”. Employees with high self-efficacy “feel better able to handle the surprise, disappointment, and stress of the workplace, and thus be less likely to feel the need to escape an otherwise unpleasant situation. Therefore, increasing employees’ self-efficacy may lower their intention to quit ...” (McNatt and Judge, 2008, pp. 787, 788). Findings of studies by Sun and Wang (2017) suggest that transformational leadership directly prevents employees from forming intentions through the cultivation of a collaborative culture. Through social exchange theory (Tse, Huang, and Lam, 2013) supported the notion that TFL is related to both social exchange mechanisms (leader-member exchange and affective commitment) which is negatively related to ETI and turnover behavior. Studies reviewed by Sulamuthu and Yusof (2018), have equally shown a positive relationship between transactional leadership and ETI. Liu, Siu and Shi (2010) revealed that TFL significantly affects employee self-efficacy. It connotes that TFL dimensions are the means to increase employees self efficacy which in turn mediates the relationship between vision implementation, ETI and performance.

We therefore conclude that when leaders in PSOs continue to apply TSL as suggested by (Caillier, 2016), it may result in lower OC which in turn breeds high ETI. TFL dimensions are the means to increase employee GSE, which in turn enhances commitment level and ETI in the PSOs.

## 7. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY AND AGENDA FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This cross-sectional design has some limitations that need special attention in future research. First of all, the study did not consider the causality and multiple level analysis. Also, part-time employees were not considered to determine their willingness to continue to work for the organizations. Future study could deal with individual organizations within the public sector organization and where possible comparative among the various sectors may be considered. Also, common source bias in relation to environmental and positive affectivity may have affected the results upwardly or downwardly (even though not identified). Future studies could separate the variables (dependent and independent variables) to deal perceptual measures.

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