

Effect of Transformational Leader Communication on Affective Commitment to Change

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Abstract

Extant literature indicates the significance of both organizational level concept like transformational leadership and individual level aspect like employee attitude, for organizational change. This paper presents a model depicting conceptual understanding of how transformational leader communication facilitates affective commitment to change of employees, with organizational identification as a mediator in the relationship. The model is argued on the basis of literature on transformational leadership, commitment and change. It demonstrates the importance of communication in Indian organizations where turnover is a big concern. The paper explains its implications for empirical studies and practice and suggests future directions for research.

Keywords: transformational leadership, communication, affective commitment to change, organizational identification, organizational change

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Leadership has been extensively studied in the context of organizational change (Bean & Hamilton, 2006; Carmeli & Sheaffer, 2008; Groves, 2006; Hill et al., 2012; Kotter, 1990). A survey done by American Management Association in 1994, as cited by Gill (2003), indicates that leaders are considered most critical to change by 92% of respondents from fortune 500 companies. Leaders are central to change when it is about taking the organization forward in the desired direction. They initiate change mainly on account of their position and status (Hollander, 1971). They contribute largely towards implementing change (Higgs & Rowland, 2011). Studies in Indian organizations have shown that leaders provide the required time, attention, commitment and resource support for organizational change, on a regular basis, which ensures active participation and involvement of management and thus enables long term effectiveness of change (Ramnarayan, 2003).

Amongst leadership styles, transformational leadership is most strongly associated with organizational change (Eastman & Pawar, 1997; Eisenbach, Watson, & Pillai, 1999; Ramnarayan, 2003; Saini & Bhatnagar, 2005; Singh & Krishnan, 2005). It helps to deal with the uncertain and unsettled environment resulting from change (Parry & Proctor-thomson, 2003). It also is highly effective in obtaining a favorable response of employees to change (Caldwell, Fedor, Herold, & Liu, 2008; Choi, 2011; Eastman & Pawar, 1997).

Employees have a critical role to play in the success of the change since any organizational change is operationalized and institutionalized through them. Their commitment to change makes them invest the required effort to make it effective (Herscovitch & Meyer, 2002). The most significant aspect of commitment to change from the perspective of enhancing performance, acquiring learning and making the change successful, is the affective aspect

(Busch, Cadwallader, & Parish, 2008). Affective commitment to change is the desire to facilitate change with the conviction that it will have inherent benefits (Herscovitch & Meyer, 2002). Research has found that transformational leadership is one of the primary variables that are responsible for it (Conway & Monks, 2007; Jaros, 2010).

Even though the association between transformational leadership and affective commitment to change has been established, there is limited literature that explains in detail the elements that facilitate the relationship. Transformational leaders perform multiple functions like creating a vision, providing strategic direction, maintaining sensitivity to environment, building a network, making decisions and engaging in communication (Hunt, 1991). However, all functions do not promote affective commitment to change or do not promote it in the same way. It is of scholarly and practical interest to know how aspects of transformational leaders promote affective commitment to change.

This paper explores the mechanism through which the communication aspect of transformational leaders promotes affective commitment to change in employees. The reason for focusing on communication is that, compared to all the other functions performed by leaders, it has the most potential to influence a large number of employees, and thus enable change. Content of communication provides information that helps employees in forming opinions and obtaining clarifications. Manner and medium of communication convey intent and attitude of the leader and that of the organization that helps in developing certain perceptions and beliefs. They together can determine the attitude of employees and guide their actions and behavior.

The paper is divided into five sections. The first section reviews pertinent literature related to transformational leaders and affective commitment to change. The second section proposes a conceptual model defining the relationship between transformational leader

communication and affective commitment to change. It details the supporting empirical studies and arguments, and provides the assumptions for its applicability. The third section discusses the theoretical perspective of the model, implications for scholar and practitioner community and relevance for Indian organizations. The fourth section focuses on the future directions for research. The paper ends with a conclusion in the fifth section.

Literature Review

Transformational Leaders and Organizational Change

Bass (1998) has defined the broad characteristics of transformational leaders in detail. According to him, firstly, such leaders demonstrate idealized influence. Employees admire and emulate them and perceive them as role models. Leaders are seen as extraordinary, tenacious, risk taking, dependable, strong-willed and ethical and employees identify with them. Secondly, they provide inspirational motivation by helping employees find value and challenge in their jobs. They develop a sense of shared vision, mission and goals and drive employees to be more spirited, optimistic and passionate about achieving them. Thirdly, they bring about intellectual stimulation in the employees by enthusing them to think innovatively, approach problem-solving differently and reconsider assumptions about work activities. They provide psychological safety to employees to help them explore their creativity. Fourthly, they display individualized consideration to each of the employees so that they are able to realize their potential and satisfy their professional ambition. They give personalized attention to identify their needs and provide opportunities to fulfill them. These attributes are very effective in bringing about active support and participation of employees during the process of organizational change.

Research reveals that transformational leaders are essential at the top management level (Barrick, Bradley, Colbert, & Kristof-brown, 2008) to achieve organizational performance. They

develop an association with employees that go beyond their functional and transactional relationship. They give employees individual attention, encourage them to be original and enjoy their trust and loyalty (Burns, 1978; Zaleznik, 1977). Transformational leaders have similar effect across different cultures (Fred Ochieng Walumbwa & Lawler, 2003). Empirical studies in Indian organizations have found that transformational leadership is associated with organizational commitment and job satisfaction (Fred O. Walumbwa, Wang, Lawler, & Shi, 2004). Attributes of transformational leaders have been found to overlap with certain tenets of Indian culture like *sattvic guna* (Kejriwal & Krishnan, 2004).

Transformational leadership promotes employees' affective commitment to change by influencing their perception of change benefits and expectations fulfillment (Hill et al., 2012) and building trust in them (Caldwell et al., 2008). It influences the attitude of the top management personnel towards goals (Barrick et al., 2008) and makes them committed to the change, that results in their active involvement, support and management of the change (Gill, 2003). Sensitivity and responsiveness of transformational leaders to employee emotions (Huy & Sanchez-burks, 2009) and their own commitment to change (Levay, 2010) strongly impact employee commitment to change. Weak transformational leadership can result in cynicism towards change (Neubert, Wu, & Yi, 2007).

Transformational Leader Communication and Organizational Change

Research in India has shown that communication is a consistent requirement, as a leadership skill, across old economy and new economy organizations (Gaur, 2006). Different scholars have discussed different forms of transformational leader communication. Tichy and Devanna (1986), as cited by Hunt (1991), have included communication of new ideals and standards of the organization as one of the three main roles performed by leaders. The other two

are comprehending the technical, political and cultural aspects of the organization and making the right decisions at the right time competently. Conger (1989) has discussed communication of vision with emphasis on its significance, and articulation of inspiring messages as major components of charismatic leadership model. Sashkin (1988) has identified personal communication of the vision as one of the primary behaviors of visionary leadership. Kotter (1990) has stated that communication of vision and strategies through verbal and non-verbal behavior is a critical aspect of networking with people to align them with organizational agenda.

According to Bass (1998), transformational leaders communicate to understand desires of individuals, and respond, coach and advise them to promote their self-development. They explain alignment of organizational vision with individual vision, which enhances the worthiness of the goals for the employees. They express high expectations of performance and convey an attractive vision of the future (Howell & Wang, 2012), that is intended to inspire employees to direct their efforts towards attaining it. Research in India has also shown that they communicate values and principles to employees that help build their self-efficacy (Singh & Krishnan, 2005). Armenakis and Harris (2009) have emphasized the role of communication in organizational change. Leader communication is an integral part of socio-technical system where change is to be implemented (Appelbaum, 2010). It is also associated with coercive, expertise and referent power to managing change (Lee, 1977).

Affective Commitment to Change

Affective commitment to change of employees is one of the key factors enabling successful adoption of change in the long term. Conceptual understanding of affective commitment to change has evolved from the pioneering work done on organization commitment by Allen & Meyer (1990, 1991) and Herscovitch & Meyer (2001, 2002). Affective commitment,

an aspect of organization commitment, makes employees feel attached, comfortable and involved in the activities of the organization, at ease with being a part of it and capable about fulfilling their job responsibilities (Allen & Meyer, 1990). Affective commitment to change has been associated with compliance, collaboration and advocating of the change by the employees (Herscovitch & Meyer, 2002) and is considered the most significant factor for change (Busch et al., 2008).

Thus, theoretical and empirical literature is indicative of the significance of transformational leaders for change and affective commitment to change. However, there is limited research on the role of transformational leader communication in facilitating affective commitment to change. Top-down communication by leaders conveys implicit and explicit messages to a number of employees together and is one of the most powerful tools that can be used to influence them. The next section proposes a relationship between transformational leader communication and affective commitment to change and introduces the role of organizational identification in the relationship. It presents a conceptual model depicting the propositions. It elaborates on the model using prior literature and additional arguments, which support the propositions. It also includes the assumptions under which the model is applicable.

Model for Transformational Leader Communication and Affective Commitment to Change

Key Variables in the Model

Transformational Leader Communication. Transformational leader communication involves the spectrum of interactions that the transformational leaders have with the employees. Transformational leaders are eloquent about their ideas, thoughts and planning that enables them to connect with employees well. They communicate in ways that help bring about a

transformational orientation in organizations at the grassroots level. While transactional leaders communicate to share expectations using contingent reinforcement, or show disapproval for deviation from norms using management by exception (Bass, 1985; Hall-Merenda & Howell, 1999), transformational leaders including charismatic or visionary leaders (Bass, 1990; Conger & Kanungo, 1987, 1994) communicate to articulate vision, deliver information and enable employees to perform with intrinsic motivation. The main aspects of transformational leader communication associated with change are organizational vision, inspiration, change information and feedback and emotional support.

Affective Commitment to Change. Affective commitment to change is the desire and willingness of the employees to support a change with the conviction and perception that the change would be beneficial to them (Herscovitch & Meyer, 2002). Employees high in affective commitment to change are happy and comfortable with the change process and the perceived outcome (Gill, 2003). They have a clear understanding of the post change environment and trust and deference for the change leaders. They find the management to be concerned about emergent issues and perceive the organization as encouraging familiarity and comfort with the change. They are high on self-efficacy and secure about their power and position (Gill, 2003). All these elements lead to their positive and enthusiastic response and thus aid change in the organization. The key characteristics of employees associated with affective commitment to change are enthusiasm, optimism, compliance, participation and collaboration.

Proposed Relationship between Transformational Leader Communication and Affective Commitment to Change. Responsible and considerate communication by transformational leaders can help employees comprehend change information satisfactorily, become competent and devoted to organizational goals and develop trust in the organization.

Trust boosts affective commitment to change in employees (Caldwell et al., 2008; Michaelis, Sonntag, & Stegmaier, 2009) by infusing the belief that an organizational initiative may benefit them too. Thus the paper makes the following proposition:

Proposition 1: Transformational leader communication leads to affective commitment to change of employees.

Transformational leader communication may not directly influence employees to respond positively to change. This is because employees are distributed across different hierarchical levels, departments, locations and functions and face different professional challenges. Thus it may be problematic to make communication relevant to all concerned. Therefore, the paper suggests that transformational leader communication promotes affective commitment to change at the individual level by inculcating a desired outlook in employees towards the organization. This outlook brings about trust and motivation to perform and is an outcome of a sense of belonging and therefore identification with the organization. Literature has shown that communication climate generates identification when it is perceived as open and receptive and fosters free exchange of trustworthy information, participation and sharing of opinions (Pruyn, Riel, & Smidts, 2001). Also, it has indicated that identification leads to affective commitment (Allen & Meyer, 1990) and enhances productivity and motivation (Lee, 1971).

Role of Organizational Identification as a Mediator

Organization Identification. Employees identify with an organization when they perceive their values, beliefs and goals to be aligned with that of the organization, have a sense of belonging to it and perceive their identity to be associated with it (Ayoko, Callan, Maldonado, & Paulsen, 2009; Lee, 1971; Ramanujam & Tangirala, 2008). Employees that identify themselves with the leader also identify with the organization when they see the leader as an

integral and the primary guiding force for the organization. Organizational identification promotes their belief that the leaders are concerned about their well-being (Allen & Meyer, 1990) and enhances their commitment to organizational objectives (Bass, 1990). If employees have a sense of belonging to the organization, they tend to be optimistic and supportive of new initiatives and make efforts to ensure their effectiveness. The primary dimensions of organizational identification associated with affective commitment to change are intrinsic motivation, self-esteem, goals alignment, self-efficacy and trust.

Proposed Relationship between Transformational Leader Communication, Organizational Identification and Affective Commitment to Change. The paper posits that the communication made by transformational leaders about their vision of the envisaged future, role expectations, change information and concern for individual development (Bass, 1985), may instill pride, create a positive identity and promote identification with the organization. In the event of an organizational change, it would bring about a favorable attitude and optimism about its perceived benefits in employees, leading to the desire and the requisite behaviors to support it. Thus, it would promote employee affective commitment to change. Therefore, the paper makes the following proposition:

Proposition 2: Organizational identification of employees mediates the relation between transformational leader communication and their affective commitment to change.

The conceptual model representing the propositions is as in Figure 1 in Appendix A.

Insert Figure 1 about here

Explanation of the Relationships in the Model

Transformational Leader Communication and Affective Commitment to Change.

Transformational leader communication is critical during change. It can aid in expressing organizational vision for the change and inspire employees to realize the idealized vision (Howell & Wang, 2012). It can convey information about change, clarifications on the change process, feedback on employees' coping with the change and care and concern for their well-being during the transition. All these have the potential to impact their perception about change positively.

Communication of transformational leaders helps to understand change logic and implications (Lewis, 1999), reduces uncertainty (Bordia & DiFonzo, 1998; Parry, 2005) and stimulates trust (Denisi & Schweiger, 1991). This aids employees in perceiving alignment of the change with the organization mission and vision (Busch et al., 2008; Jaros, 2010) and with own vision (Daif & Yusof, 2011). They are able to understand the strategic importance (Daif & Yusof, 2011) and appropriateness of change (Neves, 2009). All these factors make them willing to support change. Employees feel motivated in the job (Busch et al., 2008; Daif & Yusof, 2011; Jaros, 2010) and have a sense of organizational justice (Foster, 2003). Thus, they would develop affective commitment to change.

Therefore, it is proposed that transformational leader communication leads to affective commitment to change of employees.

Organizational Identification as a Mediator between Transformational Leader Communication and Affective Commitment to Change. Transformational leader communication of organizational vision, inspiration, change information and feedback and emotional support to employees can inculcate a sense of belonging and promote their organizational identification.

Transformational leaders encourage employees to perform well by convincing them about the significance of the job and discussing mutual expectations (Parish et al., 2008; Daif & Yusof, 2011; Jaros, 2010), and also enhance their self-concept (Arthur, House, & Shamir, 1993), thus building intrinsic motivation in them (De Cremer & Tyler, 2005). Transformational leaders convey a clear vision (Pruyn et al., 2001) and engage in verbal (Bass, 1985) and non-verbal communication like expressions, tone of voice and body language (Groves, 2006). These provide direction, conviction and support for attaining the vision. This would further promote intrinsic motivation (Bass, 1985; De Cremer & Tyler, 2005) and self-efficacy in employees. By enunciating a vision well, they help orient employees towards the organizational goals (Pruyn et al., 2001), align their aspirations with its objectives and enable them to visualize favorable outcomes of efforts (Bass, 1990). Transformational leaders inspire employees to have a broader and higher set of goals and perceive deeper value in their job, by giving meaningful and convincing messages (Singh & Krishnan, 2005), thus building their self-esteem. They share with employees complete information on the new initiative (Pruyn et al., 2001), clear definition of processes (House, 1971) and short and long term implications of the change (Busch et al., 2008; Daif & Yusof, 2011; Jaros, 2010; Neves, 2009), thus winning their trust on the change. Transformational leaders respond positively to queries, doubts and suggestions and provide constructive feedback on performance (Pruyn et al., 2001), thus fostering both trust and self-efficacy in employees. They convey emotional support by recognizing worth of individuals (Pruyn et al., 2001) and use words that show their warmth, openness and care (Crawford & Lok, 1999), thus enhancing their self-efficacy and self-esteem. Intrinsic motivation, self-esteem, alignment of goals, self-efficacy and trust of employees can indicate their identification with the organization.

Organizational identification brings about allegiance, love, respect and admiration towards the leader (Bass, 1985, 1990), thus making employees enthusiastic and dedicated towards the organizational objectives and change initiatives. It stimulates deference and compliance with the values and change goals of the organization. Self-esteem and self-efficacy bring about optimism (Dierendonck & Kool, 2012) and enthusiasm about change. Identification allows active participation of employees (Dulewicz & Hawkins, 2009), collaboration for making decisions and solving problems (Ayoko et al., 2009) of the evolving environment. Enthusiasm, optimism, compliance, participation and collaboration of employees during change can be manifestation of their affective commitment to change.

Therefore, it is proposed that organizational identification plays a mediating role in the relationship between transformational leader communication and affective commitment to change of employees.

Assumptions

The change environment of the organization has been assumed to impact all the departments or business units and pervade all the levels of the hierarchy. The phase of change has been presumed to be the time of initiation when the change process has commenced but the implications and the outcomes of the change have not been realized or observed yet. This is the stage when belief and hope about future benefits can make employees support the change through their active participation, involvement and collaboration.

Transformational leaders have been assumed to include the top management comprising the CEO, president and/or the chairman and the executive team that manages the different business units at the senior most level. Though communication by middle management and direct supervisory leaders may also contribute to affective commitment to change, the process of

influence may be different from what is specified in the model and the degree of influence may vary a lot across employees (Hill, Kang, Seo, & Taylor, 2011). Also, the paper pertains to top-down leader communication only, and not bottom-up or lateral.

Besides, transformational leader communication has been assumed to be consistent and regular since that is required to strengthen the sense of belonging in employees (Dulewicz & Wren, 2005). This implicitly means that aspects of vision, mission, policies and culture of the organization that may affect communication are unwavering and are expected to remain so for the duration of the change. These aspects may be in the form of verbal or written statements, certain non-verbal behaviors, clarifications, announcements and informal discussions and be imparted face to face, online, on phone or email or through official newsletters and policy documents.

This section has discussed the propositions for a theoretical model with independent, dependent and mediator variables. It has used research literature and arguments to define the model in detail and support the propositions. It has talked about the assumptions under which the model is appropriate. The next section discusses the implications and contribution of the model to theory and practice in general, and to the Indian context in particular.

Discussion

Significance of employees for change has been well-researched and accepted. Extant literature is available on employee response to change (Andersson, 1996; Bommer, Rich, & Rubin, 2005; Bovey & Hede, 2001; Foster, 2003; Furst & Cable, 2008; Val & Fuentes, 2003). It has been found that employees' level of commitment, efficacy and comfort in dealing with change determine their participation and involvement in a change initiative (Cady & Neubert, 2001). However, failure of change is still a big concern in organizations. Research in India

demonstrates that challenges to change can be related to staff resistance, union non co-operation and managers' discomfort (Saini & Bhatnagar, 2005), which need a strong and stable leadership to be able to deal with them successfully. This paper attempts to throw light upon some of the steps that can be taken by organizational leadership to improve employee attitude towards change.

The model makes a theoretical contribution by directing attention to individualized consideration (Bass, 1990) aspect of transformational leaders for promoting affective commitment to change. Individualized consideration involves communicating full information, inviting concerns and giving clarification, encouraging performance, boosting professional growth, providing motivation (Bass, 1985) and imparting coaching and learning (Bass & Hater, 1988) at the individual employee level. It can encourage loyalty and trust towards the organization facilitating identification, and can also instill a sense of being valued (Bass, 1990). Research in India shows that giving personal touch is an important characteristic of transformational leaders (Singh & Krishnan, 2005). Leaders attempt to understand the employees, their personality and potential and their problems. They are available in case employees need their help and give them personalized attention.

The model introduces the organizational level construct of transformational leader communication, associated with the top management, and paves the path for empirical research using cross-level approach. Hierarchical linear modeling can be an appropriate statistical approach to analyse its relationship with organizational identification and affective commitment to change at the individual level. By defining the primary factors comprising the variables, it provides guidance to develop survey questionnaire, establish construct validity of the measures through confirmatory factor analysis and measure the cogency of the relationship through

correlation between the factors. By highlighting the significance of communication, it indicates the possibility of differential influence of the aspects of transformational leadership that can be further investigated through research study.

The model helps to take the debate deeper into the practical considerations required by leaders for a successful change beyond the existing transformational leadership literature. It can be utilized by organizations that implement enterprise-wide change either internally or in other organizations. It can help them observe and understand employee behaviors during change. Any discomfort can be flagged off to the top management so that they can be examined in the light of organizational vision and change objectives. Moreover, it can provide inputs to evaluate leader communication and assess employees' organizational identification and affective commitment to change. Most importantly, it can offer practical guidelines for leaders to consciously adopt certain communication patterns to foster affective commitment to change in employees.

This paper is pertinent to Indian organizations for two reasons. The first reason is that they are facing an accelerated pace of change in the present times. This is because of environmental instability arising out of being part of a developing economy. There is a growing exposure to global markets, government regulations and competitive forces and evolving customer demands, which are triggering the need for change. Besides, the technological environment is undergoing rapid transformation, enhancing the scope of change.

The second reason is that India is witnessing high employee turnover, which is expected to further increase in the foreseeable future. According to a newspaper publication, a study conducted by Hay group in association with Centre for Economics and Business Research has predicted that 26.9% employees may quit their job in 2013 and this figure may increase to 27.5% in 2014 (Biswas, 2013). A research report jointly prepared by Confederation of Indian Industries

and Centre for Socio-Eco-Nomic Development on the basis of employee survey has cited turnover as one of the critical areas needing attention by Indian organizations (Saner & Yiu, 2008). Turnover raises concerns about the outcome of organization wide change initiatives. Successful change necessitates employees to own and internalize the change (Higgs & Rowland, 2010) so that they have the commitment to put in lot of effort. It is inhibited when new employees replace the earlier ones or old positions lie vacant for a long time. High employee turnover, thus, creates challenges for implementing and sustaining change.

One way to deal with this issue is to develop a sense of belonging in the employees so that they have motivation to stay for a long duration, willingness to put effort to perform well and commitment to the organization. Leaders have a major contribution towards developing belongingness, and thus identification in employees. This paper acknowledges the importance of transformational leaders and recognizes the potential of their communication for promoting identification, which may bring about employee retention.

The next section deliberates on future directions of research.

Research Avenues

The model opens up new avenues for research in the domain of transformational leader communication in the context of organization wide change. From the theoretical perspective, it can be investigated with regard to other types of leadership. Styles of leadership that have been related to organizational change in the past, like democratic (Raelin, 2012), stakeholder (Ford, 2005), sustainable (Ferdig, 2007) and distributed (Buchanan, Ferlie, Fitzgerald, & McGivern, 2013) leaderships, place emphasis on open participation and active involvement to take all interests into consideration for ensuring an effective organizational change. Sometimes, leadership styles are consciously adopted by organizations to suit the context and scope of the

change (Dulewicz & Young, 2006). Such literature needs to be given due consideration for model building.

Also, the role of organization structure and culture in influencing organizational identification in a change environment can be explored. Research related to identification is available on mechanistic and organic organizations (Ambrose & Schminke, 2003) and culture (Armeli, Cummings, Eisenberger, & Lynch, 1997; Conway & Coyle-Shapiro, 2005; Griffiths, Jimmieson, & Jones, 2005). However, relevant studies in the area of organizational change are limited.

Besides, organizational justice may be an important construct to be considered in the model as another mediator. A sense of interactional and informational justice in employees may be a consequence of leader communication and may influence affective commitment to change.

Finally, this paper pertains to effect of transformational leader communication on affective commitment to change at the change initiation stage. As the change progresses, the effect may be different based on certain conditions in the evolving environment. Future research can try to explore the conditions in the later stages of the change that impact the relationships conceptualized in the model.

Conclusion

Given the importance of employees for change, this paper explored the role played by transformational leaders in this regard. It posited the mechanism through which they facilitate positive response of employees to change. It identified transformational leader communication as a key attribute that influences employees to adopt change and affective commitment to change as a key attribute of employees required to enable change. It provided deep insight into the kind of

communication transformational leaders should engage in to kindle organizational identification in employees that would promote their affective commitment to change.

Communication may be functional or dysfunctional depending on multiple factors, but research has paid little attention to this aspect. The model specified the content of communication comprising of organizational vision, change information and feedback and inspiration and emotional support, and thus extended the communication literature with respect to change. It helped to recognize the basic characteristics that employees who identify with their organization may have, namely intrinsic motivation, self-esteem, individual goals aligned with organizational goals, self-efficacy and trust. It also directed attention to the fundamental behavior patterns that employees having affective commitment to change may display, like enthusiasm, optimism, compliance, participation and collaboration. Thus, it provided specific inputs for designing research instruments and conducting empirical studies on organizational change.

This paper began with discussing available literature on the transformational leader communication and affective commitment to change. It followed it up with a theoretical model that introduced organizational identification as a mediator in the relationship. It elaborated on the concepts and relationships in the model using extant research studies and supporting arguments. It also listed the assumptions for the applicability of the model. It finally discussed inferences associated with the model and offered new directions for research. It is hoped that this paper would stimulate research in the domain of change from the standpoint of communication and identification. It is also expected that it would add to the literature on transformational leadership and organizational change and encourage cross-disciplinary research in organizational behavior and management.

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Appendix A



Figure 1. Conceptual Model for Transformational Leaders and Affective Commitment to Change