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Inclusive leadership and turnover intention: the role of follower-leader goal congruence and organizational commitment

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Abstract

Purpose - Using a dual-lens of leader-member exchange (LMX) and social exchange theory (SET), this study aims to propose a conceptual model that explores the nexus between inclusive leadership and turnover intention as mediated by follower-leader goal congruence and organizational commitment. Design/methodology/approach - Data were collected via a survey questionnaire from a sample of 322 front line employees working in different banks in Pakistan. The structural equational modeling (SEM) technique was used for hypotheses testing.

Findings - Findings of the study show that inclusive leadership has a positive influence on follower-leader goal congruence which in turn has a positive influence on organizational commitment. Further, organizational commitment has a negative influence on turnover intention. Additionally, the results lend support to the mediating effects of follower-leader goal congruence on the relationship between inclusive leadership and organizational commitment, and the mediating effect of organizational commitment on the relationship between follower-leader goal congruence and turnover intention.

Research limitations/implications - This research extends the literature on inclusive leadership, follower-leader goal congruence, organizational commitment and turnover intention. This study focuses on the follower-leader centric approach.

Practical implications - The findings of this study can guide policymakers and management of the banking industry to develop the inclusive leadership qualities of existing managers to reduce the turnover intention of their employees.

Originality/value - By incorporating LMX and SET, this study tests a model that demonstrates the mediating role of follower-leader goal congruence and organizational commitment in the relationship between inclusive leadership and employees' turnover intention.

Keywords: Inclusive leadership, follower-leader goal congruence, organizational commitment, turnover intention

Introductions

Employees with their extraordinary efforts enable organizations to gain a competitive advantage, and help organizations survive in the business for the long term (**Hussinki et al, 2019**). In the current global competitive environment, organizations face several challenges to sustain their position and hence, they focus on the systematic management of human capital. Organizations have been paying attention to the retention of their employees who provide them with a competitive advantage (**Onyemah et al, 2021**). Retention of incumbent employees has become a challenge for the organizations globally (**Bao and Zhong, 2021**). For scholars working on organizational behavior, employee turnover is an important variable deemed a major issue for many organizations (**Jang and Kandampully, 2018**). Implementing a suitable management strategy can help organizations find ways to condense employee turnover and nurture sustainable growth.

There has been much research on different leadership styles and turnover intention, but research on the ability of inclusive leadership to reduce turnover intention remains relatively unexplored (**Tran and Choi, 2019**). Comparing other leadership styles with inclusive leadership, it is evident that inclusive leadership possesses a distinct style of recognition, belonging, inclusiveness and identity (**Randel et al, 2018**). Previous studies mostly investigated the impact of ethical, transformational and servant leadership styles in predicting employee turnover intention (**Babakus et al., 2010; Pravichai and Ariyabuddhiphongs, 2018**). These studies have substantiated the role of the essential leader-follower relationship and highlighted the need for a leadership style that builds a strong leader-follower relationship. The inclusive leadership literature has not adequately addressed how leaders' characteristics might impact employees' behaviors and contribute to increasing employees' retention.

The lack of evidence emphasizes the need for further research on a leader-follower relationship that may underline the inconsistent findings. Accordingly, this study intends to fill this gap by emphasizing the importance of inclusive leadership for managing employees' turnover intention and investigates the association between inclusive leadership and turnover intention with specific contingencies.

Further, compared with the other leadership styles such as servant leadership, it has been argued that servant leadership focuses on the organizational members, stakeholders and communities' success (**Ehrhart, 2004**). Whereas, inclusive leadership does not give attention to the external stakeholders. Transformational leadership focuses on immediate self-interest for the organization's mission and vision, whereas inclusive leaders focus on facilitation and belongingness.

Inclusive leadership has been considered the most favorable approach as it invites all employees to give their input for decision-making (**Shuck and Herd, 2012**). Accordingly, we argue that inclusive leadership could play a vital role in reducing the employees' turnover intention via underlying mechanisms in this study.

The multitude of positive traits and characteristics of this unique leadership style has influenced scholars to conduct studies on associated employees' outcomes in different industries (**Choi et al., 2017; Qi et al, 2019**). The above-mentioned studies investigated various employee outcomes, including employees' well-being, innovative work behavior, performance measures and voice behavior. However, not much is known about some important factors such as leader-follower goal congruence, commitment and turnover intention. Investigating the turnover intention of the frontline employees is particularly important, because experienced and competent frontline employees assist organizations in generating mutually beneficial customer-employee relationships (**Huang and Cheng, 2012**). **Jia et al.** (**2021**) suggested that future research on inclusive leadership should focus on organizational factors. Therefore, this study sought to cover this gap by applying leader-member exchange (LMX) and social exchange theory (SET) to investigate the relationship between inclusive

leadership and turnover intention, thereby contributing to the existing knowledge. This study proposes a model in which leader-member goal congruence and organization commitment mediate the relationship between inclusive leadership and turnover intention.

The contributions of this study are as follows. First, although the literature depicts a positive relationship of inclusive leadership with work engagement, psychological safety and work group identification (**Carmeli et al., 2010; Guo et al., 2020; Shore and Chung, 2022**), no empirical evidence about the inclusive leadership effect on follower-leader goal congruence and turnover intention is found. Second, this study integrates LMX theory to investigate the relationship between turnover intention and its sequential mediators. This study focuses behaviorally on LMX by studying turnover intention and attitudinal LMX by studying organizational commitment. Third, this paper contributes to the inclusion literature as it is still in infancy stage (**Mitchell et al., 2015**). Fourth, this study contributes to the literature of follower-leader goal congruence in the banking sector. Fifth, this study augments literature regarding how follower-leader goal congruence and organizational commitment play the role of mediating mechanisms in the relationship between inclusive leadership and turnover intention. Finally, the proposed paradigm emphasizes how leaders can create a sense of group belonging.

Underpinning theory

The proposed model is supported by the LMX and social change theory.

LMX theory

LMX theory explores the quality of exchange relationships between leaders and the subordinates, and consequences of the exchange relationships in terms of subordinates' attitudes and behaviors (**Van Breukelen et al, 2006**). LMX theory conceptualizes leadership from a dyadic, interpersonal relationship (**Jian, 2015**). It refers to the quality of the relationship between the leaders and group members (**Chernyak-Hai and Rabenu, 2018**). According to LMX theory, leaders build relationships with followers and drive their behavioral and attitudinal responses simultaneously with mutual relationships (**Harris et al., 2014**). In addition, LMX plays a vital role for the employees' motivation (**Gomez and Rosen, 2001**). LMX theory states that leaders are friendlier, and openly communicate with their team (**Erdogan and Bauer, 2014**). According to LMX theory, the leader develops close ties with the subordinates. Leaders divide followers into two groups: in-group and out-group. Leaders have strong relations with in-group, members characterized by mutual trust, support, affect and dependence and weak relations with out-group members, characterized by transactional exchanges based on the employment contract (**Erdogan and Bauer, 2014**).

The relationship between leaders and subordinates take time to develop due to a series of rule-making processes, which are called role-taking and role-making. Leaders in role-taking stage, offer individualized assistance and attention. Followers, on the other hand take keen interest in finding out the resources leaders may possess, and their openness to negotiate on job related matters (**Jian, 2015**). Once subordinates successfully meet the role expectations of their leaders, they move on the stage of role making. The role-making phase may eventually lead to the maturity of a dyadic relationship. In this stage, both followers and leaders send roles to each other and evaluate each other's responses. Therefore, this phase becomes the basis of mutual trust, respect and mutually understood roles and reciprocal norms, which enable effective collaboration in job fulfillment (**Jian, 2015**). At this stage, the leaders assign special tasks to the subordinates, which engenders a high-quality relationship based on trust and respect. When leaders trust subordinates, it increases their passion and commitment. LMX

substantially improves job performance and work engagement (**Breevaart et al., 2015**). Leaders' behavior and perception factors are the strongest predictors of LMX quality in comparison to follower and relationship factors (**Dulebohn et al., 2012**).

SET

SET has been anticipated to elucidate human actions in social changes. The basic principle of SET is the "reciprocity norm." According to this principle, when a person receives positive behavior in social changes, a desire for positive behavior arises in that person (**Walumbwa et al., 2011**). According to SET, social relationships are based on the trust that uplift goodwill (**Blau, 1964**), and a strong bond between leaders and followers engenders effective interactions between them, thus enhancing intrinsic motivation and cultivating energy such that employees actively engage in their work (**Fang et al., 2021**). When leaders provide employees with a valuable and beneficial resource, an obligation is generated to return a beneficial resource. The structure of rewards and costs in relationships influence the pattern of interactions that emerge from the exchange (**Mitchell et al., 2012**). Thus, based on the SET, we can expect that when employees are engaged in decision-making, they feel proud and valued, and in turn, they are more committed to their organization and prefer to better serve their organization. Similarly, it has been argued by **Cropanzano and Mitchell** (**2005**) that social exchange relations bring out positive consequences in the work environment. When employees view their employers supportive, they respond with positive feedback. As the employer's support increases, the organizational citizenship behaviors and employees' performance improve as well. SET states that employees become more effective when they have high quality relationships with their managers (**Walumbwa et al., 2011**). SET postulates that exchange interactions involve economic or social outcomes. Economic exchange relationships are short term and have weaker interpersonal attachments. Whereas, social exchange relationships are long term and associated with stronger interpersonal attachments. Those employees who are engaged in social exchange relationships demand less immediate payback and are more generous (**Mitchell et al., 2012**).

Literature review and hypotheses development

Inclusive leadership

Inclusive leadership is a type of leadership style that focuses on uniqueness and belonging to engender relationships at all levels in an organization and endeavors to achieve long terms goals (**Sugiyama et al., 2016**). According to **Nembhard and Edmondson** (**2006**), inclusive leaders create an environment where one can give consideration to others' point of view, for instance, "voices are genuinely valued" (p. 948). Inclusive leaders are open, easily accessible and approachable for interaction with their team. They listen to their team members' suggestions, problems, pay attention to their needs and encourage them to contribute to the organization's decision-making process (**Zhou and Mou, 2021**). These leaders treat their employees with respect, recognition and tolerance by giving weightage to their opinions and recognizing their contributions (**Choi et al., 2015**). Scholars regard this as a type of leadership style that reflects ethical behaviors toward the employees by treating them equally and believing in organizational solidarity (**Liu et al., 2017**). These leaders further show their high availability and openness to promote helping behaviors (**Carmeli et al., 2010**), therefore enabling subordinates to recognize the value of being treated favorably by their organization (**Tran and Choi, 2019**).

Follower-leader goal congruence

Scholars define goal congruence as goals and values being shared by the followers and leaders in work environment (**Bouckenooghe et al., 2015**). A high-quality relationship between the leaders and followers has been found to stimulate followers to work for the leaders and organizations represented by the leaders (**Bryant and Merritt, 2019**).

When followers and leaders have similar goals, high-quality knowledge gets exchanged between them, which leads the organization to goal achievement (**Leana and Van Buren, 1999**). In the high goal congruence case, followers have more knowledge about organizational decisions and the corresponding processes (**Leana and Van Buren, 1999**), which helps them be more informed regarding that how organizational decisions affect their work (**De Clercq et al., 2011**). On the other hand, low goal congruence among leaders and followers causes doubts regarding their expectations from employees (**Edwards and Cable, 2009**). Follower leader goal congruence increases psychological attachment with the organization. Thus, when leaders and employees have the same goals, employees trust their leaders to serve that increases employees' engagement with their work.

Organizational commitment

Organizational commitment is a psychological connection between employees and their employers that facilitates employees' belief in organizational objectives (**Chiang and Liu, 2017**). Organizational commitment is defined as an individual's relative strength of identification and involvement in a particular organization and is characterized by three factors: (1) a strong belief in an organization's goals and values; (2) a readiness to employ substantial effort on the organization's behalf; and (3) a strong desire to remain in that organization (**Mowday et al., 1979**).

The concept of organizational commitment refers to the desire and willingness of an employee to contribute to organizational success and implies loyalty to the organization and mobilization to achieve organizational goals (**Redondo et al., 2021**). Organizational commitment is viewed as an important work attitude for both staff and the organization (**Lambert et al., 2020**). Employees who are attached to an organization, consider the organization as a part of their family, and thus, do not want to leave the organization (**Fazio et al., 2017**).

The three-component model developed by **Meyer et al.** (**1993**) is the most commonly used commitment construct. These components are affective, continuance and normative commitment. Normative commitment expresses employee moral obligation to stay in an organization (**Allen and Meyer, 1996**). Whereas, with affective commitment, an individual shows emotional attachment to stay with the individual's organization (**Meyer et al., 2013**). Continuous commitment is the extent to which an employee bears the perceived costs after quitting the job (**Meyer et al., 2002**). However, in this study, researchers chose affective commitment from the three dimensions of organizational commitment because it explains the overall organizational commitment more satisfactorily than the other two dimensions (**Ketchand and Strawser, 2001**).

Turnover intention

Turnover is a subject-specific term for quitting one's job (**Jensen, 2021**). Turnover intention is concerned with one's attitude toward leaving one's job and it has been considered as the strongest predictor of the actual quitting of job (**Rubenstein et al., 2018**). The turnover concept relates to actual

behavior, that is quitting the job, whereas turnover intention is more concerned with employees' behavior toward quitting the job (**Jensen, 2021**). Further, it indicates that employees are in search of alternate employment opportunities (**Turkoglu and Dalgic, 2019**).

Research has addressed different types of voluntary turnover (**Onyemah et al., 2021**). Extant literature has identified controllable, uncontrollable turnover and voluntary and involuntary turnover (**Dugan et al., 2020**). Controllable turnover is when employees leave due to organizational issues which are under the organization's control (e.g. job stress, leadership) whereas uncontrollable turnover comprises issue that are not under the organization's control (**Khatri et al., 2001**). Voluntary turnover is when employees leave their job due to their own wish or to find a better opportunity. Involuntary turnover occurs when an organization forces the employees to leave the organization (e.g. downsizing, employee termination).

Inclusive leadership and follower-leader goal congruence

Inclusive leadership is a rational leadership style that means "doing things with people" and achieving tasks for mutual benefit (**Randel et al, 2018**). Inclusive leadership exhibits openness, and availability helping employees to interact freely with leadership (**Carmeli et al., 2010**). Inclusive leaders focus on promoting team members by taking suggestions from them and thus promoting feelings of belonging among their team members. These leaders involve their team members in the decision-making process and build strong relationships with them (**Al-Atwi and Al-Hassani, 2021**). These leaders trust their employees, share information and engage them in decision making. Under such conditions, they create an environment conducive to the alignment of leader-follower goals.

Based on LMX theory, this study associates inclusive leadership and follower-leader goal congruence as follows.

$H1$. Inclusive leadership has a positive impact on follower-leader goal congruence.

Relationship between follower-leader goal congruence and organizational commitment Leaders are representatives of their organizations and are responsible for implementing and designing organizational policies. They take keen interest in taking their followers' suggestions and engage them in decision making that in turn creates a sense of belongingness in their followers. When followers and leaders collectively recognize the implications of specific goals, it helps reduce ambiguity regarding effort allocation and confirms that employees' actions play a significant role in the attainment of organizational goals (**Colbert et al., 2008**). Follower-leader congruence builds strong emotional bond through the exchange of views and it engenders positive employees' outcomes such as job satisfaction (**Jacobsen and Staniok, 2018**). Accordingly, we assume that follower-leader goal congruence boosts organizational commitment. This is because, when employees are assigned the tasks of their choice, they become more committed. Using the analytical lens of the SET, this study postulates that follower-leader goal congruence will increase organizational commitment. Therefore, we hypothesize,

$H2$. Follower-leader goal congruence has a significant positive impact on organizational commitment.

Organizational commitment and turnover intention

Organizational commitment is considered as the main driver of employee turnover intention (**Tsen et al., 2021**). According to **Chang et al.** (**2013**), organizational commitment is the most significant factor that influences turnover intention. Employees with high levels of commitment may have a stronger desire to remain in that organization (**Bhat et al., 2021**). Identifying factors associated with organizational commitment could help organizations to reduce employee turnover intention (**Li et al., 2021**). Therefore, through the analytical lens of the SET, this study posits that organizational commitment will reduce turnover intention among employees. Thus, we propose,

> $H3$. Organizational commitment has a significant negative impact on turnover intention.

Mediating role of follower-leader congruence between inclusive leadership and organizational commitment

It is speculated that follower-leader goal congruence mediates the nexus between inclusive leadership and organizational commitment, because inclusive leaders are open, and accessible. When leaders listen to followers' suggestions, a strong bond emerges between the followers and the leaders. They share their goals and align these goals with the organizations' goals. Inclusive leaders allow their team members to decide tasks and goals for themselves (**Choi et al., 2015**). High levels of follower-leader goal congruence increase the organizational commitment among employees, because when employees' personal goals match with those of their leaders, they are more likely to be empowered (**Vancouver and Schmitt, 1991**). It is also evident from research that inclusive leaders foster employees' commitment such that they ensure employees that their suggestions are given weightage in organizational policies (**Hollander, 2009**). Hence, we propose that employees are more committed because they are part of decision-making process.

> $H4$. Follower-leader goal congruence mediates the relationship between inclusive leadership and organizational commitment.

The mediating role of organizational commitment between follower-leader goal congruence and turnover intention

It is conjectured that organizational commitment mediates the nexus between follower-leader goal congruence and turnover intention. When leaders provide employees with an opportunity to set their own goals, employees feel that their goals are aligned with those of their leaders (**Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005**). Organizational commitment shows employees' attachment to their organization. Empirical findings have confirmed organizational commitment's mediating role in the relationship between contextual factors and employees' outcomes. For example, previous studies have found that organizational commitment plays a mediating role between knowledge sharing and turnover intention (**Han et al., 2016**). Therefore, we propose.

*H*5. Organizational commitment mediates the relationship between follower-leader goal congruence and turnover intention.

*H*6. Follower-leader goal congruence and organizational commitment mediates the relationship between inclusive leadership and turnover intention.

Figure 1 presents the hypothesized model.

Methods

Participants, sampling and procedure

To address ambiguity problems regarding language, content and questions, the questionnaire was reviewed by two professionals working in the banking sector of Pakistan and two academic professionals working in the universities. Resultantly, some minor changes were made to the questionnaire.

Data for this study were collected from front line employees (e.g. cashier, operations staff, Agri credit staff, sales and marketing staff, operations managers, etc.) working in all departments (e.g. cash, general banking operations, Agri credit, sales and marketing, etc.) of banks in Pakistan. The front-line employees in the banks were selected using the purposive sampling technique. As suggested by **Sekaran and Bougie** (**2010**), this sampling technique was used in the absence of a complete list of the respondents.

To collect the data from banks' staff, the researchers first contacted the branch managers of the banks and asked them to participate in the survey. The researchers used different modes of communication, ranging from emails to phone calls. Upon their agreement, the it cover letters and personally met with branch managers, to discuss the process of completing the survey along with the benefits and the objectives. Additionally, branch managers were assured that the data collected from their banks would be used only for publication purposes without disclosing the names of the employees and their banks. This assurance helped the researchers distribute the questionnaire across a range of front-line employees (e.g cashier, operations staff, Agri credit staff, sales and marketing staff and operations managers).

Figure 1. The hypothesized model

The time-lagged design was adopted to gather data at two-time points with a lag of two months to minimize the potential common method bias. In the first time point ($T1$), data concerning demographics details, inclusive leadership and follower-leader goal congruence were gathered. In the second time point ($T2$), data concerning organizational commitment and turnover intention were collected. A total 650 questionnaires were distributed, of which only 480 were returned and 322 were filled and later used for the statistical analysis in this study. The response rate of the study is shown in **Table 1** shows the response rate of the survey

Respondents profile

Table 2 shows the demographic details of the respondents. The sample comprised 167 (52%) males and 155 (48%) females.

Measures

The variables in this study were adapted from existing literature. A five-point Likert scale ranging from 0 (totally disagree) to 5 (totally agree) was used to measure the items in the study. Inclusive leadership was measured using nine items adapted from the scale developed by **Carmeli et al.** (**2010**). Follower-leader goal congruence was measured using four items adapted from **De Clercq et al.** (**2014**).

Table 1. Response rate

Distributed questionnaires	650	100%
Returned questionnaires	480	73.8%
Useable questionnaires	322	67%
Unusable questionnaires	158	33%

Table 2. Demographic characteristics

Demographic variable	Categories	*n*	%
Gender	Male	167	52
	Female	155	48
Education	Masters	172	53
	Bachelors	150	47
Age	20–30 years	56	20.4
	31–40 years	136	49.5
	41–50 years	106	21.4
	Over 50 years	24	8.7
Experience	Less than 1 year	70	21.8
	1–5 years	100	31
	6–10 years	70	21.8
	11–15 years	62	19.2
	More than 15 years	20	6.2
Marital status	Single	172	53.4
	Married	150	46.6

Organizational commitment was measured using six-item adapted from a scale developed by **Meyer et al.** (**1993**). Three items for turnover intention were adapted from **Cole and Bruch's** (**2006**) study. Appendix presents the scales used in the study.

Common method bias

The common latent factor technique was used to calculate the common method bias in the data. The result shows a variance of (21.2%) which was below the threshold of 50%. Hence, no significant common method bias was found in the data.

Data analysis

For descriptive statistics, $SPSS$ version 23 was used. Structural equation modeling (SEM) with $AMOS$ 24 was used for testing the hypothesized model because SEM is not descriptive unlike the multivariate techniques and it is most appropriate for hypotheses testing, it provides exact measurements of error variance parameters and it integrates both latent and observed variables, while other techniques depend only on observed variables (**Byrne, 2013**).

Measurement model

In this study, we used **Anderson and Gerbing's** (**1988**) two-step strategy for testing the hypothesized model. First measurement model was confirmed using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). Next, SEM analyses were performed to measure the fit and path coefficients of the hypothesized model. **Figure 2** shows the measurement model of the study.

CFA is the foremost step in the estimation of the model using SEM on $AMOS$. To test the hypotheses of this study, the CFA technique was used on each of the constructs using $AMOS$ Version 24. CFA analysis was performed to measure the internal consistency reliability, convergent and discriminant validity of the constructs with respect to inclusive leadership, follower-leader goal, congruence, organizational commitment and turnover intention.

Model estimation and evaluation

The estimated results for the model in **Table 3** (refer to **Table 3**) specifying the value of the goodness-of-fit index (GFI), Tucker-Lewis index (TLI) and Confirmatory Fit Index (CFI) values as 0.831,0.805 and 0.830, respectively. All these values are below the threshold value (0.9). Thus, the outcomes show that the fit is not good. However, by estimating modification indices, we realized that the correlation between e1 and e2 is high (133.163). We repeated the estimation after correlating e 8 and e 9 and the findings in **Table 3** (refer to **Table 3**) shows that the GFI, TLI and CFI values are still less than the threshold value. Thus, we re-evaluated the modification indices that expose a high correlation between e5 and e7; the values remained lower than the threshold. Now we correlated e1 and e3. The estimated results in **Table 3** (refer to **Table 3**) shows that the values are remain below the threshold. Therefore, we re-evaluated the modification indices that show a high correlation between e2 and e3. After correlating e1 and e2. The estimated results in **Table 3** (refer to **Table 3**) show that GFI, TLI and CFI are above the threshold. This shows that the fit is perfectly good. **Table 4** presents model fit results. Constructs with loading less than 0.5 were deleted as 0.5 is the threshold (**Hair et al., 2006**).

The composite reliability (CR) of each construct ranged from 0.831 to 0.948, above the threshold value of 0.60, confirming the internal consistency reliability of the constructs (**Fornell and Larcker, 1981**). The average variance extracted (AVE) of all constructs was above the threshold value of 0.50 (**Fornell and Larcker, 1981**), and thus, confirmed the convergent validity of the constructs shown in **Table 5**. As **Table 6** shows the estimated the estimated intercorrelations among all constructs were less than the square roots of the AVE in each construct confirming discriminant validity (**Hair et al., 2006**).
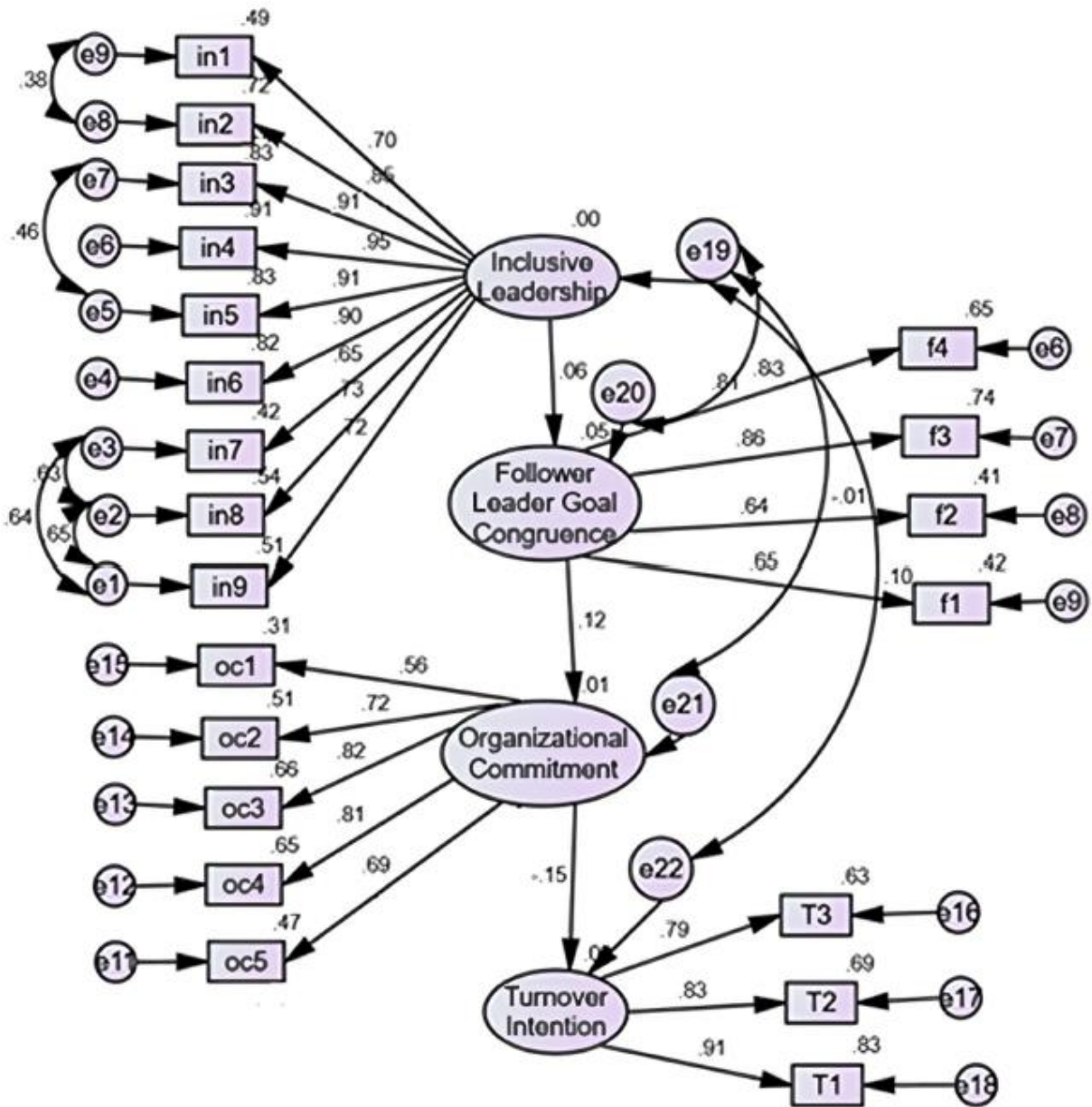
Figure 2. The measurement model

Table 3. Model estimation

Results of fit of model	CMIN	GFI	TLI	CFI	RMESA
	5.912	0.831	0.805	0.830	0.124
e1–e2	5.046	0.862	0.840	0.811	0.112
e8–e9	4.806	0.871	0.849	0.870	0.104
e5–e7	4.531	0.881	0.860	0.880	0.093
e1–e3	4.280	0.890	0.870	0.889	0.086
e2–e3	3.440	0.919	0.903	0.918	0.078

Structural model. To test the hypotheses of this study, the structural model was performed. **Figure 3** shows the structural model. The results provided good model fitness (see **Table 7**) as the value of chi

q/df = 3.384 as value is less than 5 as suggested by **Hair et al.** (**2010**). The values of $CFI = 0.919$, $GFI = 0.919$ and $TLI = 0.906$ (See **Table 7**) indicate a good model fit as recommended by **Hair et al.** (**2010**). The $RMSEA = 0.074$ further supported the criteria of good model fitness (**Hair et al., 2010**).

Table 4. Model fit indices

Fit indices	Model value	Reference value	Overall model fit
X2/df	3.440	<5.00	
CFI	0.918	>0.90	
GFI	0.919	>0.90	
TLI	0.903	>0.90	
RMSEA	0.078	<0.10	
NCP	434.300	>NCP saturated (0.00) <NCP independence (3146.508)	
FMIN	1.907	>FMIN saturated (0.00) <FMIN independence (12.327)	

Table 5. Factor loadings, composite reliability

Variables	No of items	Items	Standardized factors loading	Composite reliability	AVE
Inclusive leadership	9	In1	0.700	0.949	0.813
		In2	0.861		
		In3	0.912		
		In4	0.953		
		In5	0.911		
		In6	0.907		
		In 7	0.654		
		In 8	0.732		
		In 9	0.721		
Follower leader	4	FL1	0.652	0.793	0.567
		FL2	0.641		
		FL3	0.862		
		FL4	0.832		
Organizational commitment	6	OC1	0.561	0.848	0.717
		OC 2	0.721		
		OC 3	0.822		
		OC4	0.812		
		OC5	0.693		
		OC6	–		
Turnover intention	3	TI1	0.911	0.885	0.722
		TI2	0.836		
		TI3	0.794		

Table 6. Discriminant validity

Variables	Inclusive leadership	Follower leader goal congruence	Organizational commitment	Turnover intention
Inclusive leadership	*0.901*			
Follower leader goal congruence	0.414	*0.859*		
Organizational commitment	0.033	0.115	*0.846*	
Turnover intention	−0.020	−0.009	−0.203	*0.920*

The results confirm that inclusive leadership has a positive impact on follower-leader goal congruence $\beta = 0.47, \rho < 0.05$), thus **H1** is accepted. Results further confirm a significant positive impact of follower-leader goal congruence on organizational commitment ($\beta = 0.12$, $\rho < 0.05$). Thus, **H2** is supported. Additionally, the results validate a negative impact of organizational commitment on turnover intention ($\beta = -0.16, \rho < 0.05$), thus H3 is supported. **Table 8** displays the results of **H1** to **H3**.
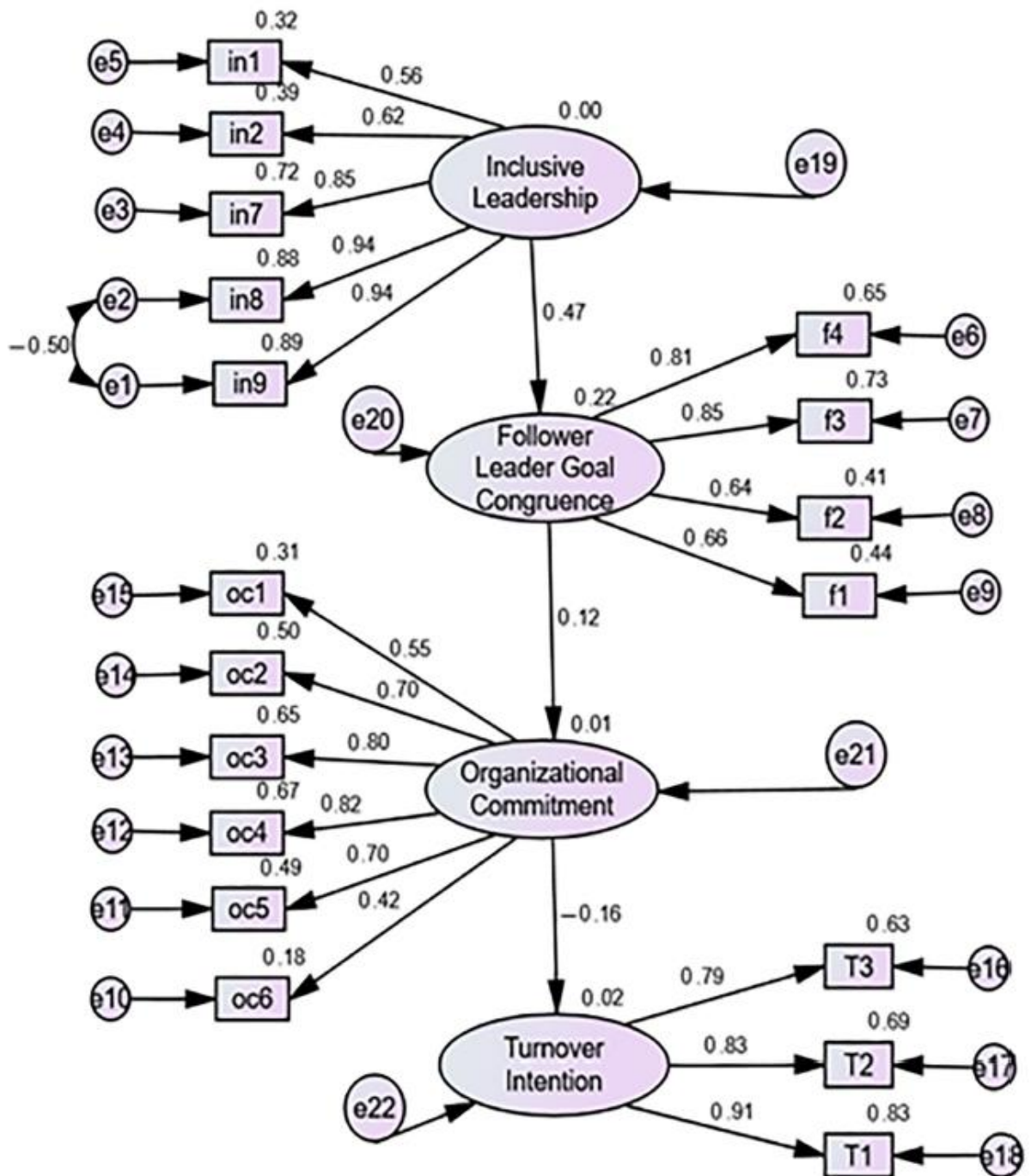
Figure 3. The structural model

Table 7. Model fit indices

Fit indices	X2	df	X2/df	CFI	GFI	TLI	RMESA
	301.6	131	3.384	0.919	0.919	0.906	0.074

The results of indirect relationships are shown in **Table 9**. For **H4**, the results confirm the mediating role of follower-leader goal congruence in the relationship between inclusive leadership and organizational commitment ($\beta = 0.049$, $\rho < 0.05$).

Table 8. Direct effect results

Standardized direct effects	Point estimate	Product of coefficients	Bootstrapping Percentile 95% CI		t value	One tail significance	Decision
			Lower	Upper			
Inclusive leadership → follower–leader goal congruence	0.471	0.075	0.188	0.472	4.509	(***)	Accepted
Follower leader goal congruence → Organizational commitment	0.123	0.057	0.005	0.279	2.515	0.031	Accepted
Organizational commitment → Turnover intention	−0.163	0.080	−0.351	−0.103	−3.460	(***)	Accepted

Note(s): $\rho < 0.05$ (based on one-tailed test with 5,000 bootstrapping)

Table 9. Indirect effect results

Standardized indirect effects	Point estimate	Standard error	Bootstrapping Percentile 95% CI		t value	Two tail significance	Decision
			Lower	Upper			
Inclusive leadership → follower–leader goal congruence → Organizational Commitment	0.049	0.027	0.001	0.106	1.814	0.039	Accepted
Follower–leader goal congruence → Organizational Commitment → Turnover intention	−0.034	0.018	−0.071	−0.001	1.888	0.040	Accepted

Note(s): $\rho < 0.05$ (based on two-tailed test with 5,000 bootstrapping)

For **H5**, the results confirm that organizational commitment mediates the relationship between follower-leader goal congruence and turnover intention ($\beta = -0.034$, $\rho < 0.05$).

Discussion

Different styles of leadership have been studied by researchers to investigate employees' attitudes and behaviors. However, few studies have explored the impact of inclusive leadership on employees' potential behaviors in the banking sector. The findings of this study have helped fill this gap. The current research augments previous research on the essential elements of individual employee turnover intention in the banking industry. By using the dual theoretical lens of LMX and SET, this study confirms that a model of inclusive leadership helps in reducing employee turnover.

As hypothesized, the findings demonstrated that there is a positive relationship between inclusive leadership and leader-follower goal congruence. This means that inclusive leadership with a positive attitude creates an environment within the organization wherein followers are encouraged to design their tasks and set their own goals.

Inclusive leaders maintain open communication to invite input from employees while displaying availability, willingness and concern about their interests (**Ye et al., 2018**). The findings are in line with

those of **Randel et al.** (**2018**), in which inclusive leadership played a significant role in increasing the feeling of belongingness in employees.

The findings regarding the second hypothesis showed that there is a positive and significant relationship between leader-follower goal congruence and organizational commitment. This means that when employees and leaders have their tasks and goals aligned, it will increase the commitment level of the employees. The SET supports the findings as leaders involve employees in the decision-making process, and they feel proud and valued which in turn makes them emotionally attached to the organization. Further, we elaborate that employees are involved in decision making processes and hence, goals of leaders and followers are aligned and employees are emotionally connected to the organization. These findings confirm that follower-leader goal congruence is a source of attitudinal LMX.

For the third hypothesis, it was found that organizational commitment is significantly negatively correlated to employee turnover intention. This may be because when employees are committed to their organization, they feel comfortable and emotionally attached to their organization and prefer to remain with the organization. These results confirmed the results of **Chang et al.** (**2013**). The SET supports these results; when employees feel respect from the organization, they become attached to their organization and prefer to stay in that organization. These results confirm that inclusive leadership is a source of behavioral LMX. This relation advances communication process of LMX theory. Managers who communicate openly with their subordinates know the ground realties of the organization and try to solve the problems of their employees, which may enhance employees' commitment to the organization.

For the fourth hypothesis, it was found that the follower-leader goal congruence mediates the relationship between inclusive leadership and organizational commitment. Although our hypothesis was supported, the value of lower confidence interval is 0.001, which shows a weak mediation. This reveals that inclusive leadership creates an environment that fosters follower-leader goal congruence and organizational commitment in employees. To the best of our knowledge, this is one of the first studies to explore this link. The LMX theory supports the results; when employees are given chance to actively engage in organizational matters, they become more committed. By studying the mediating role of follower-leader goal congruence with inclusive leadership and organizational commitment, we explore the communication process of LMX theory and fill the gap mentioned by **Jian** (**2015**). Thus, we conclude that inclusive leadership is a source of behavioral LMX.

Regarding the last hypothesis, it was found that organizational commitment mediates the relationship between follower-leader goal congruence and turnover intention. Although our hypothesis was supported, the value of the upper confidence interval is —0.001 it shows weak mediation. When followers' and leaders' goals are the same, employees become emotionally attached to their leadership, which engenders commitment and reduces their intention to leave the organization. The SET supports this result; when leaders are open and listen to their employees, then, in response to leaders' behaviors, employees exchange affection with the organization and prefer to stay in that organization.

Theoretical implications

This research makes the following important theoretical contributions. First, this study contributes to inclusive leadership research by revealing the positive impact of inclusive leadership on leader member goal congruence and organizational commitment. Second, this study responds to the calls for advanced

research to investigate precursors of LMX quality (**Nahrgang and Seo, 2015**), particularly those related to leadership style (**Dulebohn et al., 2012**). Third, this study answers to the call of **Elsaied** (**2020**) where the need to investigate the relationship between and employee behavior is worth considering. Forth, our study extends the inclusive leadership research to explain the development of follower-leader goal congruence based on LMX theory and confirms inclusive leadership as a source of leader member exchange. Fifth, previous studies on inclusive leadership have mainly focused on innovation, but this study extends the scope of inclusive leadership by studying turnover intention and confirming that inclusive leadership helps leaders and followers to align their goals. This study extends SET by studying follower-leader goal congruence and confirms that when leaders trust employees and engage them in decision making, this strengthens their relationship. Follower-leader goal congruence engenders trust and affective commitment among parties (**Molm et al, 2000**) and follower-leader is a source of reciprocal relationships because reciprocal relationships tend to result from a successful series of interactions between two parties. Fourth, by considering the relational element of inclusive leadership through the lens of LMX theory and SET as a descriptive concept, this study makes a novel contribution to the literature on the relationship between inclusive leadership, goal congruence, organizational commitment and turnover intention. Fifth, this study extends LMX theory by focusing on the impact of inclusive leadership on employees' outcomes. Sixth, this study uses SET to explain why inclusive leadership enhances employees' commitment to an organization. Inclusive leaders engage team members in decision making and take suggestions from them which may create a sense of belonging in the employees. Thus, enhancing their emotional attachment with the organization, in the form of higher levels of commitment by providing team members with support and prospects to acquire new skills. Additionally, the current study examined the study of follower-leader goal congruence by exploring how inclusive leadership builds an environment of sharing views and engages employees in the decision-making process to align the employees' goals with those of the organization. Further, this study finds a new antecedent of organizational commitment and confirms that follower-leader goal congruence increases the commitment level of employees. Finally, this study confirms the mediating role of organizational commitment and follower-leader goal congruence.

Practical implications

The findings of this study can serve as an essential basis for helping the banking industry in reduce frontline employee turnover. Frontline employees in the banking sector directly interact with customers and their core responsibility is to deliver excellent service to the bank customers; accordingly, our findings have several implications regarding increasing employees' commitment to banks. The application of inclusive leadership contributed to several positive practical outcomes such as innovation, work engagement and belongingness (**Randel et al., 2018; Cenkci et al., 2020**). Thus, instead of spending time on assigning responsibilities to employee's inclusive leaders invite employees to choose their responsibilities. A key attribute of inclusive leadership is having direct communication with subordinates; leaders encourage their team members to exchange their opinions regarding the task and thus, try to empower their team members.

The findings suggest that policymakers and banking industry management should redesign their strategies for hiring and training and attract leaders who display inclusive leadership behaviors and characteristics, to create a supportive, ethical and participative work environment for enhancing their followers' goal congruence, commitment and reducing employee turnover. Organizations must provide specific training to foster an inclusive culture and development programs that support managers to realize the benefits of inclusive leadership practices. Training helps absorb leadership behavior and supports the learning process (**Kelloway et al., 2000**).

Organizations can arrange training sessions for managers on how to adopt an inclusive leadership approach by which they will gain maximum benefits, bring positive change in employees' behavior, develop employees' emotional attachment to the organization and reduce turnover intention. Our findings suggest that organizations can develop an environment of care by following inclusive leadership practices, and thus, increase employees' commitment.

Conclusion

Using LMX theory and SET, this study examined the relationship between inclusive leadership and follower-leader goal congruence, follower-leader goal congruence and organizational commitment, organizational commitment and turnover intention and the mediating role of follower-leader goal congruence in the relationship between inclusive leadership and organizational commitment and the mediating role of organizational commitment in the relationship between follower-leader goal congruence and turnover intention. Taking a different line of inquiry from earlier studies that investigated inclusive leadership, this study used follower-leader goal congruence as a mediator to examine the relationships between inclusive leadership and turnover intention. The results reveal that perceived inclusive leadership plays a vital role in engendering organizational commitment, which further helps reduce employee turnover intention. Further, the results confirm a weak mediating role of follower-leader goal congruence and organizational commitment.

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Appendix

Inclusive leadership

(1) My manager is open to hearing new ideas
(2) My manager is attentive to new opportunities to improve work processes
(3) My manager is open to discuss the desired goals and new ways to achieve them
(4) My manager is available for consultation on problems
(5) My manager is an ongoing "presence" in this team—someone who is readily available
(6) My manager is available for professional questions I would like to consult with him/her
(7) My manger is ready to listen my requests
(8) My manager encourages me to access him/her on emerging issues
(9) My manager is accessible for discussing emerging problems

Follower leader goal congruence

(1) My manager and I have a similar vision regarding how things should be done in the bank
(2) My manager and I think alike on most issues with respect to the bank
(3) My manager and I are enthusiastic about pursuing the same goals for the bank
(4) My manager's work-related goals are fully aligned with mine

Organizational commitment

(1) I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this bank
(2) I really feel as if this bank's problems are my own
(3) I feel that I have too few options to consider leaving this bank
(4) I do not feel "emotionally attached" to this bank
(5) I do not feel like "part of the family" at the bank
(6) I owe a great deal to the bank

Turnover intention

(1) I intend to look for a job outside of current bank within the next year
(2) I have no intention to remain indefinitely within this bank
(3) I often think about quitting my job