Ilkogretim Online - Elementary Education Online, 2021; Vol 20 (Issue 5): pp. 5662-5672
http://ilkogretim-online.org
doi: 10.17051/ilkonline.2021.05.640

Compassionate Leadership is Key to Success: Role of Servant Leadership Style in Predicting Employees Trust in Leadership, Psychological Safety, and Turnover Intention

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Abstract- Over the last decade, scholars have been particularly involved in the theory of servant leadership. Servant leadership requires one-on-one interaction for leaders to understand their followers' skills, desires, hopes, goals, and abilities and, as a result, bring out the best in them. Understanding each follower's unique characteristics and expectations, according to current literature, enables leaders to assist their followers in reaching their full potential. The convenience sampling method was used to collect data from 297 nurses in a cross-sectional study to investigate the impact of servant leadership style on predicting employees' trust in leadership, psychological safety, and turnover intention. The healthcare industry is facing significant challenges in retaining the best employees who are motivated to do their jobs. The data was analysed using PLS-SEM. The assessment of the measurement model achieved composite reliability and validity. The structural model assessment revealed that servant leadership predicts trust and psychological safety, which reduces the intention to leave among Pakistani nurses. Theoretical and practical implications were explored.

Key Terms: Servant Leadership, Psychological Safety, Trust, Turnover Intention

I. INTRODUCTION

The high rate of employee turnover in Pakistan's Healthcare sector is a major issue (Hamid et al., 2013; Meghani & Sajwani, 2013). Previous research in the healthcare sector indicates that leadership style could be a factor that can help improve employee work satisfaction, resulting in lower employee turnover (Ganji & Johnson, 2020). Specifically, servant leadership, with its emphasis on employee well-being, can reduce turnover by fostering positive job attitudes among employees, developing psychological safety and psychological resources among followers, and reducing employee turnover and turnover intentions under the conditions of regulatory attention of the employees, outcomes, and factors that have been shown to reduce employee turnover and turnover intentions(Ahmad et al., 2020; Shah et al., 2020).

Since the inception of the term servant leadership, despite the importance of this unique kind of leadership where the major focus is on serving, it is still in the early phases despite three decades passed since the term is coined. The current research examines the effects of SL on nurses' PsycSaf and trust (as a mediating variable), in the healthcare sector of Pakistan. To address the problem of high nurse turnover in the healthcare sector and to fill a gap in the literature, this study will investigate whether SL is associated with nurses' PsycSaf and trust, and mediating impact of both the relationship ofSL and employee turnover intention. The current study proposed that SL along with PsycSaf and trust reduces the nurse's intent to quit in the healthcare sector(Huning et al., 2020).

Organizational capital, human capital, and financial resources, support organizations in their existence (Williamson & Somaya, 2008). An organization's loss of both capital resources can have significant effects because today's markets are highly volatile, and because of this, an organization must invest a great deal of effort and money in holding onto capital resources like or acquiring them if it wishes to stay ahead of the competition.As unique and irreplaceable of the three resources, humans are critical to a company's well-being. We can't let our human resources be put at risk because any company's success would be undermined by their departure.To ensure that human capital is engaged and empowered, organizations endeavor to consistently build and preserve an enterprise identity that workers find enjoyable, allow them to take risks, strengthen their communication skills, foster trust, and is enjoyable to work for and

make employees proud of their achievements. Workers have thus far had primarily been studied for their employment and training needs, but their desires, interests, hopes, and dreams have received scant attention.(Huning et al., 2020). According to the firm's resource-based view (RBV) (Inkson, 2008), tacit information is one of its strategic assets and tools that are important, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable on which firms develop their core competencies for competitive advantage (Inkson, 2008).

Researchers and professionals agree on the value of recruiting and maintaining skilled workers. From a managerial standpoint, attracting and retaining high-quality skilled workers is more important than ever before due to a variety of developments (e.g., globalization, increased information work, and accelerating pace of technological advancement) that make it imperative that businesses obtain and retain the best human resources (Retno et al., 2020). Employee turnover and retention study continue to receive widespread and global recognition in the twenty-first century (Wen, 2020). Furthermore, an increasing body of empirical research shows that companies with higher turnover rates have poorer firm output (Huning et al., 2020), most likely due to social capital losses (Williamson & Somaya, 2008) and the high cost of replacing lost jobs (Memon et al., 2018; Memon et al., 2018; Soomro et al., 2020). Turnover has been debated in terms of financial costs (recruiting and training replacements to cost from 90 percent to 200 percent of the annual pay; (Meyer Allen, N. J., Smith, C. A., 1993), operational disruptions (Ton & Huckman, 2008), increased injury rates (Shaw & Delery, 2005), and reduced customer service and quality (Hancock et al., 2011). "Employee turnover is more dangerous for knowledge-intensive and people-based organizations because valuable tacit knowledge embedded in employees is lost when they leave, including confidential market and consumer information, business insight, and processes that could help rival firms" (Williamson &Somaya, 2008). The top three workforce management challenges that organizations are dealing with today are turnover, commitment, and recruitment("SHRM Survey Findings: Influencing Workplace Culture Through Employee Recognition and Other Efforts," 2016).

The turnover problem is even more severe in the medical profession, where it has a triple effect on the stakeholders involved. The effect is felt even more acutely in industries where demand outnumbers supply, such as healthcare professionals. The existing healthcare climate is confronted with obstacles, such as increasing workplace service demands and a severe shortage of qualified workplace staff (Hom et al., 2017). This fundamental deficiency is attributed to a maturing workforce and alarmingly high rates of turnover intention (Brohi, Jantan, Qureshi, Jaffar, et al., 2018; Rubenstein et al., 2019), which will only worsen over the next decade (Wen, 2020). Nursing turnover is a significant problem for healthcare administrators (O'Brien-Pallas et al., 2006), particularly when there is a shortage of healthcare workers globally. According to Meghani & Sajwani (2013), voluntary turnover is related to the hospital's failure to meet the needs of patients and provide high-quality treatment (Shields & Ward, 2001), loss of individual and organizational efficiency, low staff morale, and increased organizational costs (Li & Jones, 2013).

According to Meghani & Sajwani (2013), nursing turnover is a significant outcome because it is associated with a loss of individual and organizational efficiency, a significant reduction in quality of care, an increase in workload on the staff who survived the turnover, a loss in morale, and more turnover. Excessive turnover can lead to the "dysfunction" of human resource management activities in organizations(Brohi, Abdullah, Khan, Dahri, et al., 2018; Qureshi, Hamid, et al., 2018). According to recent research, a high nursing turnover rate may have a detrimental effect on an organization's ability to respond to patients' needs effectively and provide them with a high standard of care (Shields & Ward, 2001). The patient loses the most as a result of the care service deficit caused by turnover. During this time, experienced nurses are unavailable, and new replacements need time to learn about the patient's medical background and develop a trusting relationship (Jenkins & Stewart, 2010).

II. Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

Direct Effect of Servant Leadership on Turnover Intention

SL, a significant predictor of turnover intention, has piqued the interest of many researchers worldwide due to its profound effect on employees' personal and emotional growth and well-being (Huning et al., 2020). While it is acknowledged that the atmosphere in which nurses work in Pakistan is daunting and exposes them to the development of negative Behavior, the study contends that practicingSL by the nurse manager or management would have buffered the stressors, if any existed. This is consistent with Rodriguez (2016) research, which contends that SL is critical to buffering negative employee Behavior formed over time within service organizational contexts, and health care facilities are no exception.

Despite the growing popularity of SL studies, there are still some gaps in the literature that need to be filled.

First, SL, as described in this report, is a relatively recent concept that is still in its infancy. Since Farling et al. (1999)call for empirical studies, three streams of research have emerged. However, there have been very few empirical studies that investigate SL style (Greenleaf, 1977) in a specific organizational environment. As a result, there might be a void in the literature for empirically testing the effect of SLstyle on different follower outcomes. Following that, numerous researchers responded to further support the claim that SL is a strong predictor of follower outcomes. As a result, there is a theoretical void that must be filled.

Hypothesis 1:*SL predicts the turnover intention among Nurses.*

Direct Effect of Servant Leadership on Psychological Safety and Trust

To discuss the turnover phenomenon in a SL sense, Brohi, Jantan, Mehmood, Khuhro, et al. (2018) argue in their empirical study that the SL style is negatively correlated with employee turnover intention. They also claimed that the SL style was insufficient to directly affect the degree of confidence that workers put in their leaders. A strong and optimistic employer brand perception emerged as a critical tool for servant leaders to gain the confidence of their followers. This implies the importance of comprehending and defining the process by which SL influences the various follower outcomes.

The longitudinal research on SL shows that SL improves the well-being of followers. These studies demonstrated conceptually and empirically how SL influences followers' well-being by fostering a positive work climate (Abror, 2017). Increased loyalty to the organization increases employee work satisfaction and, as a result, lowers employee turnover (Jaramillo et al., 2015). Servant leaders achieve these positive results by building confidence and nurturing followers, which promotes innovation, helpful habits, and followers' well-being (Lemoine et al., 2019). Overall, these findings support the idea that SL will increase positive organizational behaviors and thereby boost followers' well-being, resulting in a lower intention to leave (Shah et al., 2020; Shaheen et al., 2016). As a result, SL's focus on increasing healthy behaviors in followers would have a positive impact on the follower's outcomes (Arain, 2017). Based on this, it is proposed that SL components improve employees' positive organizationalbehaviors (i.e. psychological resources and PsycSaf), which are proposed as a means of mitigating turnover intention in this research.

Following that, psychological capital is something that affects the relationship between leadership and follower outcomes (Rego et al., 2012). “Well-being research” has grown in popularity over the last decade since it emphasizes the positive rather than the negative aspects of humanity (Krasikova et al., 2015). Assisting others with their success goes above and beyond what the members expect (Liden & Wayne, 2016). However, in the author's opinion, optimistic factors such as optimism and resiliency are receiving more consideration than the need for negative ones such as resiliency and negative coping mechanisms such as negative thinking. within the discipline of psychology, as well as in both teaching and in general, as well as in training and management (Schunk, et al., 2002). Until now, however, previous research has concentrated on identifying the antecedents of more neutral organizational behavior, such as fault avoidance and conformity (Peterson & Seligman, 2003). To put it another way, the role of leadership in this stage of personal development has been marginalized (Avey et al., 2009).

When leaders act, it is difficult to have or achieve long-term progress (Johnson et al., 2017). Gimbel (2001) states in his article on leadership roles and characteristics that trust is largely an attitude that the leader does or may not have. Woolston discovered that humble and sensitive interactions with subordinates had a beneficial impact on leader morale. To summarize, current research concludes that being confident in one's leader's abilities is a byproduct of one's followers' degree of confidence. These are some of the potential explanations suggested by the LMX theory and the social exchange. Thus, the following is hypothesized:

Hypothesis 2: *SLpredicts PsycSaf among Nurses.*

Hypothesis 3: *SL predicts the employees Trust in leadership among Nurses*

Direct Effect of **Psychological Safety on Turnover Intention**

Nurses aspire to be themselves as their nurse manager's SL has cultivated their psychological well-being, revealing their true self without ever considering the negative implications associated with their

character or work(Meghani & Sajwani, 2013). As a result, nurses engage in positive habits including ethical conduct, motivation, and dedication, which leads to better outcomes, job satisfaction, and a decreased urge to quit(Qureshi et al., 2019). As a result of "ever-changing trends, particularly the paradigm shift in the power relationship from employer to employee, employee retention is more important than ever"(Hom et al., 2017). It's important to think about the factors that influence employee engagement in order to reduce the likelihood of employee turnover. Employees who are satisfied, committed, and engaged at work are more likely to stay, which leads to increased overall productivity. As a result, the following hypothesis is proposed based on the previous arguments:

Hypothesis 4: *PsycSaf mitigates the Turnover Intention among Nurses*

Direct Effect of Trust on Turnover intention

According to increasing scientific research, confidence and identification with one's colleagues, such as their officials, has a favorable and significant effect on employee satisfaction (Newman et al., 2002; Stahl & Sully de Luque, 2014). Furthermore, higher levels of job-related motivation are associated with higher levels of organizational loyalty. It also applies to the level of trust that the leader instills in his subordinates. According to studies, active jobs are the product of a winning combination of trust and motivation (Jin et al., 2016). As a result, leaders must foster and sustain employee engagement, especially when it is built on trust because employees are more likely to be loyal to an organization when the leader is loyal and trustworthy. Based on the preceding debate, the current research postulated the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 5: *Employees Trust in leadership mitigates the Turnover Intention among Nurses*

The mediating role of Psychological Safety between SL and Turnover Intention

The previous sections addressed the direct impact of SL on PsycSaf and the decision to leave. However, it is also critical to examine the role of psychological protection in mediating the relationship between SL and turnover. The previous study has shown that SL is a powerful indicator of employee attitudes and behaviors (Brohi, Jantan, Qureshi, Jaffar, et al., 2018). Brohi et al. (2018) argued in their analysis in Pakistan's educational sector that PsycSaf mediates the partnership between SL and turnover intention. However, it is timely to investigate the role of PsycSaf in Pakistan's healthcare sector, where turnover intention has severely impacted Nurses' success for a variety of reasons discussed in earlier parts of the current report. According to the social exchange principle (Homans, 1958), nurse managers' SL facilitates the advancement of nurses' psychological protection by behaving ethically, encouraging, and placing subordinates first, and nurses can reciprocate by participating in actions that contribute to work fulfillment, high results, and overall achievement. The following hypothesis is advanced based on the preceding arguments.

Hypothesis 6: *There is an indirect effect of PsycSaf between SL and nurses' turnover intention.*

Mediating effects of trust in leaders

Since the inception of the term SL, burgeoning research has been conducted to unveil the effects of SL style on various employees outcomes (Aboramadan et al., 2020; Brohi, Jantan, Qureshi, Ahmad, et al., 2018; Brohi, Jantan, Sobia, Akhtar, et al., 2018; Brohi et al., 2019; Lee et al., 2020; Qureshi, Brohi, et al., 2018), however, since last decade the much focus has been put on the SL research in general and on the underlying psychological mechanisms in particular. Employee style and turnout have been identified as mediators in burnout (Babakus et al. 2010) and services climates (Hunter et al. 2013), but the authors were unable to locate any studies examining the mediating effects of subsidiary trust in their leaders and employer brand perception on the relationship between their employer and their leader.

According to Dirks and Ferrin (2002), employee confidence in leadership was a significant phenomenon in an organizational environment, and leaders' behavior played a significant role in developing trust. Joseph and Winston's (2005) findings substantiated this argument by demonstrating how employees' trust in leadership is linked positively with SL style and that SL is a predictor of corporate trust and leadership confidence. Additionally, it has been discovered that "confidence" is a critical value in SL (Farling et al. 1999). According to the authors, when followers perceive leadership styles as SL, they develop a greater sense of trust in their leaders, which influences their intentions to leave. As a result, the authors postulate the following:

Hypothesis 7: *There is an indirect effect of employees' trust in leadership between SL and nurses' turnover intention.*

All the postulated hypotheses are in the research model, depicted in Figure 1.

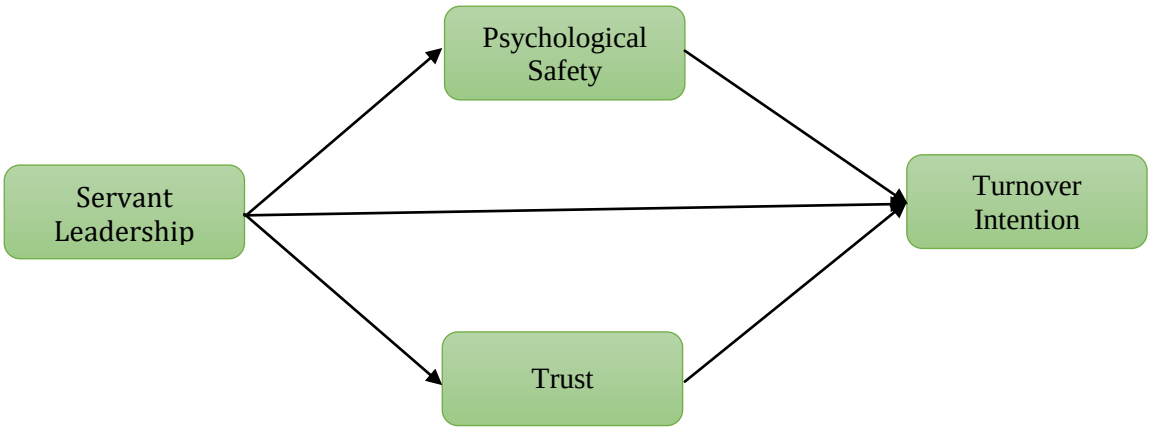

Figure 1 Research Model

III. METHODOLOGY

Sampling and Data Collection

The data was collected from the Nurses working at the Divisional Headquarters in the Province of Sindh. The Convenience sampling technique was used because the exact number of Nurses working in the Public sector hospital was unknown and the researchers could not find any source to inquire about the exact numbers. Therefore, the convenience sampling method was best suited under such circumstances(Saunders et al., 2016). A total of 500 questionnaires were distributed among Nurses and only 306 filled responses were received. The Useable data samples were 297 after screening for missing values and outliers.

MeasurementInstruments

The current study investigates the impact of SL style on nurse's turnover intention and the mediating effect of PsycSaf and trust. In this cross-sectional study, the research instrument was adapted from the well-established constructs. Subsequently,seven items adapted from (Liden et al., 2015) were used to assess SL, while ten items were used to assess employee trust adapted from Treadway, Hochwarter, Ferris, Kacmar, Douglas, Ammeter, &Buckely(2004) and Mayer et al (1995). Three items adapted from Edmondson (1999) were used to assess PsycSaf, and four items adapted from (Reilly et al., 1991) were used to assess turnover intention. The current study used a five-pointLikert scale.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS

Measurement Model Assessments

The researcher searched for items with loadings greater than 0.5 on their respective (a priori) constructs to ensure convergent validity, while discriminant validity was tested by making sure there were no relevant inter-research variable cross-loadings (Hair et al., 2017). According to t-statistics derived from bootstrapping, all products have loadings greater than 0.5 (ranging from 0.666 to 0.897), all loadings are meaningful at pb0.001 (300 resamples) except few items of Trust loaded low thus removed from the further analysis. As a consequence, all of the remaining measurement items converged well on their constructs, meaning that they are valid measures.

Construct	Indicator (s)	Indicator Reliability (Loadings)	Composite Reliability	AVE	Convergent Validity (AVE>0.5)	Discriminant Validity
Servant Leadership	SL1 SL2 SL3 SL4 SL5 SL6 SL7	0.895 0.871 0.840 0.890 0.897 0.849 0.909	0.960	0.773	Yes	Yes
PsycSaf	PS1 PS2 PS3	0.880 0.860 0.725	0.863	0.680	Yes	Yes
Trust	Trust1 Trust10 Trust5 Trust6 Trust7 Trust8 Trust9	0.684 0.723 0.670 0.666 0.822 0.741 0.694	0.880	0.513		
Turnover Intention	TI1 TI2 TI3 TI4	0.882 0.865 0.877 0.814	0.919	0.739	Yes	Yes

Table 1 Convergent ValidityAssessment

Hair (2018)suggested an average variance extracted (AVE) value of 0.5 and above and composite reliability values should be higher than 0.7 to achieve the convergent validity, and the correlation between constructs should be less than thesquare root of the AVE value to achieve the discriminant validity. Table 1 depicts that all the values are greater than the threshold levels i.e., composite reliability values range from 0.863 to 0.960, AVE values range from 0.513 to 0.773, thus achieved the convergent validity in the current study. Furthermore, as seen in Table 2, depicts that the correlation values of all constructs were less than the square root of AVE values. Overall, these observations indicate that the measurement used in this study has discriminant validity.

	PsySaf	SL	Trust	Turnover Intention
PsySaf	0.824			
SL	0.384	0.879		
Trust	0.062	0.351	0.716	
Turnover Intention	-0.477	-0.583	-0.391	0.860

Table 2 Fornell-Larcker Criterion

Structural Model/ Path Model Assessment

The structural model assessment was done using Smart-PLS. The path coefficients were generated using the bootstrap technique (5000 sub-samples). The direction of the relationship was tested by determining the path coefficient values. The results of the structural model are depicted in figure 2, table 3, and table 4.

Hypotheses	Path Coefficients	T Statistics	P Values
PsySaf -> Turnover Intention	-0.317	3.815	0.000
SL ->PsySaf	0.384	4.939	0.000
SL -> Trust	0.351	4.483	0.000
SL -> Turnover Intention	-0.377	4.560	0.000
Trust -> Turnover Intention	-0.239	2.825	0.005

Table 3 Direct Effect Assessment

Table 3 shows the direct effects of SL. H1 states that there is a negative relationship between SL and turnover intention (β=-0.377, t-stats=4.560, p-value=0.000) thus H1 supported this study. H2 states that there is a positive significant relationship between SL and PsycSaf (β=0.384, t-stats=4.939, p-value=0.000), thus H2 supported in the current study. H3 states that there is a positive significant relationship between SL and employees' trust in leadership (β=0.351, t-stats=4.483, p-value=0.000), thus H3 supported in the current study. H4 states that there is a negative significant relationship between PsycSaf and turnover intention (β=-0.317, t-stats=3.815, p-value=0.000), thus H4 supported in the current study. H5 states that there is a negative significant relationship between employee trust in leadership and turnover intention (β=-0.239, t-stats=2.825, p-value=0.005), thus H5 supported in the current study. All the direct effect hypotheses postulated in the current study were supported at significance levels.

Hypotheses	Indirect Effect	T Statistics	P Values	LLCI	ULCI
SL -> Trust -> Turnover Intention	-0.084	1.984	**0.047**	-0.181	-0.017
SL ->PsySaf -> Turnover Intention	-0.122	2.500	**0.012**	-0.228	-0.037

Table 4 Indirect effects assessment

In the next step, the indirect effects were assessed using the bootstrap procedure. H6 states that PsycSaf mediates the direct relationship between SL and turnover intention (β=-0.122, t-stats=2.500, p-value=0.012), thus H6 is supported. H7 states that employees' trust in leadership mediates the direct relationship between SL and turnover intention (β=-0.084, t-stats=1.984, p-value=0.047), thus this hypothesis also supported in the current study.

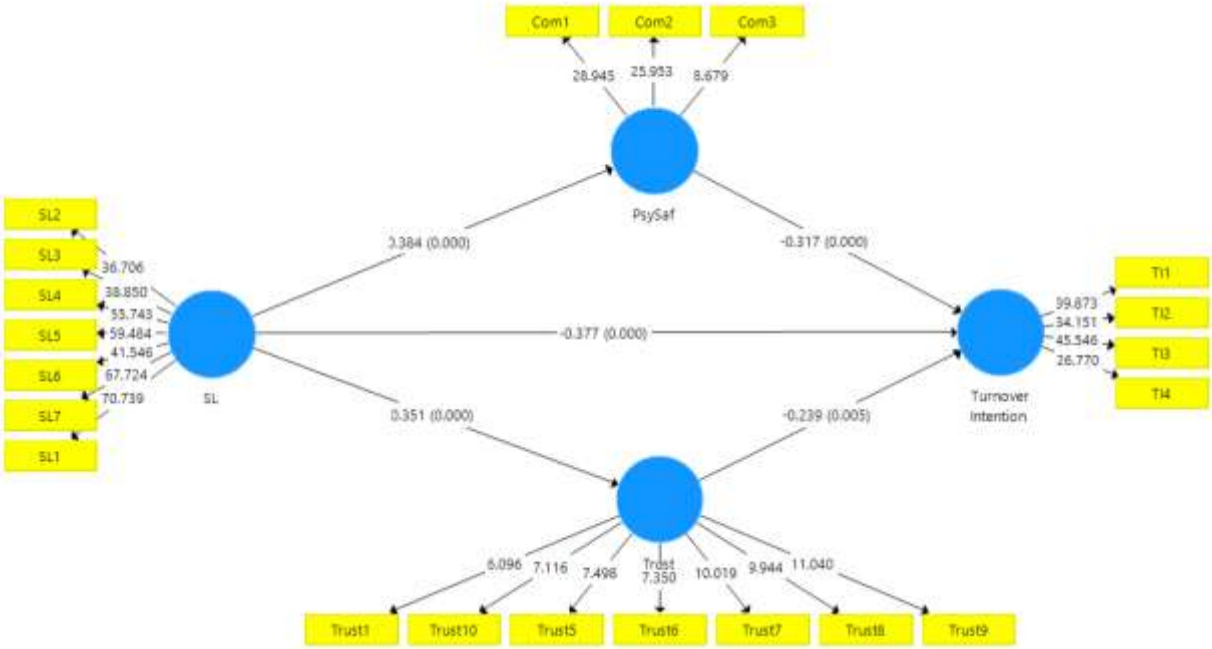

Figure 2 Structural Model

V. Discussion and Conclusions

The current study tested a mediation model of PsycSaf and employees' trust in leadership in the context of the healthcare sector in Pakistan. This study is unique in nature due to two contributions. First, we have tested SL in the healthcare sector of Pakistan, only a few studies have tested the role of SL in this context. Second, trust in leadership and PsycSaf was never tested in the healthcare sector of Pakistan, thus filling a gap in the literature. The direct effects showed that SL significantly predicts the employee's outcomes. Moreover, PsycSaf and trust proved to be a successful psychological mechanism in explaining the relationship between SL and turnover intention.

VI. Future Suggestions and Recommendations

There were some practical limitations to this study. Since the current study was drawn from healthcare facilities in a resource-poor environment, these findings must be extrapolated with caution. Furthermore, the data in this analysis were obtained using a cross-sectional approach, rendering the results moot. A longitudinal design, on the other hand, can be used to increase the probability of accuracy. It is suggested that the results be replicated. Other polls have been conducted in order to project a positive picture, skewing the findings (Johnson et al., 2002).

One disadvantage is that it was limited to paramedics' interactions, and no other healthcare personnel, including managers, were allowed to participate in the report. Many possible mediating mechanisms were overlooked in this analysis in favor of focusing solely on the structures. Researchers should perform more in-depth analyses of RL studies, which will help potential studies of TI and occupational deviance. A more refined research approach could support employees in the future. A more methodical analysis is needed to determine the true causes of WDB. Future studies may look at other industries, such as finance or education, to see if these findings are right. Leaders will also begin to differentiate between “ethical,” “servant,” and “transactional” leadership styles in the future. Future research may use different conceptual models and/or proportions, as well as different measurements, to replicate the findings of this study in order to explore other understudy concepts.

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