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Dina Alkhodary (Jordan)

# DRIVING WORKPLACE ALIGNMENT AND ADAPTABILITY IN JORDANIAN SERVICE INDUSTRY: A CULTURAL EXAMINATION OF MANAGERIAL INFLUENCE AND STAFF ENGAGEMENT

## Abstract

This study aims to examine the impact of transformational leadership on employees' emotional commitment to organizational change and their intention to support change while evaluating the mediating role of innovative behavior. The analysis was conducted in the Jordanian tourism and hospitality sector between January and February 2025. A structured questionnaire was distributed to employees working in hotels, travel agencies, and tourist attractions across various regions of the country. Stratified random sampling ensured balanced representation by organization type and location. Out of 300 distributed questionnaires, 230 valid responses were collected, yielding a response rate of 76.7%. Participants had at least one year of experience and prior exposure to organizational change efforts, such as digital transformation or environmental sustainability programs. Relationships among the constructs were analyzed using structural equation modeling.

The findings show that transformational leadership significantly influences emotional commitment to change (standardized coefficient = 0.65, significance level = 0.001), intention to support change (standardized coefficient = 0.58, significance level = 0.003), and innovative behavior (standardized coefficient = 0.62, significance level = 0.002). Innovative behavior partially mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and both emotional commitment (indirect effect = 0.25) and support for change (indirect effect = 0.21). These results indicate that transformational leadership enhances employee adaptability when supported by creativity and psychological safety. The study concludes that culturally aligned leadership practices promoting innovation and trust are essential for improving organizational resilience and managing change in high-context service environments.

**Keywords** leadership, innovation, commitment, change, behavior, motivation, adaptability, trust, tourism, culture

**JEL Classification** M12, L83, O31

## INTRODUCTION

Tourism and hospitality form one of the pillars of the Jordanian economy, playing a significant role in generating jobs, output at home, and global reputation. Iconic sites like Petra and the Dead Sea have made the nation one of the top destinations in the Middle East. Yet, the industry is increasingly under pressure to keep pace with accelerating technological innovation, shifts in tourist preferences, and growing demands for sustainability. Added to these are internal organizational factors, such as strict hierarchical management and high uncertainty avoidance, both of which affect the behavior of employees and leaders.

In managing such complexities, effective leadership is seen to play a pivotal role in organizational resilience. Of all the different leadership

approaches, transformational leadership has been universally recognized for its potential to motivate employees, promote innovation, and encourage commitment to changes. However, its implementation and effectiveness in culturally diverse and collectivist settings, such as Jordan, have been under-researched. More specifically, there is a wide research gap concerning the role of transformational leadership in employees' emotional commitment to changes and propensity to participate in change-driven initiatives in service-oriented industries.

## 1. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES

Jordan's tourism and hospitality sector is a vital backbone of the national economy, largely due to its attractions, including Petra and the Dead Sea, which attract millions of tourists annually. Yet, the industry needs to adapt continually to emergent conditions around it, digital changes, and ever-demanding tourists. Practices of leadership, particularly transformational leadership, have been identified as effective in addressing such challenges and stimulating creativity, flexibility, and commitment within organizations (Morshed et al., 2024; Sestino et al., 2025). Dynamic service industries like tourism, where changes must happen quickly, highlight the importance of transformational leadership, according to Ntalakos et al. (2024). Frontline service intensity, emotional labor, and customer-oriented outcomes are all typical in the hospitality environment, and therefore, not only must leadership oversee operations but also influence the psychological environment for innovation and changes (Taqi, 2025).

In culturally complex settings like Jordan, leadership needs to work within the confines of set expectations and norms (Shiyyab & Morshed, 2024). Cultural aspects like collectivism and high power distance heavily influence leadership behaviors (Alqhaiwi et al., 2023; Jandu & Pradhan, 2025). In hierarchical environments like this, authority needs to balance with sensitivity in relationships. Javad (2023) mentions collectivist values impacting organizational norms like adherence to rules, loyalty, and straightforward hierarchies. These dimensions of culture require the modification of leadership schemes derived from Western settings. Zighan et al. (2024) and Madi Odeh et al. (2023) propose the adoption of context-specific leadership in the Middle East and North Africa, arguing that effective leadership must complement conventional power relationships and social norms

(Karimi et al., 2023).

Transformational leadership, which was initially conceptualized by Burns and later developed by Bass and Avolio, is founded on four primary dimensions: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (J. Alwali & W. Alwali, 2025; Kyambade & Namatovu, 2025). It has been extensively validated across various industries for its potential to improve performance, motivation, and commitment. However, cross-cultural scholars of leadership argue its implementation in non-Western environments must take into consideration local values and communication norms (Rockstuhl et al., 2023). In Jordan, the focus on relational authority, group harmony, and top-level decision-making might call for leaders to highlight selective dimensions like inspirational motivation and individualized consideration while modulating the expression of intellectual stimulation (Morshed, 2025).

Innovation as a response to change is strongly determined by leadership style (Ciasullo et al., 2024). According to Kundu and Roy (2023), innovative behavior is a three-pronged process of idea generation, promotion, and implementation. Mirza et al. (2024) reinforce the model by correlating leadership with the psychological conditions of creativity. Componential model of creativity further underscores the importance of domain-relevant skills, task motivation, and work environment to innovation (Husseini & Malmir, 2025). Yet, within culturally conservative environments like Jordan, employees are reluctant to share new ideas because of risk aversion and prioritizing hierarchical protocols (Alsharif et al., 2019; Essex et al., 2023). These obstacles underscore the need for leadership styles that foster psychological safety. Transformational leadership, which entails vision articulation and individualized consideration, is well poised to deliver

such conditions and stimulate innovation (Rolls, 2024; Sliwka et al., 2024).

Eduzor (2024) and Jauhari et al. (2024) record the positive impact of transformational leadership on employees' job satisfaction, innovation, and performance, particularly in customer-oriented sectors (Ahmed et al., 2023). In the Jordanian context, Jreissat et al. (2024) noted that leadership is most potent where rooted in social responsibility and cultural awareness. This is supported by Amory et al. (2024), proving that while there are universally effective leadership behaviors, they have outcomes modulated by local culture. According to Almashayekhi (2024), leadership centered on group orientation and shared vision profoundly resonates in collectivist cultures. This is substantiated by the GLOBE study (Rockstuhl et al., 2023), which records the worldwide popularity of transformational leadership while noting its variability across cultures (Ashal & Morshed, 2024).

In spite of such wide-ranging endorsements, there are warnings from other scholars against making universal assumptions. For instance, Bankins et al. (2024) counter that transformational leadership might not produce the same motivational benefits in high power distance settings where employees are socialized to comply instead of participate. Similarly, Koburtay et al. (2023) posit that gender relations in Arab leadership environments, such as Jordan, add another level of complexity to the manner in which transformational behaviors are construed and performed. Such critical accounts highlight the call for more context-specific empirical verification, particularly in industries like tourism, where emotional engagement, cultural identification, and innovation at the front line coincide (Chen & Yu, 2023; Mattila et al., 2025).

Transformational leadership has been demonstrated to impact innovative behavior both indirectly and directly. Jun and Lee (2023) illustrate that leadership affects creativity by driving commitment to change, whereas Rehmani et al. (2023) establish that intrinsic motivation is a primary mechanism through which leadership engenders innovation. AL-Shboul (2024) documents how transformational leaders reduce the fear of fail-

ure, thereby facilitating creativity in risk-averse and conservative cultures. This aligns with the mediation model examined in the current study. Azinga et al. (2023) and Karimi et al. (2023) similarly identify psychological capital and affective commitment as mediating factors in converting leadership to innovation-related outcomes. In addition, Ficopal-Cusí et al. (2020) posit that organizational support and emotional attachment reinforce knowledge-sharing behaviors, precursors to innovation.

Within the field of change management, affective commitment and behavioral support from employees are crucial to achieving success. According to Othman and Busari (2024), the three-component model of commitment recognizes affective commitment as the most predictive factor of proactive support for change. Pulido-Martos et al. (2024) demonstrate how transformational leadership facilitates better outcomes from change by linking goal setting for change to the values of employees. Affective commitment is seen by Khaw et al. (2023) as a primary factor in change success and is noted by Schiuma et al. (2024) to be fostered through transformational leaders framing change within a social narrative. In the case of high uncertainty avoidance in Jordan, such framing is seen to decrease risk perceptions and encourage buy-in behavior. Diko and Saxena (2023) and Devonish (2023) emphasize the importance of empathetic leadership in reducing resistance and enhancing morale.

The theoretical links between transformational leadership and employee commitment have also been confirmed using advanced statistical approaches. Jadgal et al. (2024) and Schuberth et al. (2023) demonstrate the efficacy of structural equation modeling for evaluating complex mediation effects. Sureshchandar (2023) highlights the use of confirmatory factor analysis in validating leadership and commitment constructs across cultures (Oreqat, 2021). These methodological insights support the current study's analytical design, which incorporates measurement model validation and structural path testing to explore direct and indirect effects (Maama, 2024).

Moreover, organizational context plays a vital role. Nyathi and Kekwaletswe (2023) argue that

electronic human resource systems must be coupled with leadership initiatives to unlock employee performance (Alateeg & Alhammedi, 2024). This is particularly relevant in tourism, where technology adoption and digital transformation often intersect with change resistance. Kara et al. (2023) also show that green human resources management, when supported by leadership, enhances employee engagement and innovative behavior in emerging economies. Their findings reinforce the importance of leadership as a lever for contextual performance, especially when environmental or strategic shifts are underway (Ghamrawi et al., 2024).

Cross-cultural studies of leadership further support the necessity of leadership tailoring to national environments. Bankins et al. (2024) discuss the differences in leadership behavior across collectivist and individualist cultures and posit that cultural alignment is key to success. According to Niazi et al. (2023) and McCauley and Palus (2021), culturally attuned leadership will deliver organizational results and employee engagement. In Jordan, where tourism schemes often capitalize on national pride and culture, transformational leadership that aligns with such values is likely to have a greater impact on the country (Aburamadan et al., 2021; Trillo et al., 2020).

In light of the growing focus on transformational leadership and innovation in the Middle East and North Africa, there has been relatively scant empirical research exploring how they interact in the case of the Jordanian tourism industry. In a culture characterized by hierarchy, risk aversion, and collectivism, there are both challenges and opportunities for effective leadership. This study attempts to fill the gap by empirically exploring the role of transformational leadership in generating employees' emotional commitment to the change and intention to implement the change with innovative behavior as the mediating factor. Synthesizing leadership theory with cultural sensitivity, the study enhances the comprehension of how adaptive leadership practices promote sustainable transformation in the tourism and hospitality sector of Jordan.

The hypotheses are as follows:

*H1: Transformational leadership positively influences the emotional commitment of employees to organizational change.*

*H2: Transformational leadership makes employees ready to accept change initiatives.*

*H3: Transformational leadership contributes to the enhancement of innovative behaviors in employees.*

*H4a: Innovative behavior of employees mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and employees' emotional commitment to change.*

*H4b: Innovative behavior of employees mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and employees' intention to support change efforts.*

## 2. METHOD

This study investigates the impact of transformational leadership on employees' affective commitment and support for change, with innovative work behavior acting as a mediator in the Jordanian tourism and hospitality industry. The industry holds great significance for Jordan in terms of employment and GDP and, therefore, is a cornerstone of the Jordanian economy. In addition, the ever-changing nature of the industry and its vulnerability to global changes emphasize the importance of appropriate leadership, innovation, and commitment by employees for sustainability and competitiveness.

The survey covers all employees working in hotels, travel agencies, or tourist units throughout the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Stratified random sampling chooses representatives based on different groups according to the size/number and distinction of the organization's role. Therefore, participants whose length of experience was supposed to have reached at least one year had already experienced prominent organizational change, digital transformation, and environmental protection activities several times. Out of 300 questionnaires, 230 were returned, therefore yielding a 76.7% response rate. This ap-

proach allows for the generalizability of the findings across the industry. Table 1 presents the demographics of respondents by gender, age, experience, and organizational affiliation.

**Table 1.** Sample demographics

Variable	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	130	56.5
	Female	100	43.5
Age Group	20–30	85	37.0
	31–40	90	39.1
	41–50	40	17.4
	51 and above	15	6.5
Experience	1–3 years	95	41.3
	4–7 years	80	34.8
	8–10 years	35	15.2
	11 years and above	20	8.7
Organization Type	Hotel	120	52.2
	Travel Agency	60	26.1
	Tourist Attraction	50	21.7

Note: Percentages are rounded to one decimal point. Total sample size:  $n = 230$ .

Data collection was conducted through a structured, self-administered survey distributed both electronically via email and on professional social networks, such as LinkedIn. To ensure inclusivity and clarity, the survey was made available in both Arabic and English, accommodating the linguistic preferences of participants. The survey consisted of four sections, each measuring key constructs of the study using well-established and validated scales.

Table 2 outlines the constructs assessed, the measurement scales utilized, and sample survey items to illustrate each construct.

Transformational leadership involves a leadership style based on inspiring, motivating, and intellec-

**Table 2.** Survey structure and measures

Construct	Measurement Scale	Number of Items	Sample Item
Transformational Leadership	Podsakoff et al. (1990)	23	"My leader articulates a compelling vision."
Innovative Behavior	De Jong and Den Hartog (2010)	10	"I come up with new and practical ideas."
Affective Commitment to Change	Herscovitch and Meyer (2002)	6	"I feel emotionally attached to this change."
Intention to Support Change	Fedor et al. (2006)	4	"I am willing to support organizational changes."
Response Scale	5-Point Likert Scale (1–5)	–	1 = Strongly Disagree; 5 = Strongly Agree

Note: Scales validated in prior research and adapted for cultural relevance.

tually stimulating employees to perform well above the norm and even go through change. Emphasis is placed on the articulation of vision, intellectual stimulation, and individualized support in motivating employees, building their commitment, and stirring creativity. Transformational leadership was measured using Carter's (2009) 23-item scale, capturing dimensions such as articulating vision, intellectual stimulation, and individualized support (Al-Muntasir, 2022).

Innovative behavior refers to the proactive efforts of employees in generating, promoting, and implementing ideas that improve organizational processes and services. This suggests the openness of finding creative solutions and adopting new practices to help organizations adapt and maintain their competitiveness. Innovative behavior has been measured using a 10-item scale developed by Uppathampracha and Liu (2022), which aims to assess how actively employees generate, promote, and realize ideas.

Affective commitment to change implies an employee's emotional attachment toward organizational change efforts. When employees feel a strong emotional commitment, it means they are significantly motivated to make active contributions toward the success of any initiative. Workers who possess high affective commitment view the change as important and relevant to their personal and professional goals. Affective commitment to change was measured based on Lee et al.'s (2023) six-item scale.

Intention to support change implies that employees are ready to actively participate in organizational transformation processes. This means that one could draw on how the concept of proactive individuals can act and behave in fostering con-

tinuous change. According to Ficapal-Cusí et al. (2020), this is an assessment of the concept based on a four-item scale with the aim of understanding the active support for change by an individual within an organization.

The factors have their roots in relatively well-known theoretical frameworks and are measured by scales whose validation has already been established. These provide a sound basis on which to test the links between leadership practices, innovative behavior, and employee attitudes toward organizational change in Jordan's tourism and hospitality sector.

This study utilized the method of structural equation modeling, using maximum likelihood estimation. SEM can simultaneously investigate multiple relationships among latent variables, taking measurement errors into account. In this respect, SEM becomes extremely important in research involving theoretical models with mediated effects, as one will be able to quantify various direct and indirect relationships within one cohesive framework. This approach gives a holistic understanding of how transformational leadership, innovative behavior, affective commitment, and intention to support change are interlinked rather than a piecemeal approach (Walther et al., 2024).

MLE is an appropriate approach for SEM since it performs well in medium to large sample sizes. It will provide parameter estimates that are unbiased and consistent, given multivariate normality. Additionally, MLE is highly regarded for its reliability in estimating complex models with numerous pathways and latent variables. This makes it especially suitable for this study since the analysis investigates both direct and mediated relationships among the variables (Schuberth et al., 2023).

Second, SEM verifies the theoretical framework because of its capability to incorporate both latent constructs and their respective measurement items into the same analysis. Furthermore, through various model fit indices, the proposed model is evaluated to determine how well it fits or differs from the observed data, thereby establishing methodological soundness in testing the hypothesized relationships (Jadgal et al., 2024).

This, therefore, represents a methodological choice to enable an integrated analysis of the interplay between transformational leadership, innovative behavior, and responses of employees to change that meets the purpose of the study, hence the reliability and validity of the results. Data collected were analyzed in two clear stages: measurement model validation and structural model testing. The statistical technique applied to the study involved the appropriateness and fit of the proposed model into its reliability, validity, and goodness-of-fit testing, respectively. The measurement model validation stage was used to assess the reliability and validity of the constructs. Structural model testing was employed to investigate the proposed hypotheses in relation to the inclusion of an innovative behavioral role.

For these, the measurement model validation was done by considering several statistical techniques to confirm the strength of various survey constructs. Reliability measurements taken into consideration include Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability in the items included internally to ascertain the consistency of the particular data. The convergent validity is analyzed by the average variance extracted, which will ensure the construct variances for each item are included accordingly. Further, discriminant validity is assessed by adopting criteria in terms of the Fornell-Larcker criterion and the HTMT ratio to ensure that the above constructs are distinct (Morshed, 2024b).

**Table 3.** Data analysis procedures

Stage	Objective	Techniques/Criteria	Thresholds
Measurement model validation	Assess reliability and validity	<b>Reliability:</b> Cronbach's Alpha, Composite Reliability (CR)	CR > 0.70
		<b>Convergent Validity:</b> Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	AVE > 0.50
		<b>Discriminant Validity:</b> Fornell-Larcker Criterion, HTMT Ratio	Constructs are distinct
Structural model testing	Test hypothesized relationships	<b>Direct Effects:</b> Path coefficients for direct relationships	Significance ( $p < 0.05$ )
		<b>Mediating Effects:</b> Bootstrapping with 1,000 resamples	Bias-corrected confidence intervals
		<b>Model Fit Indices:</b> RMSEA, CFI, TLI	RMSEA < 0.08, CFI > 0.90, TLI > 0.90

At the structural model testing stage, the relationships among the key variables (transformational leadership, innovative behavior, affective commitment, and intention to support change) were tested. Direct effects were assessed using standardized path coefficients, while mediating effects were tested through bootstrapping with 1,000 resamples, which provided bias-corrected confidence intervals. The overall adequacy of the structural model was assessed using model fit indices, including RMSEA, CFI, and TLI (Morshed, 2024a).

The study followed strict ethical considerations throughout the entire process to ensure that participants were well-protected and data maintained with integrity. Participation is absolutely voluntary, with the right of respondents to withdraw from the process at any stage with no consequences. Since personal data are confidential, questionnaires were required to be filled in anonymously, and any other data were appropriately stored and secured to prevent unauthorized access. More importantly, this research instrument was formally approved by the institutional ethics committee before data collection to ensure full adherence to established ethical principles.

### 3. RESULTS

This study explores the relationships among transformational leadership, innovative behavior, affective commitment to change, and intention to support change. Descriptive statistics indicate positive perceptions across all variables, with trans-

formational leadership showing the highest mean and innovative behavior the greatest variability.

Reliability and validity analyses confirm strong internal consistency, convergent validity, and discriminant validity for all constructs. Structural equation modeling (SEM) reveals significant direct effects of transformational leadership on affective commitment, intention to support change, and innovative behavior, highlighting leadership's key role in driving alignment with change objectives. Mediation analysis reveals that innovative behavior partially mediates these relationships, underscoring the importance of transformational leadership and an innovation-friendly culture for achieving effective organizational change.

Table 4 depicts descriptive statistics for the main variables being measured in this study, including transformational leadership, innovative behavior, affective commitment to change, and intention to support change. The results show that perceptions for all variables are generally positive. The highest mean score was for transformational leadership, with an M of 4.15, while innovative behavior had the greatest variation, with an SD of 0.70. In addition, the values of skewness and kurtosis indicated that the data were approximately normally distributed.

Table 5 shows internal consistency with Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha$ ) and composite reliability (CR) of the study variables. All variables present values above the threshold suggested in the literature, both for Cronbach's alpha and CR, with values of at least 0.70 considered to have good to excellent internal

**Table 4.** Descriptive statistics

Variable	Number of Items	Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (SD)	Skewness	Kurtosis
Transformational Leadership	23	4.15	0.62	-0.45	0.31
Innovative Behavior	10	3.98	0.70	-0.32	-0.12
Affective Commitment to Change	6	4.10	0.65	-0.40	0.25
Intention to Support Change	4	4.05	0.60	-0.28	-0.05

**Table 5.** Reliability analysis

Variable	Number of Items	Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha$ )	Composite Reliability (CR)	Internal Consistency
Transformational Leadership	23	0.91	0.93	Excellent
Innovative Behavior	10	0.88	0.89	Good
Affective Commitment to Change	6	0.85	0.86	Good
Intention to Support Change	4	0.82	0.84	Good

**Table 6.** Validity analysis

Construct	AVE	Fornell-Larcker Criterion	HTMT Ratio
Transformational Leadership	0.67	Meets Criterion	< 0.85
Innovative Behavior	0.65	Meets Criterion	< 0.85
Affective Commitment to Change	0.63	Meets Criterion	< 0.85
Intention to Support Change	0.61	Meets Criterion	< 0.85

consistency (Kara et al., 2023).

Table 6 presents the results of the construct validity analysis, where the convergent validity was checked by means of average variance extracted (AVE) and discriminant validity by the Fornell-Larcker criterion and HTMT ratio. All constructs present values of AVE above the threshold of 0.50, confirming the adequacy of convergent validity. Besides, both the Fornell-Larcker criterion and HTMT ratios indicate clear discriminant validity since all HTMT values are below the recommended threshold of 0.85. The findings give credibility to the measurement model for the assurance of reliability and distinctiveness among the study's constructs (Nyathi & Kekwaletswe, 2023).

Table 7 presents the results of the CFA, which confirm the measurement model using the factor loadings and important model fit indices: RMSEA, CFI, and TLI. The factor loadings for all constructs are above the threshold of 0.60, showing robust item reliability. In addition, the values of RMSEA are less than 0.08, while the values of CFI and TLI are above 0.90, showing that the model fits well. These findings validate the measurement model, confirming that it is adequate and robust for further structural analysis (Sureshchandar, 2023).

**Table 7.** Measurement model validation – CFA results

Construct	Factor Loadings	RMSEA	CFI	TLI
Transformational Leadership	0.72–0.89	0.05	0.94	0.92
Innovative Behavior	0.68–0.85	0.06	0.93	0.91
Affective Commitment to Change	0.70–0.88	0.05	0.95	0.93
Intention to Support Change	0.73–0.87	0.04	0.96	0.94

**Table 8.** Structural equation modeling (SEM) – Hypotheses testing results

Hypothesis	Path	Path Coefficient ( $\beta$ )	Significance (p-value)	Result
H1	Transformational Leadership → Affective Commitment to Change	0.65	0.001	Supported
H2	Transformational Leadership → Intention to Support Change	0.58	0.003	Supported
H3	Transformational Leadership → Innovative Behavior	0.62	0.002	Supported
H4a	Innovative Behavior → Affective Commitment to Change	0.40	0.010	Supported
H4b	Innovative Behavior → Intention to Support Change	0.35	0.015	Supported

The results in Table 8 confirm that transformational leadership has a significant effect on affective commitment to change ( $\beta = 0.65$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ), intention to support change ( $\beta = 0.58$ ,  $p = 0.003$ ), and innovative behavior ( $\beta = 0.62$ ,  $p = 0.002$ ). Leaders who articulate a clear vision, build trust, and encourage creativity foster both emotional attachment and proactive support for organizational change. These findings underscore the centerpiece that leadership holds in reconciling the behaviors and attitudes of employees with the objectives of change.

Moreover, innovative behavior significantly influences affective commitment to change ( $\beta = 0.40$ ,  $p = 0.010$ ) and intention to support change ( $\beta = 0.35$ ,  $p = 0.015$ ). If workers are encouraged to propose innovative ideas and implement them, they will be more committed emotionally and willing to support the change. Therefore, cultivating a culture that values and rewards innovation is crucial for enhancing employees' engagement in change initiatives.

These results underlined the twofold role of transformational leadership in directly influencing emotional and behavioral commitment to change, on the one hand, and fostering innovative behav-

**Table 9.** Mediation analysis – Bootstrapping results

Hypothesis	Path	Indirect Effect ( $\beta$ )	95% Confidence Interval (CI)	Significance (p-value)	Result
H4a	Transformational Leadership → Innovative Behavior → Affective Commitment to Change	0.25	[0.15, 0.38]	0.002	Supported
H4b	Transformational Leadership → Innovative Behavior → Intention to Support Change	0.21	[0.12, 0.34]	0.004	Supported

ior as a mediator on the other. This implies that for organizations, leadership development and innovation-friendly environments must be highly valued, especially in dynamic sectors such as tourism, in pursuit of sustainable success through change management (Azinga et al., 2023; Morshed, 2024a).

Table 9 presents the results of the mediation analysis concerning the indirect effects of transformational leadership on affective commitment to change and intention to support change through innovative behavior. Analyses were made by bootstrapping with 1,000 resamples to provide bias-corrected confidence intervals (95% CI) of the significance of the mediating paths (Amoa-Gyarteng & Dhliwayo, 2024).

## 4. DISCUSSION

The findings of this study contribute to the literature by providing valuable insights into the role of transformational leadership in enhancing employees' affective commitment to change, intention to support change, and the mediating role of innovative behavior within Jordan's tourism and hospitality sector. Transformational leadership was found to have a significant and positive effect on affective commitment to change, which is consistent with the findings of Sliwka et al. (2024) and Pulido-Martos et al. (2024). Leaders who give a clear vision, personalized support, and engendered trust create an emotional commitment to organizational goals, and there is less resistance to and greater engagement in change on the part of employees. In Jordan's collectivistic society, these behaviors are valued and congruent with societal expectations for leaders to show loyalty and promote group harmony.

There are indeed significant positive relations between transformational leadership and the intention to support change of employees, further supporting Diko and Saxena (2023) and Devonish

(2023). Transformative leaders also mitigate the growth in uncertainty because they bring into the context clarity and reassurance and build trust. For Jordan, with its high avoidance of uncertainty across its culture, such conduct would be one that chased away terrors of alteration and instead motivated proactive contribution by workers.

Transformational leadership also had a significantly positive effect on innovative behavior among employees, which aligns with the findings of Jun and Lee (2023) and Rehmani et al. (2023). Leaders create a psychologically safe environment where employees can suggest new ideas and implement them without feeling threatened by any negative repercussions. This is especially important within Jordan's tourism sector, where competitiveness depends on creativity and adaptability. However, transformational leaders should carefully handle the cultural challenges of risk aversion and hierarchical deference to unlock the full innovative potential of employees.

This study further corroborates innovative behavior as a mediator between transformational leadership and both affective commitment and the intention to support change in line with Mirza et al. (2024) and Pulido-Martos et al. (2024). Innovative behavior plays a bridging role, serving as the translator of leadership practices into emotional and behavioral compliance with change initiatives. The employees who feel empowered to try new things and give creative suggestions will certainly develop an emotional attachment toward the change efforts and thus contribute to its success. In the tourism sector in Jordan, innovation development becomes an important long-term investment in resilience for adapting to fast changes in technologies and markets.

This would, in theory, further solidify the contributions of Rockstuhl et al. (2023) and Almashayekhi (2024). While transformational leadership works

globally, the leadership style is not uniformly universal but rather bound by cultural fit. Jordanian culture is collectivist and hierarchical; therefore, transformational leaders can be successful if they focus on shared purpose, trust, and group alignment to ensure employee engagement with change. This also supports the componential theory of creativity proposed by Mirza et al. (2024), particularly highlighting the role of innovation as a key pathway linking leadership to employee outcomes.

Practical implications indicate that organizations should invest in management development programs that are culturally aligned and focus on psychological safety to evoke creativity. Rewards

systems that take into account emotional devotion and innovation would be beneficial. Clear communicative strategies will also reduce ambiguity and build confidence when an organization is going through change.

Despite these contributions, this study has its limitations. First, the cross-sectional design means that no causal interpretations are allowed, and the sector-specific results have limited generalizability. Future studies should, therefore, employ longitudinal designs and compare results across sectors. Again, reliance on self-report data introduces possible biases in the data; these might be minimized in future research by collecting multi-source data.

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## CONCLUSION

This study specifically examined the effect of transformational leadership on employees' emotional commitment to organizational change and their intention to support such change within the tourism and hospitality sector in Jordan. It also evaluated the mediating role of innovative behavior in these relationships. The findings confirmed that transformational leadership significantly enhances both emotional commitment and intention to support change and that innovative behavior serves as a partial mediator, reinforcing the pathways between leadership and employee responses to change.

These results provide empirical support for the role of leadership in cultivating an adaptive organizational culture, especially in culturally conservative and hierarchical settings. Transformational leaders who articulate a clear vision, foster trust, and encourage innovation are more likely to inspire commitment and behavioral support among employees. The study highlights that the presence of psychological safety and recognition of creative contributions are essential conditions for achieving successful change outcomes.

Practically, organizations in the tourism and hospitality industry must focus on leadership development initiatives tailored to their specific culture. Priority must be given to training leaders to inspire, create, and manage change in methods corresponding to the locals' values and organizational hierarchies. Future studies might include broadening the context by cross-comparing findings with those from different industries or applying a longitudinal methodology to study the development of leadership outcomes over time.

## AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

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