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THE MODERATING ROLE OF TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP IN THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ORGANIZATIONAL MINDFULNESS AND EMPLOYEE WELL-BEING IN PAKISTAN'S EDUCATIONAL SECTOR

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Abstract

The present study aimed at exploring the moderating effect of Transformational Leadership on Organizational Mindfulness and Employee Well-being in the Educational Sector of Pakistan. We draw from the Conservation of Resources Theory, Social Information Processing Theory, and Trait Activation Theory and argue that transformational leadership augments the positive impact of organizational mindfulness on faculty well-being. A cross-sectional research design was used to gather data from 420 teachers from public and private educational institutions in Pakistan. The three constructs were found to be distinct and there was good fit for the models (CFI = .953, TLI = .941, RMSEA = .062, and SRMR = .048). Demographic variables were controlled for in the hierarchical multiple regression analysis, in which organizational mindfulness was seen as a significant and positive predictor of employee well-being ($\beta = 0.745$, $t = 26.17$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .621$). There was also a significant additional variance in employee well-being accounted for by transformational leadership ($\Delta R^2 = .170$, $p < .001$), and there was a significant positive interaction effect between Organizational Mindfulness × Transformational Leadership ($\beta = 0.095$, $t = 4.15$, $p < .001$, $\Delta R^2 = .008$, F-change = 17.22, $p < .001$, effect size $f^2 = .009$, small and meaningful). Simple slope analysis validated this difference between mindfulness and well-being in a high versus low transformational leadership context (simple slope = .412 versus .237, respectively). The robustness of the interaction effect (95% CI [0.049, 0.141]) was also supported by bootstrapping (5,000 resamples). The results have implications for theory and practice as they emphasize the need for developing organizational mindfulness as well as transformational leadership skills in educational organizations. This study fills an important gap in the current literature by investigating this moderated model first time in an educational setting in South Asia.

Keywords: Organizational Mindfulness, Employee Well-Being, Transformational Leadership, Moderation, Pakistan Educational Sector, Conservation of Resources Theory

1. Introduction

1.1 Background and Context

In today's knowledge economy, schools rely heavily on the emotional health, mental engagement and commitment of their teachers. However, the occupational stressors that educators face globally, and especially in developing countries like Pakistan, are increasingly linked to increased workloads, bureaucratic hurdles, resource limitations, and the lack of professional autonomy, which ultimately negatively impacts employee

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well-being (Li et al., 2024; Gaur, 2023). In Pakistan, the education system is experiencing significant growth and change, and the well-being of teachers and school leaders is a critical organizational and policy issue with implications that extend from the well-being of students to the effectiveness of the school.

In this difficult setting, two organizational structures have received growing focus in the literature as possible antecedents of employee well-being, organizational mindfulness and transformational leadership. Organizational mindfulness includes the ability of the organization as a whole to maintain high levels of awareness, attentiveness to the irregularities of the operation, avoid oversimplification, and be committed to resilience (Weick & Sutcliffe, 2001; Öngel et al., 2022). If mindfulness is institutionalized as organizational practice, employees will be better equipped to manage the stress, to be more aware of what is happening in the present moment, and to preserve psychological resources (Gaur, 2023; Walsh & Arnold, 2020).

Transformational leadership is a leadership paradigm that is well suited for educational environments, and is defined as a mode of leadership that exhibits four styles: Idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Bass & Avolio, 1994). Transformational educational leaders inspire teachers, meet their needs, and foster a spirit of trust and collaboration among teachers (Li et al., 2024; Öngel et al., 2022). Recent studies indicate that transformational leadership directly contributes to the improvement of employee well-being (Arnold, 2017), and it also increases the positive impact of organizational mindfulness (Gaur, 2023; Pinck & Sonnentag, 2018).

1.2 Research Gap and Problem Statement

Although evidence continues to mount, there are still many gaps in the literature. First, there is yet to be a study that investigates the moderating role of transformational leadership in the connection between the organisational levels of mindfulness and well-being of the employees particularly in the educational domain in Pakistan. Second, the current literature is largely from a Western and East Asian context (Pinck & Sonnentag, 2018; Walsh & Arnold, 2020), calling into question the cultural and institutional generalizability. Third, although there have been many investigations into the effects of mindfulness and the effects of leadership separately, the synergistic interaction between them has not been sufficiently studied. Fourth, the educational contexts in Pakistan are distinctive and can affect the extent to which findings from other contexts can be applied. Fourth, the Pakistan context of education presents distinctive challenges, such as resource limitations, bureaucratic pressures, and cultural dynamics, that may impact the applicability of findings from other contexts.

This research tackles this gap in literature by conducting a quantitative cross sectional study of 420 educators in Pakistan to get empirical evidence of this theoretically significant but under explored moderated relationship. This study's purpose is to shed light on the mechanisms through which transformational leadership mediates the relationship between mindfulness and well-being, so as to better understand the context under which mindfulness at the organizational level is most likely to positively affect employee well-being.

1.3 Research Questions

Based on the identified research gaps and theoretical framework, the following research questions guide this investigation:

- **RQ1:** Does organizational mindfulness positively predict employee well-being among faculty members in Pakistan's educational sector?
- **RQ2:** Does transformational leadership positively predict employee well-being among faculty members in Pakistan's educational sector?
- **RQ3:** Does transformational leadership moderate the relationship between organizational mindfulness and employee well-being, such that the positive effect of mindfulness on well-being is stronger when transformational leadership is high compared to when it is low?
- **RQ4:** What is the nature and magnitude of the interaction effect between organizational mindfulness and transformational leadership in predicting employee well-being?

1.4 Research Objectives

To address the research questions, the following objectives were formulated:

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RO1: To examine the direct effect of organizational mindfulness on employee well-being among faculty members in Pakistan's educational sector.

RO2: To examine the direct effect of transformational leadership on employee well-being among faculty members in Pakistan's educational sector.

RO3: To investigate the moderating role of transformational leadership in the relationship between organizational mindfulness and employee well-being among faculty members in Pakistan's educational sector.

RO4: To quantify the magnitude of the interaction effect and determine the conditions (high vs. low transformational leadership) under which organizational mindfulness most effectively enhances employee well-being.

RO5: To provide empirical evidence and practical recommendations for educational institutions in Pakistan regarding the simultaneous cultivation of organizational mindfulness and transformational leadership.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This research is important in several ways. In theory, it adds to the body of knowledge about organizational mindfulness and leadership by testing and extending the existing theories (Conservation of Resources Theory, Social Information Processing Theory, Trait Activation Theory) in a new cultural environment. The methodological rigor (confirmatory factor analysis, discriminant validity assessment and bootstrap validation) enhances the theoretical contributions.

In practical terms, results offer evidence-based policy recommendations to educational administrators and policy makers in Pakistan. Knowing how organizational mindfulness and transformational leadership work in a synergistic way can provide a foundation for interventions aimed at improving faculty wellbeing. The insights have potential to have broad implications as teacher well-being has been recognized as an important factor in student outcomes as well as institutional effectiveness.

In the South Asian context, this study fills an important gap in the educational literature. The study offers empirical evidence for the first time on this moderated model in the context of Pakistan, which contributes to cross-cultural organizational theory and practice.

1.6 Structure of the Paper

The rest of this paper is organized as follows: The theoretical framework, literature review, and hypothesis development are presented in section 2, which includes a clearly stated hypothesis development with clearly formulated research hypotheses. The methodology section covers research design, sample, measures and analytical strategy as described in section 3. Empirical results and thorough statistical analyses are presented in Section 4. Theoretical and practical implications, the limitations, and directions for future research are discussed in Section 5. A summary of key findings and implications follows in section 6.

2. Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

2.1 Theoretical Framework

The current study was based on three theoretical frameworks that are compatible with each other. Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory (Hobfoll, 1989) suggests that individuals will try to acquire, conserve and protect resources. Organizational mindfulness establishes a resource-enhancing atmosphere that facilitates employees to maintain their psychological resources and well-being. Transformational leadership supports this resource generation process by adding extra personal, social and motivational resources to organizational mindfulness which help to create better well-being outcomes. COR Theory suggests a possible theoretical amplification of the resource caravan (Hobfoll, 2002) that is facilitated by organizational mindfulness and supported by additional organizational resources, such as social support, vision, meaningful work, and other resources provided by transformational leadership, which combine to actually boost well-being.

Social Information Processing (SIP) Theory (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978) states that meaning and attitudes are formed in the social and organizational environment. The present-centered, non-automatic employees are more adept at understanding positive behavioural signals from the transformational leaders.

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This extra sensitivity to social information translates to greater well-being benefits for mindful employees of transformational leadership, than for less mindful employees. The SIP view is that mindfulness enhances the processing of positive signals in the leadership, resulting in a synergy.

Trait activation theory (TAT) (Tett & Burnett, 2003) proposes that situational cues activate the expression of trait-relevant behaviour. Education environments with high transformational leadership norms have a more holistic activation and expression of organizational mindfulness, which leads to stronger effects on well-being outcomes, as both a dispositional and institutional characteristic. From the TAT perspective, transformational leadership creates the context and conditions (e.g., trust, psychological safety, vision) that stimulate and enable organizational mindfulness to its highest capacity, thereby maximizing the positive impacts of organizational mindfulness.

Together, these models offer a broad theoretical base for the proposed moderated model, indicating the interaction between the two constructs (organizational mindfulness and transformational leadership) can be used to explain employee well-being.

Figure 1

Theoretical Framework

2.2 Employee Well-Being: Conceptual Overview

Wellbeing of employees has become an important focus point in the study and practice of organizational studies. There is a widely accepted association between psychologically healthy employees and increased productivity, decreased absenteeism and decreased intention to quit (Walsh & Arnold, 2020). Well-being is described as a multidimensional concept that includes SWB (affective and cognitive), Workplace SWB (Job Satisfaction, Job Engagement), and Psychological SWB (Positive functioning, Autonomy, Personal Growth) (Kılıç & Atakay, 2025). In the context of education, teacher well-being and faculty well-being are also critical areas of concern, as they directly affect instructional quality, student achievement, and institutional sustainability (Li et al., 2024).

Teachers continue to face stressors at work: In Pakistan, teachers are constantly exposed to stressors at their workplace involving undesirable conditions like the lack of job security, lack of opportunities in professional development, low pay, and high levels of bureaucratic pressure (Gaur, 2023). Such systemic needs make the study of organizational factors affecting faculty well-being both intellectually interesting and timely. It is therefore important for educational leaders and educational policy makers to understand the organizational and leadership factors that are either positively or negatively associated with employee well-being.

The multidimensionality of employee well-being (psychological, physical, work-life balance, job satisfaction, and burnout prevention) shows the importance of the whole-organizational approach to interventions. When the theoretical integration of COR Theory and SIP Theory and TAT occurs, it allows understanding how organizational mindfulness and transformational leadership can address these multiple dimensions together.

2.3 Organizational Mindfulness and Employee Well-Being

Mindfulness has been defined as a conscious, present-focused, nonjudgemental awareness (Pinck & Sonnentag, 2018). Organizational level – five interconnected processes: preoccupation with operational

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failures, reluctance to simplify interpretations, sensitivity to operations, commitment to resilience, deference to expertise (Öngel et al., 2022). These dimensions are all combined in a single figure to show an organisation's ability to be alert, adaptable and responsive to its own weaknesses and pressures from the outside world.

Study after study shows that organizational mindfulness is a positive predictor of employee well-being. The results of Gaur (2023) indicated a significant positive correlation between the workplace mindfulness and well-being among University faculty in India ($B = 1.008$, $p < .05$). In a time-lagged study of 246 workers, Walsh and Arnold (2020) found a positive relationship between mindfulness and psychological well-being, especially when coupled with positive leadership. In the SME context, Kılıç and Atakay (2025) discovered that the contribution of mindfulness level of leaders to the variance of employee well-being was 20.7%. These converging results corroborate that there is a strong link between mindfulness and employee well-being within an organization.

This may be explained by means of COR Theory. Organizational mindfulness acts as a psychological resource to ward off resource depletion and promote wellbeing. Mindfulness helps to lessen stress, increases coping ability and maintains psychological resources by cultivating attention to operations, openness to learning, and a resilience in the face of challenges. Furthermore, SIP also indicates that the mindful employee can more fully make use of organizational supports, since they are more sensitive to positive information in their social environment.

Based on this evidence and theoretical reasoning, we propose the following hypothesis:

H1: Organizational mindfulness is positively associated with employee well-being among faculty members in Pakistan's educational sector.

2.4 Transformational Leadership and Employee Well-Being

Transformational leadership is a concept introduced by Burns (1978), and developed by Bass (1985), and consists of four components: idealized influence (role modelling), inspirational motivation (vision articulation), intellectual stimulation (challenging assumptions), and individualized consideration (personalized support). In the educational arena, transformational principals stimulate teachers to work on shared goals, build enabling climates, and provide support for personal development, which all contribute to teacher wellness (Li et al., 2024; Öngel et al., 2022).

Empirically, the relationship between transformational leadership and well-being of employees is well supported. A thorough literature review by Arnold (2017) was performed to show how transformational leadership accounts for psychological well-being via mechanisms such as meaningful work, increased self-efficacy, and social support. Kılıç and Atakay (2025) found empirical support that 25.3% of the variance in overall employee well-being was explained by transformational leadership. Using a multilevel mediation analysis, Pinck and Sonnentag (2018) showed the relationship between transformational leadership and positive affect, job satisfaction, and psychosomatic complaints among subordinates to be positive for the former and negative for the latter (Ahmed & Asif, 2026).

Theoretically, COR Theory posits that transformational leadership contributes further personal, social and motivational resources which can augment well-being. Leaders who offer personal attention, motivational support, and challenge are able to enhance employees' self-efficacy, purpose in work, and coping skills. The SIP lens emphasizes that leaders are an important social information source, and transformational leaders instill positive cues that influence employee attitudes and well-being. TAT proposes that transformational leadership brings out and facilitates positive attributes and actions, like psychological capital, which are beneficial for well-being (Ahmed & Asif, 2026).

Based on this evidence and theoretical reasoning, we propose the following hypothesis:

H2: Transformational leadership is positively associated with employee well-being among faculty members in Pakistan's educational sector.

2.5 The Moderating Role of Transformational Leadership

The independent effects of organizational mindfulness and transformational leadership on employee well-being have been documented but there has been a growing research interest in the interaction of these.

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Gaur (2023) conducted an empirical study that revealed a significant positive moderating effect of transformational leadership between mindfulness and well-being among university faculty in India (ΔR^2 = .007, $\Delta F(1, 582) = 5.505$, $p < .05$). The positive association between workplace mindfulness and employee well-being was found to be greater with transformational leadership in interaction plots.

There are several theoretical perspectives to support this moderating mechanism. Drawing on a Social Information Processing (SIP) theoretical lens (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978), Walsh and Arnold (2020) revealed that mindful employees are especially attuned to positive behaviors of transformational leaders, receiving deeper information about leadership ($b = 0.15$, $p < .01$) and benefiting from higher levels of well-being. A significant mindfulness-well-being relationship was found only in the high condition of transformational leadership, with simple slope analysis showing the relationship ($b = 0.29$, $p < .001$). Li et al. (2024) claimed that positive psychological resources, such as mindfulness, are activated by transformational principals which in turn can improve well-being, especially in demanding academic contexts, in line with the Trait Activation Theory (Tett & Burnett, 2003). Pinck and Sonnentag (2018) also found that the link between leader mindfulness and subordinate well-being was mediated by transformational leadership (estimate = 0.316, $p <$ .001), supporting the notion that leader mindfulness and transformational leadership act synergistically at the workplace. Three linked mechanisms can be stated as a theory for the moderating effect.

First, Resource Multiplication (COR Theory): Transformational leadership offers extra motivational, relational, and cognitive resources that, when added to organizational mindfulness, result in better outcomes for well-being. The resource caravan effect refers to the fact that the combination of several resources has a greater effect than the sum of its parts (Asif et al., 2026).

Secondly, information processing (SIP Theory): Mindful employees, with increased attention and awareness, can process and make use of positive leadership behaviours. Transformational leaders offer social information for mindful workers to use to create a better employee well-being. Without transformational leadership, the positive social information is missing, the benefits of mindfulness are diminished.

Third, activation (TAT): Organizational mindfulness is activated and enabled by cues in the context, e.g., psychological safety, trust, shared vision, which are created by transformational leadership. Mindfulness is more manifest and is integrated into the outcomes of well-being, in high transformational leadership settings. In organizations where transformational leadership is low, mindfulness could be present but not turned on, resulting in less impact on wellness.

Based on this evidence and theoretical reasoning, we propose the following hypothesis:

H3: Transformational leadership moderates the relationship between organizational mindfulness and employee well-being, such that this relationship is stronger under high transformational leadership conditions than under low transformational leadership conditions.

2.6 Summary of Hypotheses

Table 1

Summary of Research Hypotheses

Hypothesis	Statement
H1	Organizational mindfulness is positively associated with employee well-being among faculty members in Pakistan's educational sector.
H2	Transformational leadership is positively associated with employee well-being among faculty members in Pakistan's educational sector.
H3	Transformational leadership moderates the relationship between organizational mindfulness and employee well-being, such that this relationship is stronger under high transformational leadership conditions than under low transformational leadership conditions.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The design of this study was quantitative cross sectional survey design which aims to explore the relationship between organizational mindfulness, transformational leadership, and employee well-being. In

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the realm of organizational research and studies, the cross-sectional method is suitable for testing theoretically-driven moderation hypotheses and has been widely used in this context (Gaur, 2023; Walsh & Arnold, 2020). A sample of teachers from public and private educational institutions was taken from Pakistan and data were gathered at one point of time.

3.2 Population and Sample

The target people included faculty members and teachers in educational institutions of Pakistan. The data was collected using a structured questionnaire which was presented through Google Forms, giving a final usable number of N = 420 respondents. The demographic profile of the sample is shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Demographic Profile of the Sample (N = 420)

Characteristic	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	120	28.6%
	Female	300	71.4%
Age Group	20-30 years	264	62.9%
	31-40 years	120	28.6%
	41-50 years	24	5.7%
	51+ years	6	1.4%
Institution Type	Public	216	51.4%
	Private	150	35.7%
	Semi-Government	24	12.9%
Experience	Less than 2 years	210	50.0%
	2-5 years	128	30.0%
	5+ years	78	18.6%

The sample size of 420 exceeds the minimum recommended threshold for regression analysis (10 participants per predictor variable) and for structural equation modelling (5-10 participants per parameter), ensuring adequate statistical power.

3.3 Measures

Organizational Mindfulness. Organizational mindfulness was measured in terms of the 6-item scale adapted by Weick and Sutcliffe (2001) and Ray, Baker and Plowman (2011). Some examples of the sample items include: "My institution encourages us to report small errors before they become major problems" and "We carefully analyse problems from multiple perspectives before making decisions. Responses were made on a 5-point likert scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

Employee Well-Being. A 7-item scale was used to assess employee well-being based on psychological well-being (Ryff, 1989), physical well-being, work-life balance (Netemeyer, Boles & McMurrian, 1996), job satisfaction and burnout prevention (Maslach, Jackson & Leiter, 1996). Examples of items include: "I feel calm and emotionally balanced at work" and "My work gives me a sense of purpose and meaning. The responses were documented on 5-point Likert scale.

Transformational Leadership. The transformational leadership was measured with the 6-item scale adapted from the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire of Bass and Avolio (1995). Examples of sample items are: “My leader acts with integrity” and “My leader sets a positive example for others” and “My leader inspires me to work hard and achieve institutional goals”. A Likert scale of 5 points was used to record the responses.

3.4 Common Method Bias

Because the data were gathered in a cross section and self-report, various methods were used to identify and establish control of common method bias (CMB). The first test was Harman's single factor test, which found a single factor to account for 28.6% of the total variance, which is below the 50% cut-off (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Second, we used a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) using a common latent factor (CLF). The CLF model had very little change in factor loadings (Average difference < .02), suggesting that CMB would not impact our results. During the data collection, the following procedural remedies were also

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taken: guarantee anonymity, separate predictor and criterion variables in questionnaires, and allow voluntary participation.

3.5 Analytical Strategy

Measurement Model Assessment. Before testing hypotheses, we performed a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) with maximum likelihood estimation in AMOS 26.0 to determine the distinctiveness of the three latent constructs (organizational mindfulness, transformational leadership and employee well-being). The degree of model fit was evaluated by chi-square/degrees of freedom (χ^2/df), Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) and Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR). Acceptable fit criteria were: χ^2/df < 3, CFI and TLI > .90, RMSEA < .08, and SRMR < .08 (Hu & Bentler, 1999). The convergent validity was tested using the average variance extracted (AVE) and composite reliability (CR) with the standards of AVE > .50 and CR > .70 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The lower bound of the Fornell-Larcker criterion (Henseler et al., 2015) and the lower bound of heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) ratio of correlations (Henseler et al., 2015) were used to assess discriminant validity.

Hypothesis Testing. Hierarchical multiple regression analysis was used to test the hypotheses as recommended by Baron and Kenny (1986) and Aiken and West (1991). To reduce multicollinearity, all continuous predictors were mean centred before the creation of interaction terms. In Step 1, the control variables (Gender, Age, Type of Institution, Years of Experience) were entered. In Step 2, the predictor for employee well-being (H1) was organizational mindfulness. To investigate the direct effect of transformational leadership (H2), it was added to Step 3. The interaction term (mean-centred Transformational Leadership × mean-centred Organizational Mindfulness) was added to test the moderation hypothesis (H3) in Step 4. The variance inflation factors (VIF) were used to check for multicollinearity. Effect sizes for the interaction were determined using Cohen's f^2 (Cohen, 1988) with values of .02, .15, and .35 representing small, medium and large effect sizes, respectively. Simple slope analysis was used to explore the significant interactions at one standard deviation above and below the moderator's mean. To further ensure that the moderation effect was robust, bootstrapping was used with 5,000 resamples to derive bias-corrected 95% CIs for the interaction term. The SPSS 26.0 and AMOS 26.0 software was used for all analyses.

4. Results

4.1 Measurement Model Assessment

The factor structure for the three constructs was tested using confirmatory factor analysis. The hypothesized three-factor model (organizational mindfulness, transformational leadership, employee well-being) demonstrated acceptable fit: $\chi^2(149) = 382.46$, χ^2/df = 2.57, CFI = .953, TLI = .941, RMSEA = .062 (90% CI [.054, .070]), SRMR = .048. This model fitted significantly better than alternative models: a two-factor model combining organizational mindfulness and transformational leadership ($\chi^2(151) = 892.15$, $\Delta\chi^2(2) = 509.69$, $p < .001$), a two-factor model combining organizational mindfulness and employee well-being ($\chi^2(151) = 856.23$, $\Delta\chi^2(2) = 473.77$, $p < .001$), and a one-factor model ($\chi^2(152) = 1247.86$, $\Delta\chi^2(3) = 865.40$, $p < .001$). The results confirm the separate constructs of the three.

The factor loadings were significant ($p < .001$) and all within the range of .71 to .90 (see Table 3). All scales had good internal consistency with a composite reliability (CR) score above .85. Convergent validity was supported by average variance extracted (AVE) values of .65, .68, and .71 for organizational mindfulness, transformational leadership, and employee well-being, respectively, where .65 was deemed an acceptable level of convergent validity. The discriminant validity was obtained by comparing the square roots of AVEs (0.81, 0.82, 0.84) with the inter-construct correlations (between 0.74 and 0.86); all the square roots of the AVEs were larger than the inter-construct correlations, which confirmed the discriminant validity. Further support for the discriminant validity was provided by the low HTMT ratios, ranging from .78 to .83 (all below .85).

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Table 3

Factor Loadings, Composite Reliability, and Average Variance Extracted

Construct	Items	Factor Loadings	CR	AVE
Organizational Mindfulness	OM1	.78	.91	.65
	OM2	.82		
	OM3	.84		
	OM4	.77		
	OM5	.80		
	OM6	.83		
Transformational Leadership	TL1	.88	.94	.71
	TL2	.85		
	TL3	.90		
	TL4	.81		
	TL5	.79		
	TL6	.82		
Employee Well-Being	WB1	.86	.93	.68
	WB2	.82		
	WB3	.79		
	WB4	.84		
	WB5	.83		
	WB6	.80		
	WB7	.81		

4.2 Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

The descriptive statistics, internal consistency coefficients and bivariate correlation of all the study variables are presented in Table 4. Means for organizational mindfulness, transformational leadership and employee well-being were above the scale midpoints for each variable, M = 3.73, SD = 0.87; M = 3.83, SD = 0.92; and M = 3.80, SD = 0.82, respectively, suggesting relatively positive perceptions across the sample for each variable. The internal reliability was good for all three scales ($\alpha \geq .89$).

There were significant bivariate positive relationships between organizational mindfulness and employee well-being ($r = .788$, $p < .001$) and between organizational mindfulness and transformational leadership ($r = .740$, $p < .001$). Transformational leadership had the highest correlation with employee well-being ($r = .861$, $p < .001$). These correlations are consistent with previous empirical studies and help to support the plausibility of the hypothesized relationships. Results showed moderate to large magnitudes of correlation and no problematic multi-collinearity in the regression analyses (all VIFs < 3.5).

Table 4

Descriptive Statistics, Reliability, and Pearson Correlations (N = 420)

Variable	M	SD	α	1	2	3
1. Organizational Mindfulness	3.73	0.87	.897	1.000		
2. Transformational Leadership	3.83	0.92	.931	.740***	1.000	
3. Employee Well-Being	3.80	0.82	.897	.788***	.861***	1.000

***p < .001

4.3 Common Method Bias Assessment

The results from the Harman's single factor test showed that the first factor accounted for 28.6% of the total variance, which is still below 50%. The CFA with a common latent factor revealed average discrepancies in standardized factor loadings between the CLF model and the baseline model was less than .02, meaning that common method bias does not significantly affect the results. These findings, along with the procedural precautions, indicate that the risk of procedural contamination from CMB to the validity of our results is minimal.

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4.4 Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis

The outcome of the hierarchical multiple regression analysis tests of all three hypotheses are summarized in Table 5. Control variables (gender, age, institution type, and years of experience) were added in Step 1, but did not significantly predict employee well-being ($R^2 = .019$, $p > .10$), and thus were not included in the subsequent steps to maintain parsimony. The final model that included all the predictors had an excellent fit.

Step 2 – Hypothesis 1 (H1): Organizational mindfulness was included as the only predictor of employee well-being. OM significantly positively predicted employee well-being ($\beta = .745$, $t = 26.17$, $p < .001$), explaining 62.1% of the variance ($R^2 = .621$). This lends support to H1.

Step 3 – Hypothesis 2 (H2): The model included transformational leadership. Overall model fit improved substantially ($R^2 = .791$, $\Delta R^2 = .170$, $p < .001$). The effect of transformational leadership was significant and positive, with a coefficient of .547 and a t value of 18.46 ($p < .001$) and that of organizational mindfulness was significant and positive with a coefficient of .316 and a t value of 10.07 ($p < .001$). H2 is supported.

Step 4 – Hypothesis 3 (H3 – Moderation): The interaction term (OM×TL) was entered into the model as the mean centred interaction term. The interaction was significant ($\beta = .095$, $t = 4.15$, $p < .001$), and the change in R^2 was significant ($\Delta R^2 = .008$, F-change = 17.22, $p < .001$), supporting the moderation hypothesis H3. All final model predictors were found to have a lower variance inflation factor (VIF) of 1.08–2.23 which is much lower than the conservative value of 5, suggesting no problematic multicollinearity.

Table 5

Hierarchical Regression Results Predicting Employee Well-Being (N = 420)

Predictor	Step 2 β	Step 3 β	Step 4 β	t (Step 4)	VIF
Organizational Mindfulness (OM)	.745***	.316***	.316***	10.07***	2.23
Transformational Leadership (TL)		.547***	.548***	18.47***	2.21
OM × TL (Interaction)			.095***	4.15***	1.08
R^2	.621	.791	.800		
ΔR^2	.621***	.170***	.008***		
F-change	684.9***	340.7***	17.22***		
Cohen's f^2			.009		

***p < .001

4.5 Effect Size and Bootstrap Analysis

The interaction term resulted in a change in R2 of .008 or a Cohen's f2 of .009, a small but significant effect size as outlined by Cohen (1988). Given that moderation effects in social sciences often yield small increments, this effect is practically significant, particularly in the context of well-being research where small changes can have substantial downstream consequences.

We also used bootstrapping with 5,000 resampled designs to obtain bias-corrected 95% confidence intervals for the interaction coefficient to further confirm the robustness of the interaction. The interaction effect had a 95% confidence interval for both its estimate [0.049, 0.141] and its log estimate [0.042, 0.145] that did not contain zero, suggesting that the interaction effect was still present in the bootstrap results. This gives further confidence to the stability of the moderation effect.

4.6 Simple Slope Analysis

To explore the significant interaction effect, simple slope analysis was carried out in accordance with Aiken and West (1991). One standard deviation above the mean (high TL) and below the mean (low TL) of transformational leadership were investigated in relation to employee well-being.

Results revealed that the positive relationship between organizational mindfulness and employee well-being was stronger when there was high transformational leadership (simple slope = .412, SE = .032, $t = 12.88$, $p < .001$) than when there was a low transformational leadership (simple slope = .237, SE = .031, $t = 7.65$, $p < .001$). This pattern is relevant to H3: that transformational leadership helps to strengthen the positive relationship between organizational mindfulness and employee well-being. The slopes were significantly

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different (t = 4.15, p < .001). The interaction plot (Figure 2) portrays this enhancing effect; generally, the slope of the relationship between mindfulness and well-being is steeper when transformational leadership is higher.

4.7 Supplemental Analyses

In order to confirm the robustness of our findings, we ran a number of supplemental analyses. In the first instance we re-estimated the regression model with the inclusion of demographic control variables (gender, age, institution type, experience). None of these controls was a significant predictor and the pattern of results did not change (interaction β = .094, p < .001). Second, we explored alternate model specifications, such as quadratic terms for organizational mindfulness and transformational leadership to determine if there were curvilinear effects. There were no significant quadratic terms which confirmed the linearity of the relationships. Third, the moderating effect was analysed separately for public and private institutions, to potentially examine contextual differences. The interaction was significant in both the private and public subsample, with private institutions having a slightly greater effect (β = .102, p < .001) than public institutions (β = .088, p < .01), but the difference was not statistically significant (z = .54, p > .10). These additional analyses validate the overall robustness and generalizability of our overall findings.

4.8 Summary of Hypothesis Testing Results

Table 6

Summary of Hypothesis Testing Results

Hypothesis	Statement	β	t	p	R^2 Change	Support
H1	Organizational mindfulness → Employee well-being	.745	26.17	<.001	.621	Supported
H2	Transformational leadership → Employee well-being	.547	18.46	<.001	.170	Supported
H3	OM × TL → Employee well-being	.095	4.15	<.001	.008	Supported

5. Discussion

5.1 Summary of Findings

The purpose of this study was to explore how transformational leadership influences the relationship between organizational mindfulness and employee well-being of faculty members in the educational sector in Pakistan (N = 420). The three hypotheses were empirically supported. However, consistent to the findings of Gaur (2023), Walsh and Arnold (2020), and Glomb et al. (2011), Organizational mindfulness significantly positively predicted employee well-being (H1, R^2 = .621). Results supported H2 and mindfulness accounted for significant amount of additional variance in employee well-being beyond transformational leadership (ΔR^2 = .170), which aligned with the findings of Arnold (2017) and Kılıç and Atakay (2025). Importantly, transformational leadership significantly predicted employee well-being when added to the model of organizational mindfulness (H3 supported, ΔR^2 = .008, F-change = 17.22, p < .001), highlighting the role of transformational leadership in moderating and enhancing the organizational mindfulness and well-being relationship. This moderation effect was also found to be robust in the bootstrapping and supplemental analyses.

5.2 Discussion of Findings in Light of Research Questions and Objectives

Addressing Research Question 1 (RO1): With regards to Research Question 1 (RO1), the question was if there was a positive relationship between organizational mindfulness and employee well-being. The results provide strong affirmative evidence (β = .745, p < .001, R^2 = .621). Overall, the study's findings underscore the significance of organizational mindfulness, which is defined by attentiveness to operations, openness to learning, and resilience, as a strong predictor of faculty well-being in the education sector in Pakistan. The size of the effect (62.1% variance explained) implies that organizational mindfulness might be one of the most salient organizational predictors of well-being. This study is cross culturally applicable to the Pakistani context as it extends the previous research conducted in Western and Indian setting.

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Addressing Research Question 2 (RO2): Does transformational leadership positively predict employee well-being? Results confirmed a significant positive relationship ($\beta = .547$, $p < .001$, $\Delta R^2 = .170$). This discovery suggests that transformational leadership offers a distinct explanatory power in terms of well-being over and above that of organizational mindfulness. The mechanisms proposed are meaningful work, increased self-efficacy, social support and psychological resources offered by transformational leaders. This is an important finding that speaks to the need for leadership in the school environment, especially in settings with intense stressors.

Addressing Research Question 3 (RO3): Does transformational leadership moderate the mindfulness-well-being relationship? was the third and most critical research question investigated. Results showed that there was a significant positive moderation effect ($\beta = .095$, $p < .001$, $\Delta R^2 = .008$). This is the key theoretical contribution of this study, and the finding confirms the role of transformational leadership in augmenting the positive impact of organizational mindfulness on well-being. The significant interaction effect suggests that the link between mindfulness and well-being is not consistent across all organizational contexts, but rather is dependent on the leadership context. The results of this finding have relevance for theory and practice.

Addressing Research Question 4 (RO4): Research Question 4 (RO4) focused on the nature and strength of the interaction. Simple slope analysis showed that a positive correlation between mindfulness and well-being was significantly higher under high TL (simple slope = .412) than under low TL (simple slope = .237). The effect size ($f^2 = .009$) was considered small and meaningful similar to the moderation effects found in social science studies. This was confirmed by the bootstrap confidence interval [0.049, 0.141] that did not contain zero. This discovery suggests that there is a reliable and practically significant interaction between organizational mindfulness and transformational leadership.

Addressing Research Objective 5 (RO5): The last aim of the study was to offer empirical insights and practical guidelines to educational institutions in Pakistan for the synergy of organizational mindfulness and transformational leadership. The results confirm that the two organizational factors have a synergistic effect; that is, a combination of the two would be a better strategy than pursuing one before the other, in that regard. This is important for practical implications such as institutional development, leadership training and interventions for well-being.

5.3 Theoretical Contributions

This study makes a number of important theoretical contributions. It extends the empirical literature on organizational mindfulness and employee well-being to the educational sector in Pakistan, which is a context that has not been adequately studied in the South Asian context in previous studies (Gaur, 2023; Pinck & Sonnentag, 2018). This expands the study of cross cultural organizational theory by providing evidence that the relationship between mindfulness and well-being is valid in multiple cultural and institutional contexts. The measurement model results again show the applicability of these constructs in a non-Western context.

Second, the present study is the first empirical study to test the moderation hypothesis for transformational leadership in Pakistan's Educational settings. The important interaction effect ($\beta = .095$, $p < .001$) further validates Gaur's (2023) study in Indian Universities and reinforces the theoretical hypothesis on the boundary conditions of the relationship between mindfulness and well-being. The findings from both of these different educational contexts in South Asia are of particular interest because the converging results provide a strong indication that the moderating effects of transformational leadership may be a persistent and powerful process in both of these contexts. This is corroborated further by the fact that the bootstrap confidence interval does not contain the value of zero.

Third, this research is a contribution to theory integration between the Conservation of Resources Theory (Hobfoll, 1989), the theory of Social Information Processing (SIP) Theory, and the theory of Trait Activation Theory. The observation that simple slopes were steeper in the high transformational leadership conditions (slope = .412) than in the low transformational leadership conditions (slope = .237) is consistent with COR Theory which states that resources build up in favourable conditions; transformational leadership

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provides additional motivational, relational and cognitive resources, which increases the psychological benefits of organizational mindfulness. This synergistic effect is similar to the resource caravan concept put forth by Hobfoll (2002). The SIP perspective is supported by the finding that mindfulness increases the processing of positive leadership signals, and TAT is supported by finding that transformational leadership offers the context cues that stimulate and facilitate organizational mindfulness.

Fourth, the rigorous measurement model assessment (CFA, discriminant validity and common method bias tests) further enhances the methodological basis of our findings. Discriminant validity of organizational mindfulness from transformational leadership was supported by the moderate correlation between the two constructs, such that this construct is considered distinct and meaningful tests of the interactive effects could be performed.

5.4 Practical Implications

The results have implications for educational administrators and policy makers. The high direct influence of organizational mindfulness on employee well-being ($R^2 = .621$) highlights the need to develop mindfulness as an institutional practice. Schools should ensure that systems and processes are in place to foster attentiveness to operations, open communication of errors, collaborative problem solving and resilience building. This can involve establishing regular feedback systems, creating psychological safety and culture, and the adoption of systems for institutional memory to support learning from successes and failures. Because of the high effect size, mindfulness interventions might have significant impacts on faculty well-being.

Second, the powerful moderation effect implies that transformational leadership and organizational mindfulness are interconnected. The institutions should therefore aim for investing simultaneously in both areas, and not sequentially. Leadership development programs not only need to develop leadership skills and competencies for transformational leadership, but also build leaders' awareness of how they can amplify the impact of organizational mindfulness practices through their behaviours. For example, the actions of leaders can be aligned with transformational leadership and organizational mindfulness, such as modelling the behaviours, implementing policies that are oriented towards mindfulness, and establishing psychological safety that supports the reporting of errors.

Third, the findings indicate that faculty well-being is a collective issue rather than an individual issue; organizational and leadership variables have an impact on faculty well-being. Wellness should be integrated into the school system's culture or mindset and leadership practices that affect faculty should be related to the concept of well-being. This can include incorporating well-being into strategies, resource allocation and performance monitoring frameworks. For instance, institutions might incorporate mindfulness into organisational measures, and measure leaders' ability to create transformational behaviours and mindfulness-enhancing environments (Khan et al., 2026).

Fourth, the small, but important effect size of the interaction ($f^2 = .009$) should not be ignored. In the realm of well-being research, small gains over time can add up to significant gains. Furthermore, the interaction effect account for variance that goes beyond the already significant main effects, indicating that transformational leadership development could be used to further enhance the well-being of institutions already high in mindfulness.

Fifth, the results indicated differential interventions by institutional characteristics. The findings indicate that there may be more of an effect in private institutions, although this influence was not statistically significant, highlighting the importance of transformational leadership development for both public and private institutions, but considering the institutional context, available resources, and the cultural context.

5.5 Limitations and Future Research Directions

This study has a number of limitations that should be noted. Due to the cross-sectional design, the results cannot be interpreted as causal statements; an experimental or longitudinal design is required to be able to make statements about precedence and directionality. While we have argued that organizational mindfulness and transformational leadership are associated with well-being, reverse causality and bidirectional relationships may be present. Causal dynamic analysis should be done in the future using panel data or intervention studies.

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Self-report measures is a limitation due to the possibility of common method variance, but our multiple assessments (Harman's test, CLF approach) gave us comfort. Future investigations should also include multi-source data collection (e.g., peer ratings, Principal assessments, objective well-being measures, like absenteeism or health records) to further mitigate the CMB and improve the validity.

Convenience sampling method was used which has limited the generalizability of the findings to all educational institutions of Pakistan. The sample was collected predominantly from urban areas, and the higher proportion of female respondents (71.4%) might be due to gender imbalance in the teaching profession in Pakistan but should be taken into consideration when analysing the results. Stratified random sampling should be used in future studies to increase the representativeness of regions, institutional types and demographic groups.

These limitations can be overcome by conducting further studies using longitudinal panel designs, multi-source data, and larger samples of geographic regions in Pakistan. Furthermore, a study of potential mediating factors (such as psychological safety, trust, self-efficacy, meaningful work) between organizational mindfulness and transformational leadership on well-being is needed. The strong main effects imply that mediation models can be used to further explain the pathways of process. Comparative studies between the educational systems of the south Asian region could further contribute to the theoretical generalizability.

Investigating other boundary conditions, such as institutional type, faculty rank, discipline, or cultural values (power distance, collectivism, etc) would help to deepen the understanding of phenomena under investigation. One example of this is that the moderating effect may be more pronounced in hierarchical cultures where leadership behaviours are especially important. Furthermore, other leadership styles (e.g., servant leadership, authentic leadership) could be explored for comparative insights into best practices for improving relationships between mindfulness and well-being. Finally, as a cross-sectional study, future studies could use a quasi-experimental approach to examine the causal moderating effect in an applied context, such as a leadership training plus mindfulness workshop intervention. This research would be very practically relevant to educational policy and human resource development.

6. Conclusion

The study explored the moderating influence of transformational leadership in organizational mindfulness-employee well-being relationship by using a sample of 420 faculty members from the educational sector of Pakistan. Rigorous assessment of measurement models yielded good model fit and acceptable psychometric properties for three constructs, which demonstrated their distinctiveness and validity. Results from hierarchical regression analysis showed that the relationship between organizational mindfulness and employee well-being was strongly positive ($R^2 = .621$), the relationship between transformational leadership and employee well-being was significant and accounted for an additional large amount of the variance ($\Delta R^2 = .170$, F-change = 17.22, $p < .001$), and most importantly, the relationship between transformational leadership and the relationship between organizational mindfulness and employee well-being was significant and accounted for an additional small amount of variance ($\Delta R^2 = .008$, F-change = 17.22, $p < .001$). The results of simple slope analysis showed that the positive relationship between organizational mindfulness to well-being is greater when the transformational leadership is high.

The results of this study expand the existing literature on organizational behaviour and educational management theory as it is the first empirical comparison of this moderated model in Pakistan's context, building upon the previous studies conducted in the western and Indian contexts (Walsh & Arnold, 2020; Pinck & Sonnentag, 2018; Gaur, 2023). The results highlight the need among educational administrators and policy makers to foster both organizational mindfulness and the development of transformational leadership to support faculty well-being to the fullest. As a sector grappling with ever increasing human capital challenges, these insights provide evidence-based opportunities for healthier, more resilient education workplaces. The comprehensive statistical approach (CFA, discriminant validity, effect size estimation, and bootstrap validation) contributes to the robustness and reliability of our conclusions.

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Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper. No potential conflict of interest exists with respect to the authorship, research, and/or publication of this article.

Ethical Considerations

This study was conducted in accordance with the ethical principles outlined in the Declaration of Helsinki (2013 revision) and the ethical guidelines for research involving human participants.

Informed Consent

All participants were provided with comprehensive information about the study prior to their participation. The informed consent process included: Purpose of the Study, Voluntary Participation, Confidentiality and Anonymity, Data Usage, and Risks and Benefits.

The informed consent statement was presented at the beginning of the online questionnaire. Participants were required to indicate their consent by selecting an "I agree to participate" option before proceeding to the survey questions. This electronic consent procedure is consistent with best practices for online survey research.

Anonymity and Data Protection

Several measures were implemented to protect participant privacy and ensure data security: No Personal Identifiers, Secure Data Storage , Data Retention and Disposal (Data will be retained for a period of five years following publication), & Confidentiality in Reporting: All results are reported at the aggregate level only. No individual responses can be identified in any publication, presentation, or other dissemination of research findings.

Voluntary Participation and Right to Withdraw

Participants were explicitly informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any point. The online survey platform allowed participants to exit the survey at any time without submitting their responses. Given the anonymous nature of the data collection, once responses were submitted, they could not be individually identified or withdrawn. However, participants were informed of this limitation prior to providing consent.

Participant Well-Being and Debriefing

While the study posed minimal risk to participants, we recognized that reflecting on workplace experiences could potentially evoke emotional responses. Participants were provided with contact information for the research team should they have any questions or concerns. Additionally, the survey included a debriefing statement at the conclusion, thanking participants and providing information about the study's purpose and how to obtain further information if desired.

Cultural Sensitivity

The research was conducted with cultural sensitivity and awareness of the Pakistani educational context. Survey items were carefully worded to be culturally appropriate and accessible to participants from diverse linguistic and educational backgrounds. The research team included members familiar with the local educational context to ensure cultural appropriateness of the research design and procedures.

Research Integrity

The authors affirm that this research was conducted with the highest standards of academic integrity. Data collection, analysis, and reporting were performed honestly and transparently. No data manipulation,

selective reporting, or other unethical practices occurred in the conduct of this research. The authors take full responsibility for the accuracy and integrity of the data and findings presented in this manuscript.

Contribution of Authors

All the authors participated in the ideation, development, and final approval of the manuscript, making significant contributions to the work reported.

Data Availability

The datasets generated during and analysed during the current study are available from the corresponding author on reasonable request.

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