

The Relationship between Transformational Leadership and Job Satisfaction in Selected Colleges at King Khalid University, Abha, Saudi Arabia

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ABSTRACT

Background: Leadership has become the key issues in managing the organization, the emerging business and economic environments have forced organizations to be flexible, adaptive, entrepreneurial and innovative to meet changing demand of the present-day business environment. The purpose of the present study is to examine the relationship between the various dimensions of transformational leadership (predictor variable) and their effects on employees' job satisfaction (criterion variable) in three selected Colleges (Medicine, Dentistry and Science) in King Khalid University.

Methods: The methodology employed in this study was a quantitative and cross-sectional correlational survey type of design Data collection was done using a questionnaire design that was directly administered to the participants. 250 questionnaires were sent to the participating three colleges (Medicine, Dentistry and Sciences).

Results: The findings of the multiple linear regression analysis indicated a weak positive association between transformational leadership behavior and employees' job satisfaction (R -value 0.386). The multiple linear regression analysis signifies a weak positive correlation between transformational leadership behavior and job satisfaction (R -value 0.386). A p -value in Spearman's rho that is less than the 0.05 level of significance indicated that there is a significant level of relationship which exists between transformational leadership behavior and job satisfaction.

Conclusions: This study concluded that transformational leadership behavior and its four dimensions showed a weak positive correlation with a statistically significant level of relationship between transformational leadership behaviour and employees' job satisfaction among three selected colleges (Medicine, Dentistry and Sciences) in King Khalid University, Abha, Saudi Arabia.

Key words: Job satisfaction, Transformational leadership, University teacher's organization, Saudi Arabia

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INTRODUCTION

The advent of globalization has brought significant changes in the world, creating a global village [1]. Further, globalization may be an element fueling constant change in

organizations. In adapting to these changes, organizations encounter many challenges to meet their objectives. To achieve a competitive advantage, organizations need a workforce that is committed, creative, innovative, and imitable [2].

The educational sector is dependent on the services and competencies of employees (lecturers), an ability that helps students acquire information and knowledge for their

development [3-5]. In the management of organizations, the first contact leader in each department in the educational sector is the coordinator and manager of the employees, and directly influences the quality of work in the department [6-8]. The manager acts as a guide, a motivator, a coach, a mentor, an enabler, a spokesperson, a deep listener, a syllabus and system designer, etc., to the department staff [3, 9-11].

Leaders need to be able to persuade employees, and employees need to be able to follow the direction toward which they are being influenced, albeit through their own choices. A transformational leader manages staff through the fundamental principles of idealizing influence and providing inspirational motivation, individualized consideration, and intellectual stimulation [12]. Transformational leaders intellectually motivate followers, thus encouraging rationality and problem-solving skills, offering individualized consideration to the employees, and attending to employees' individual needs for growth and development as well. Transformational leadership is often defined and described as a process of motivating change and endowing employees to improve themselves and their organization, and it encourages employees to be accountable and accept responsibility [13].

Locke et al. [14] defined job satisfaction as "a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job and job experience" [15]. Scholars have also studied job satisfaction extensively in recent decades [16,17]. It is seen as the most important factor in influencing employees to be committed, motivated, and loyal toward their job and to participate effectively in achieving the organization's overall goals [18]. The relationship between job satisfaction and dissatisfaction depends on what one expects—and gets—from one's job. For teachers, job satisfaction means meeting their needs and improving their performance. Therefore, the importance of job satisfaction for productive activities in a university, not to mention the growth of the educational sector in the world, cannot be underestimated [43]. There are several factors that influence whether employees will be satisfied with their job. Some of these factors are (a) Effective management leadership, (b)

Adequate compensation for the job performed, (c) Employee empowerment, and (d) A working environment that fosters teamwork [19,20].

Leadership is crucial because a good leader builds effective relationships with stakeholders, thereby facilitating required organizational changes with minimal confrontation [21]. Good leaders can stimulate and encourage followers in a way that results in a high degree of satisfaction, organizational citizenship, and commitment [22]. The job satisfaction level is the degree to which individuals feel either positive or negative about their work [23]. In an educational context, three general factors affect job satisfaction: (a) Psychological factors, such as the teacher's personality, behavior, and attitude; (b) Environmental factors, including the work itself; and (c) Demographic factors, such as gender or age [24].

The present study aims to examine the relationship between transformational leadership and employees' job satisfaction in a tertiary institution. Similar studies have been carried out in an organizational context, including higher institutions in Western and non-Western countries [3,5,25,26], but little is known about Saudi Arabia's higher educational sector regarding the relationship between transformational leadership and job satisfaction. The present study will rely on data collected from selected colleges in a Saudi Arabia-based institution, King Khalid University (KKU) in Abha, Saudi Arabia.

Research problem statement

Leadership has become the key issues in managing organization, the emerging business and economic environments have forced organizations to be flexible, adaptive, entrepreneurial and innovative to meet changing demand of the present-day business environment [27-29]. However, despite substantial management literature in a western context there is a definite gap in the literature on the Saudi Arabia, especially on the possible relationships between transformational leadership style and employees' job satisfaction [27].

Today, tertiary education plays a major role in nation-building [5]. Hence, there is a need to ensure the effective behavior of leaders as

well as employees' job satisfaction. Despite the availability of significant studies relating to these constructs in Saudi Arabia, there is a dearth of knowledge concerning the relationship between transformational leadership and employees' job satisfaction in tertiary institutions [27] in the southern part of Saudi Arabia, particularly Abha, where this study was carried out. It is therefore expedient to conduct a quantitative cross-sectional study using a homogeneous, purposive non-probability sampling method in the selected tertiary institution in Saudi Arabia to establish the statistical association. The findings of this study might be of great benefit for organizational stakeholders as they can provide a suitable managerial strategy for the institution to ensure effective leadership and employees' job satisfaction.

Research questions

- ✓ What dimensions of transformational leadership influence employees' job satisfaction the most in selected colleges at King Khalid University, Abha, Saudi Arabia?
- ✓ What dimensions of transformational leadership influence employees' job satisfaction the least in selected colleges at King Khalid University, Abha, Saudi Arabia?
- ✓ What is the theoretical relationship between transformational leadership and employees' job satisfaction in selected colleges at King Khalid University, Abha, Saudi Arabia?

Research objectives

- ✓ To determine the aspect of transformational leadership that influence employees' job satisfaction the most in selected colleges at King Khalid University, Abha, Saudi Arabia.
- ✓ To determine the aspect of transformational leadership that influence employees' job satisfaction the least in selected colleges at King Khalid University, Abha, Saudi Arabia.
- ✓ To determine the theoretical relationship between transformational leadership and employees' job satisfaction in selected colleges at King Khalid University, Abha, Saudi Arabia.

Research methodology and design

Population and sample size

"Population" means the total group of people or objects that constitute the scope or that meet the criteria of the study. The population of this present

study was 250, the total number of teaching staff of the selected colleges in King Khalid University. Due to cost and time constraints, only the teaching staff of the colleges of Dentistry, Medicine, and Science were used in the survey. The questionnaire was administered to both leaders and subordinates. The sample size for this study was based on the total population size of the three selected colleges, that is, 150 out of the 250 teaching staff in those colleges. The best approach for this type of study is homogenous, purposive non-probability sampling because the targeted institution comprises leaders and employees with similar characteristics.

Method of collecting data

The instrument used to collect data involved a combined measuring instrument made up of two well-recognized instruments: the multi-leadership questionnaire (MLQ) and the job satisfaction survey questionnaire (JSS). The instruments were adapted and modified to suit the context of the present study. The MLQ is suitable for this study due to its rigorous development and simple interpretation. The JSS [30] was chosen because it measures job satisfaction, and a literature review showed that it impacts the level of job satisfaction. Congruency exists between the instrument and the theoretical literature.

This method is convenient in that it provides a suitable and cost-effective way of deriving information on a large group of people. These questionnaires enable the measurement of a wide range of behavior and perceptions from the population size for future use in improving the organizational leadership and job satisfaction.

Measuring instrument

A theoretical and conceptual framework formed the basis of the study questionnaire. The scale of the measurement employed was based on suitable, well-recognized measurement scales with appropriate Cronbach's alpha consistency scores so that hypothesis-testing validity and reliability were ensured in the development of the questionnaire. Assessments for each of the measurement items were based on a Likert scale rating to allow the participants the opportunity to choose a specific value for a given option.

The survey instrument consists of three scales of measurement. Section 1 was comprised of demographic variables such as age, place of

employment, years of experience, and role in the institution. Section 2 consisted of 26 questions related to the multifactor leadership questionnaire (MLQ-5X) developed by Avolio et al. [31]. The MLQ-5X form was utilized to evaluate employees' views of their leadership behaviors, and the rater form can be used to measure subordinates' views of a leader's behaviors. The third section comprised 36 items measuring job satisfaction, developed by Spector et al. [30], it was utilized to evaluate employees' job satisfaction. Respondents were asked to complete all items using six-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1), To strongly agree (6). The questionnaires were distributed to all teaching staff of the selected colleges of King Khalid University. The questionnaire took about 15 minutes to complete. The study was conducted in English, as the environment is an educational institution where people speak English. Many types of studies and peer-reviewed articles have used both the instruments described in Sections 2 and 3.

Reliability and validity

The goal of any scientific study should be to present accurate findings with a minimum of errors, whether it is quantitative or qualitative. This study was based on the positivist paradigm shift, so reliability was measured objectively and represented as a singular, autonomous truth. "Validity" is the extent to which a measurement instrument precisely measures the variable under study. To this end, reliability and validity guarantee that the research process is error-or bias-free and therefore enhances data integrity. Reliability concerns were addressed with the use of well-known measurement scales. For internal consistency of measurement, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used. Validity can be internal or external validity [28]. Internal validity measures the research procedure and how precise outcomes show the causative relationships between constructs. External validity connotes the degree to which research outcomes can apply to a different setting. Possible challenges to validity were addressed by conducting a pre-test and a pilot study before the data collection. The purpose is to scrutinize and discover any limitation with the practical and logical characteristics of the survey instrument. Correlation analysis was also used to address construct validity.

Another issue in the accuracy of measurement and removal of participant bias is to reduce common technique variance. Hence, instructions were written in a simple and clear language. This ease understanding of the requisite tasks and enables providing an accurate answer. Additionally, a pilot study was carried out before the main study to ensure that instructions are unambiguous and concisely given to the participants, allowing the survey instrument to be revised if necessary. Another bias likely to occur is the social desirability bias, where participants might give responses that seem more socially admirable [32] his study examined management behaviors as assessed by subordinates and its attendant effect on subordinates' job satisfaction; subordinates were skeptical that information might be leaked to their respective managers. Thus, it was clearly stated in the consent form that confidentiality and anonymity would be kept both during and after data collection to minimize anxiety and the social desirability effect.

Pilot study

A pilot study was carried out on a small sample taken from the target population. The intent of the pilot study was to decide the suitability of the survey instrument for the prospective participants. In this regard, the feedback from respondents on logical coherence and question sequence was of more interest to the researcher. Furthermore, the pilot study also assessed the ease of understanding and the adequacy of the instructions in the research instrument. The survey instrument was distributed among twenty employees to test its practical suitability, and it was found to be suitable. All participants were contacted through a direct visit to the institution. The researcher was introduced to the participants by the institution's contact person. The survey instrument was a hard-copy questionnaire. These questionnaires were manually administered to the participants and scored electronically.

Ethical consideration

Institutional permission was requested and obtained from the institution being studied, and approval for this study was given by the Departmental Ethics Committee, University of South Africa (UNISA), before the commencement of the study. The participants were informed of

the study and its aim and objectives and then given consent letters. Each participant was asked to complete the questionnaire after the nature and content of the instruments were clearly explained to them. Each questionnaire took approximately 15 minutes to complete. By providing clear instructions to participants and assuring anonymity, the probability of obtaining biased responses is reduced.

Data analysis techniques

The relationship between the constructs was assessed by Spearman rank correlations, based on the data collected from the questionnaires' inferential statistics, which were used to assess the causality between the independent, intermediary, and dependent variables. This allows one to arrive at conclusions and make a prediction about the general population. The software Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (IBM SPSS 20.0) was used to analyze the data collected. The researcher made use of a paid statistician to help analyze the data. To determine the features of the dataset and test the normality of distribution, descriptive statistics were employed. The relationship between the predictor variable and the criterion variable was assessed with correlation. A multiple regression analysis was utilized to test the hypotheses and analyze the predictive variables to assess the effect that the predictor variables had on the criterion variable. Some factors that may affect job satisfaction apart from transformational leadership dimensions in respect to this study were salaries, promotion, and co-workers [30]. These factors were treated as intermediary predictive variables in this study and measured by the JSS.

RESULTS

Description of the population and sample

The sample was made up of 146 teaching staff members of selected colleges of King Khalid University. Three colleges were randomly selected from among all the colleges of King Khalid University to participate in the research study, and the recruited respondents were

selected based on the inclusion criteria from the sampling frame (Table 1). Inclusion criteria were that employees must be on the teaching staff of the selected colleges. The minimum sample size for the study was 116, based on G*Power 3.1 calculations for an a priori analysis with an exact test family using bivariate correlation (Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient), two tails, medium effect, size 0.3, alpha .05, and power .90.

Data collection was done using 250 questionnaires sent to the participating colleges and directly administered to the recruited participants. From the 250 administered, 146 individuals responded (sample size n=146). The response rate was 58.4%, which is 12% more than the minimum required sample size.

Demographic results

From the 146 respondents in the study, 119 (81.51%) were male, and 27 (18.49%) were female. Most of the respondents (80, or 54.79%) were between 35 and 44 years old. Most of the respondents (137, or 93.84%) were postgraduate, while nine (6.16%) were graduates. Most of the respondents (56, or 38.36%) had between one and five years of working experience, while one person (0.68%) had at least 20 years of working experience. Table 2 and Figures 1–5 display the demographic profile of study respondents.

Descriptive statistics

IBM SPSS version 20.0 was the statistical tool used to analyze the data. The four transformational leadership dimensions were measured with the MLQ form. The job satisfaction of teaching staff at King Khalid University was assessed using the JSS scale.

Internal consistency and reliability of the data were established with the use of Cronbach's alpha, which signifies a high level of internal consistency for both variables. Table 3 shows the descriptive statistics for the transformational leadership scales and job satisfaction scale. The idealized influence had the highest mean score of $54.77 \pm SD 11.7$, while individualized consideration had the lowest mean score of $17.21 \pm SD 4.33$.

Table 1: Sample size distribution.

Operational Unit	Total population	Sample size	% of population	Sample method	Sample Frame
Unit A	100	60	60%	Non- probability Homogeneous Purposive Sampling	KKU. Manually & hard copy
Unit B	90	50	55.60%	Non- probability Homogeneous Purposive Sampling	KKU. Manually & hard copy
Unit C	60	40	66.70%	Non- probability Homogeneous Purposive Sampling	KKU. Manually & hard copy

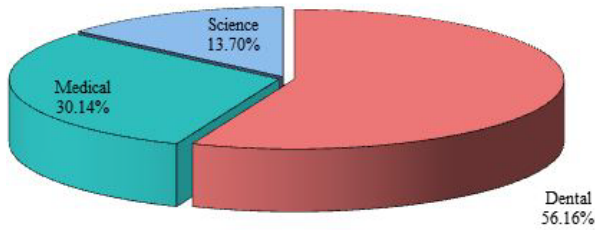


Figure 1: Distribution of sample according to college.

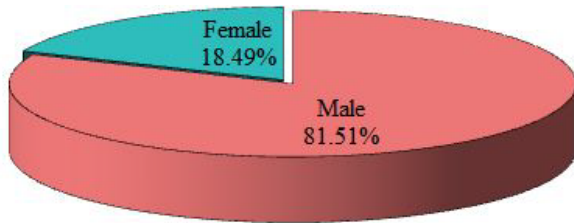


Figure 2: Gender wise distribution.

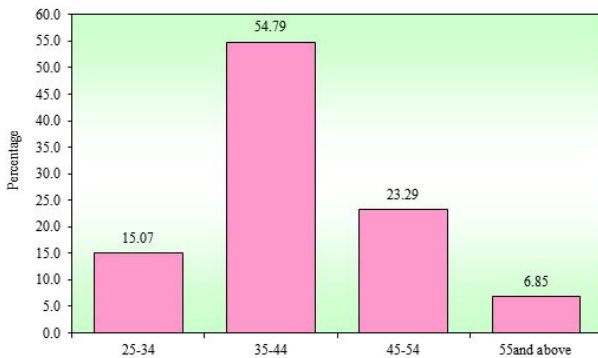


Figure 3: Age wise distribution.

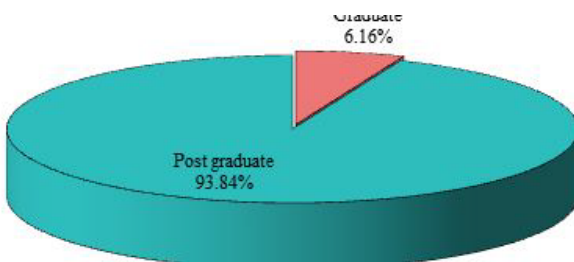


Figure 4: Distribution according to educational level.

Normality of the distribution was assessed using the Kolmogorov Smirnov test. A test with a significance level of $p < .05$ indicates that the data are not normally distributed, and in this study, responses on transformational leadership behavior were below 0.05, contravening the assumption of the normality of data. The data for responses about job satisfaction did not contravene the assumption of normality. The results of the Kolmogorov Smirnov test shown in Table 4 indicate that the data for the dimensions of leadership behavior do not follow a normal distribution, while job satisfaction data do.

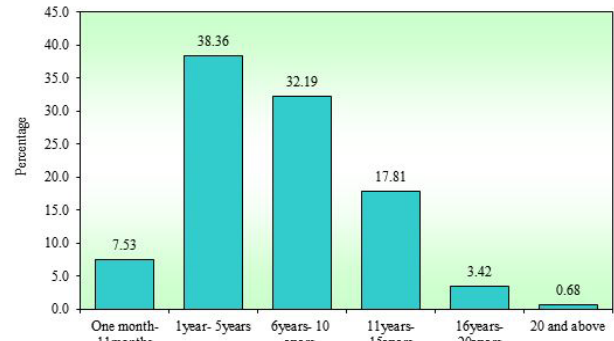


Figure 5: Distribution according to working experience.

Table 2: Demographic profile of study participants.

Factors	No of participants	% of participants
Types of colleges		
Dental	82	56.16
Medical	44	30.14
Science	20	13.7
Gender		
Male	119	81.51
Female	27	18.49
Age groups		
25-34	22	15.07
35-44	80	54.79
45-54	34	23.29
55 and above	10	6.85
Highest educational level		
Graduate	9	6.16
Post graduate	137	93.84
Role in organization		
Academic	145	99.32
Non-academic	1	0.68
Working experience		
One month- 11months	11	7.53
1year- 5years	56	38.36
6years- 10 years	47	32.19
11years- 15years	26	17.81
16years-20years	5	3.42
20 and above	1	0.68
Total	146	100

Analysis and results

Spearman’s rank order correlation (Spearman’s rho [ρ]), a non-parametric analysis, was utilized to analyze the association between transformational leadership and job satisfaction as the data for transformational leadership dimensions significantly deviated from a normal distribution. Spearman’s rho was appropriate to analyze the data because the two variables met the three assumptions required to obtain a valid outcome. The variables were ordinal, observations were paired, and an initial evaluation based on a visual inspection of a scatterplot showed a monotonic relationship between the variables. A monotonic relationship

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics of dimensions of transformational leadership and job satisfaction.

Variables	N	Min	Max	Range	Mean	SD	SE
Idealized influence (ID)	146	14	72	58	54.77	11.77	0.97
Inspirational motivation (IM)	146	7	30	23	22.75	4.93	0.41
Intellectual stimulation (IS)	146	6	30	24	22.45	5.07	0.42
Individualized consideration (IC)	146	4	24	20	17.21	4.33	0.36
Job satisfaction	146	80	198	118	148.36	19.93	1.65

Table 4: Normality of all variables by Kolmogorov Smirnov test.

Variables	Z-value	p-value
Idealized influence (ID)	1.842	0.0020*
Inspirational motivation (IM)	1.914	0.0010*
Intellectual stimulation (IS)	1.685	0.0070*
Individualized consideration (IC)	1.647	0.0090*
Total of all dimensions (transformational leadership)	1.897	0.0010*
Job satisfaction	0.946	0.332

*p<0.05

Table 5: Spearman's rank order correlation coefficient analysis of transformational leader dimensions and job satisfaction.

Variables	Spearman's rank order correlation coefficient between job satisfaction with			
	N	Spearman R	t-value	p-level
Idealized influence (ID)	146	0.3452	4.4137	0.0001*
Inspirational motivation (IM)	146	0.2934	3.6833	0.0003*
Intellectual stimulation (IS)	146	0.3622	4.6627	0.0001*
Individualized consideration (IC)	146	0.3334	4.2443	0.0001*

*p<0.05

Table 6: Spearman's rank order correlation coefficient analysis of overall transformational leader and job satisfaction.

Variables	Spearman's rank order correlation coefficient between job satisfaction with overall transformational leadership			
	N	Spearman R	t-value	p-level
Transformational leader (TL)	146	0.3459	4.4238	0.0001*

Table 7: Multiple linear regression analysis of job satisfaction by transformational leadership behavior.

Independent variable	Estimates	SE of estimate	t-value	p-value
Intercept	111.8655	7.4231	15.0698	0.0001*
Transformational leadership behaviour	0.3115	0.062	5.0242	0.0001*

R=0.3861, R²=0.1491, F(1,144)=25.242 p<0.00, S, Std .Error of estimate: 18.450

*p<0.05

is a relationship between two variables. When the value of one variable increases, that of the other also increases (positive correlation), or else, as the value of one variable increases, that of the other variable decreases (negative correlation).

The results of Spearman's rho in Table 5 indicate that all the transformational leadership dimensions have a relationship with job satisfaction, with intellectual stimulation having the highest correlation (R= 0.3622) and inspirational motivation having the least correlation (R= 0.2934).

A p-value in Spearman's rho of less than the 0.05 level of significance indicates that there is a significant relationship between transformational leadership behavior and job satisfaction. The value of Spearman's correlation coefficient (ρ) can range from -1

to +1, indicating a perfect negative or positive association. The results indicated a weak positive correlation between individual dimensions of transformational leadership and job satisfaction, as shown below (Table 5). Regarding the overall transformational leadership behavior and job satisfaction, the result shows a weak positive correlation with a statistical significance level of relationship that exists between the two variables (Table 6).

The multiple linear regression analysis signifies a weak positive correlation between transformational leadership behavior and job satisfaction (R value 0.386). The results of the multiple linear regression analysis are illustrated in Table 6 (predictors: constant transformational leadership; dependent variable: job satisfaction). R, with a value of 0.386, represents the simple correlation between

transformational leadership and job satisfaction. The value $R^2=0.1491$ indicates that 14.9% of the variability of the dependent variable, job satisfaction, is explained by the independent variable, transformational leadership. In other words, although this variability in job satisfaction can be explained by many factors, the model can explain 14.9% of it, while 85.1% cannot be explained by transformational leadership alone. Hence, there are other variables that influence job satisfaction.

The results in Table 6 indicate that overall, this research model can significantly predict the dependent variable, job satisfaction, while in Table 7, the p-value shows that the research model is not statistically significant between the dimensions of leadership behavior and job satisfaction, which could be due to other variables not mentioned in the job satisfaction survey scale.

DISCUSSION

There is inadequate research on the relationship between transformational leadership and employees' job satisfaction in Saudi Arabia. The purpose of this study is to fill that gap and improve the understanding of transformational leadership and its association with job satisfaction in the educational sector, specifically in the selected colleges of KKU.

The participants were drawn from the target population from three colleges (Medicine, Dentistry, and Science) of KKU, Abha, Saudi Arabia, and a purposeful sample of 146 respondents participated in this present study. Data were collected for the present study with a combined measuring instrument made up of two well-recognized instruments, MLQ and JSS, which were manually administered. The job satisfaction items were collected through the JSS while transformation leadership behavior items were collected through the MLQ, which measured transformational leadership and its four dimensions [9]. The results of this study show that there is a weak positive correlation between individual dimensions of transformational leadership behavior and job satisfaction (Table 5). Moreover, the overall transformational leadership behavior and job satisfaction results show a weak positive correlation with a statistical significance level of

relationship between the two variables (Table 6).

The following research questions were examined to determine the association between transformational leadership behavior and employees' job satisfaction:

Research question 1

What dimensions of transformational leadership influence employees' job satisfaction the most in selected colleges at King Khalid University, Abha, Saudi Arabia?

The first research question examined the dimension of transformational leadership that most influences job satisfaction. Results emanating from this research show that the four dimensions of transformational leadership—idealized influence ($R=0.3452$, $\rho=0.0001$), inspirational motivation ($R=0.2934$, $\rho=0.0003$), intellectual stimulation ($R=0.3622$, $\rho=0.0001$), and individualized consideration ($R=0.3334$, $\rho=0.0001$)—have a statistically significant level, and have weak positive relationships with job satisfaction. This means that intellectual stimulation ($R=0.3622$, $\rho=0.0001$) influences employees' job satisfaction the most, compared to the other three dimensions of transformational leadership behavior. Thus, transformational leadership can be seen as having little influence on job satisfaction in the selected colleges at KKU. This result is in line with Mohammad et al. [33].

Research question 2

What dimensions of transformational leadership influence employees' job satisfaction the least in selected colleges at King Khalid University, Abha, Saudi Arabia?

The second research question investigates the dimension of transformational leadership that influence job satisfaction the least. The results show that the four dimensions of transformational leadership behavior have a statistically significant level and weak positive relationships with job satisfaction: idealized influence ($R=0.3452$, $\rho=0.0001$), inspirational motivation ($R=0.2934$, $\rho=0.0003$), intellectual stimulation ($R=0.3622$, $\rho=0.0001$) and individualized consideration ($R=0.3334$, $\rho=0.0001$). This means that inspirational motivation influence employees' job satisfaction the least among the four dimensions of transformational leadership.

Research question 3

What is the theoretical relationship between transformational leadership and employees' job satisfaction in selected colleges at King Khalid University, Abha, Saudi Arabia?

The findings revealed a weak positive correlation with a statistically significant relationship between transformational leadership dimensions and employees' job satisfaction. These findings are the same as in the study carried out by Wang et al. [34], which found a statistically significant moderate positive correlation ($R=0.556$, $p<0.001$) between transformational leadership and job satisfaction among clinical registered nurses. The study's findings were also consistent with prior studies, which found a positive relationship between transformational leadership and employees' job satisfaction [33, 35-40].

The findings of the multiple linear regression analysis indicated a weak positive association between transformational leadership behavior and employees' job satisfaction (R value 0.386). This is similar to the findings of Rothfelder et al. [39], who showed that transformational leadership was a significant predictor of German hotel employees' job satisfaction levels. The findings of the multiple linear regression analysis are illustrated in Table 7. (Predictors: constant transformational leadership; dependent variable: job satisfaction). R has a value of 0.386 and represents the simple association between transformational leadership and job satisfaction. The value $R^2=0.1491$ indicates that the independent variable (transformational leadership) explains 14.9% of the variation of the dependent variable (job satisfaction). Although this variation in job satisfaction can be explained by many factors, the model can only explain 14.9% of it. This means that 85.1% cannot be explained by just transformational leadership behavior. Consequently, there are other variables that influence job satisfaction such as isolation, job security, communication, trust, remote leadership behavior, and environmental factors such as the weather, etc., which do not constitute part of this study.

Although many researchers agree that transformational leadership has a positive influence on employees' job satisfaction, the findings of Thamrin, et al. [41] showed that

transformational leadership did not affect employees' job satisfaction. Similarly, the findings by Long et al. [42] did not support previous studies that transformational leadership had a significant and positive correlation with job satisfaction. Hanaysha, et al. [43] in their study found inspirational stimulation to be positively correlated with job satisfaction, individualized consideration to be negatively correlated with job satisfaction, while charisma had no relationship to job satisfaction. Like that 2012 study, the present study also found a different degree of relationship with the dimensions of transformational leadership, with intellectual stimulation finding the greatest correlation.

Tesfaw et al. [44] also determined that transformational leadership behavior has a low-to-moderate level of overall teachers' job satisfaction. That result is similar to the present study's findings. Other prior studies that found a positive relationship with job satisfaction include Abourriai et al. [45], Aydin et al. [46], Bayram, et al. [47], Bolger, et al. [48], Islam et al. [49], Mohammad, et al. [33] and Shibru, et al. [38].

Theoretical implications

This research contributes to existing theory in numerous methods. First, present research makes a novel contribution by unboxing the limited understanding of the effect of transformational leadership and its four dimensions on employees' job satisfaction in a tertiary institution in the context of non-western nation like Saudi Arabia. It was also concluded that Intellectual stimulation had more influence and inspirational motivation had least influence on employees' job satisfaction. This study spotlight that transformational leader develops relationship with the followers, reduces followers unwillingness in championing of employees job satisfaction during organizational change using transformational leadership style. Second, this research uncovers the meditational effect of transformational leadership on job satisfaction using conceptual leadership framework. In other words, the influence of transformational leaders to enhance championing behavior of an employee in the context of job satisfaction varies depending on the degree of employee engagement during organizational change. Finally, assessing the conceptual model in the

context of the Saudi Arabia higher institutional sector will open an avenue for the organizations in non-western countries.

Practical implications

This research has few practical implications. Firstly, the transformational leader style is discovered to be suitable for influencing worker behavior and its four dimensions in the context of organizational change particularly in a non-western context like Saudi Arabia. Hence for this reason, the present study suggests that the organization should spotlight the practice of the transformational management technique inside the corporation to enhance the follower's engagement level in the organization. According to Bass et al. [50] individual private traits and personality are highly connected with consequences of leadership style. Secondly, the outcome of this research observes that if the connection between the transformational leader and job satisfaction is stimulated by the influence of workers engagement. Consequently, managers need to take the important strategy to encourage and inspire the worker to ensure job satisfaction in the organization. Finally, the findings of this study have some importance for leadership training, policy makers and school management and it's also provide valuable insights in non-western contexts like Saudi Arabia, to distinguish the impact that transformational leadership and work engagement and job satisfaction would bring on employee behavior for tackling organizational change [51-55].

CONCLUSION

This study finds that transformational leadership behavior and its four dimensions show a weak positive correlation, with a statistically significant level of correlation between transformational leadership behavior and employees' job satisfaction among the three selected colleges of Medicine, Dentistry, and Science at King Khalid University, Abha, Saudi Arabia, as measured by the MLQ and the JSS. It also found that intellectual stimulation had the greatest influence and inspirational motivation had the weakest influence on employees' job satisfaction.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of this study have some

importance for leadership training, policy-makers, and school management. The following recommendations can be made. To stimulate employees' satisfaction with higher institutions, it is necessary for school leaders to create an open and amicable climate in their institutions in which employees can freely express and share their opinions and collaborations on important decisions. This will reduce stress and boost job satisfaction and morale. Programs such as seminars, workshops, and updates on school administration might be of great help. Leaders should make themselves available for leadership training and development programs to ensure maximum efficiency in functions.

More research in the area could extend to cover other constructs, which also relate to employees' organizational effectiveness and outcomes. Numerous studies are needed in higher education. Further studies could also investigate private institutions with a broader variety of backgrounds, as well as a comparative analysis between full-time faculty staff and part-time academic staff in higher education. Finally, further studies could be carried out to see how leadership can improve the performance of both public and private institutions.

Future research could include other leadership styles like transactional or laissez-faire, because other leadership styles may influence job satisfaction. Employees may prefer laissez-faire leadership, as this would allow them to do their jobs more independently. A repeat of this research is recommended with individuals at different levels of the organization to determine whether these transformational leadership dimensions influence job satisfaction.

LIMITATIONS

As with all research, this study was bound by some limitation that cannot be disparage. Using a cross-sectional research design limits the understanding of the relationship between transformational leadership employees' job satisfaction over time. The study examined transformational leadership, not the full range of leadership styles. Also, the study only measured employees' perceptions of leadership behavior; no information was collected from leaders themselves. The results of the leadership assessment provide a contrast between how

leaders regard themselves and how subordinates regard them. These assessments contribute to changes in leadership behavior by promoting self-cognizance, and may encourage leadership development.

Another constraint of the present study is the degree to which the results can be generalized to the entire study population in higher institutions in Saudi Arabia, considering the small number of colleges (three) and institutions (only one, KKU) involved in the study. Therefore, conclusions cannot be drawn about the entire population. Another limitation to this research was the problem of men and women associating with one another due to restrictive government policies on gender, as it was very difficult for the researchers to access many participants due to this restriction.

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