

Transformational Leadership and Its Impact on Job Satisfaction and Personal Mastery among Public Health Leaders and Their Subordinates in the Southern Region of Saudi Arabia

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1.1 Introduction

Leadership effectiveness is widely recognized as a fundamental determinant of organizational performance across sectors, particularly within healthcare systems where leadership decisions directly influence service quality, workforce engagement, and institutional sustainability. In public health organizations, leadership plays a central role in shaping strategic direction, guiding policy implementation, and fostering a work environment that promotes collaboration, accountability, and continuous improvement. Effective leadership not only affects administrative outcomes but also significantly influences employee motivation, job satisfaction, and opportunities for professional growth and development (Northouse, 2022).

Healthcare systems are complex and dynamic, requiring leaders who can navigate challenges such as workforce shortages, rising service demands, technological advancements, and policy reforms. In this context, leadership styles that emphasize adaptability, innovation, and employee empowerment are essential. Within public health institutions, leaders are expected to manage organizational resources efficiently, inspire teams, cultivate a supportive work culture, and promote learning and professional development among staff members (Yukl, 2013).

In Saudi Arabia, the healthcare sector is undergoing a significant transformation as part of the national reform agenda articulated in Vision 2030. This strategic framework aims to improve the quality, efficiency, and accessibility of healthcare services while promoting innovation, privatization, and the development of a sustainable healthcare workforce. The implementation of these reforms requires effective leadership capable of guiding organizations through structural changes, managing workforce expectations, and

fostering a culture that embraces continuous improvement and professional excellence (Saudi Vision 2030; Ministry of Health, Saudi Arabia, 2023).

Among the various leadership theories explored in organizational research, transformational leadership has received considerable attention for its positive impact on organizational outcomes. The concept of transformational leadership was initially introduced by James MacGregor Burns and later expanded and operationalized by Bernard M. Bass. Transformational leaders are characterized by their ability to inspire and motivate followers to exceed expectations, encourage innovative thinking, and foster strong interpersonal relationships within the organization (Bass & Riggio, 2006). This leadership style is commonly described in terms of four key dimensions: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Through these dimensions, transformational leaders promote a shared vision, encourage creativity and problem-solving, and provide personalized support for employees' professional development.

The relevance of transformational leadership in healthcare settings is well documented. Studies consistently demonstrate that transformational leadership is associated with improved employee performance, stronger organizational commitment, enhanced teamwork, and higher job satisfaction among healthcare professionals (Boamah et al., 2018). In environments characterized by demanding workloads and emotional stress, leadership approaches that promote recognition, empowerment, and professional support are especially valuable for maintaining workforce stability and morale.

Job satisfaction is widely regarded as a critical indicator of employee well-being and organizational effectiveness. It reflects the extent to which individuals feel fulfilled,

valued, and motivated within their professional roles. High levels of job satisfaction are associated with numerous positive outcomes, including reduced turnover intentions, lower absenteeism rates, decreased burnout, and improved productivity (Judge et al., 2017). Conversely, low job satisfaction can negatively affect employee performance, patient care quality, and overall organizational efficiency. In the healthcare sector, where human resources are among the most valuable assets, maintaining a satisfied and motivated workforce is essential to delivering high-quality health services.

Another important concept relevant to leadership and professional development is personal mastery, introduced by Peter Senge in his influential work, *The Fifth Discipline*. Personal mastery refers to an individual's commitment to continuous learning, self-improvement, and the pursuit of excellence in both personal and professional domains (Senge, 2006). Within the framework of learning organizations, personal mastery emphasizes reflective practice, goal alignment, and the ongoing development of skills and competencies. Leaders play a vital role in fostering environments that encourage personal mastery by supporting learning opportunities, promoting open communication, and empowering employees to take initiative in their professional development.

Transformational leadership is particularly well aligned with the principles of personal mastery. Leaders who adopt a transformational approach often encourage employees to expand their capabilities, challenge existing assumptions, and engage in innovative thinking. By fostering a supportive, empowering organizational culture, transformational leaders can help employees develop greater self-awareness, confidence, and a commitment to lifelong learning. This process ultimately contributes to both individual growth and organizational improvement (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

Despite the growing body of literature on transformational leadership in healthcare, most studies have primarily focused on hospital environments and nursing leadership. Fewer studies have examined leadership dynamics in public health institutions, particularly in the context of Saudi Arabia. Moreover, research on the relationships among transformational leadership, job satisfaction, and personal mastery among public health professionals remains limited.

This gap is especially evident in the Southern Region of Saudi Arabia, where public health institutions play a crucial role in delivering preventive and community-based health services. Understanding how leadership styles influence employee attitudes and professional development in this context is essential for supporting workforce effectiveness and achieving the broader goals of health sector reform.

This study aims to explore the impact of transformational leadership on job satisfaction and personal mastery among public health leaders and their subordinates in Jazan, Saudi Arabia. By examining these relationships, the study seeks to contribute to the growing body of knowledge on leadership in healthcare and provide insights to support leadership development initiatives within Saudi public health institutions.

١,٢ Study Rationale

Effective leadership significantly influences organizational performance, employee motivation, and professional development within healthcare systems. In public health organizations, leadership shapes workplace culture, facilitates collaboration, and ensures the effective delivery of preventive and community-based health services (Northouse, 2022). Among various leadership approaches, transformational leadership is consistently associated with positive organizational outcomes, such as increased employee

engagement, stronger organizational commitment, and higher job satisfaction (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

Job satisfaction serves as a critical indicator of workforce stability and organizational effectiveness. Elevated job satisfaction correlates with improved productivity, reduced turnover intentions, and enhanced employee well-being (Judge et al., 2017). Additionally, personal mastery, defined as an individual's commitment to continuous learning and self-development, is essential for enhancing professional competence and supporting growth within learning organizations (Senge, 2006). Transformational leaders foster environments that promote both job satisfaction and personal mastery by encouraging empowerment, providing support, and facilitating professional development.

Although international literature on transformational leadership in healthcare is expanding, limited research has investigated its impact within public health institutions in Saudi Arabia. This research gap is particularly significant given the ongoing health sector transformation under Saudi Vision 2030, which prioritizes improvements in healthcare quality and the enhancement of workforce capabilities.

This study aims to examine the impact of transformational leadership on job satisfaction and personal mastery among public health leaders and their subordinates in Jazan, Saudi Arabia. Insights from this research may inform leadership development initiatives and support workforce sustainability within the Saudi public health sector.

¶Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

Leadership plays a central role in organizational effectiveness, particularly within healthcare systems, where coordination, collaboration, and professional commitment are essential for delivering high-quality services. In public health organizations, leadership influences administrative processes, staff motivation, skill development, and job satisfaction. As healthcare systems face increasing demands, evolving policies, and workforce challenges, effective leadership is crucial for maintaining organizational stability and achieving health objectives (Northouse, 2022).

Transformational leadership has garnered considerable attention in organizational research due to its strong association with positive organizational outcomes. Transformational leaders motivate employees to exceed expectations, promote innovation, and create an environment that supports professional growth (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

The following sections review literature on transformational leadership, job satisfaction, and personal mastery, with particular emphasis on empirical studies from international, regional, and Saudi Arabian contexts.

2.2 Transformational Leadership

James MacGregor Burns first introduced the concept of transformational leadership in 1978, describing it as a process in which leaders and followers collaborate to achieve higher levels of motivation and morality. Bernard M. Bass later expanded this concept

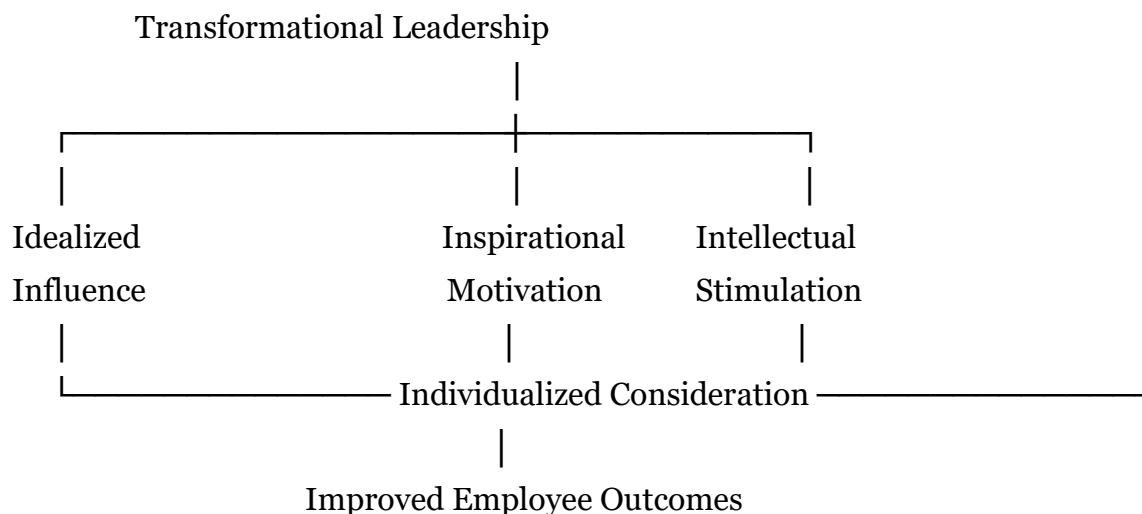
and developed the transformational leadership model, which is now widely utilized in contemporary leadership research.

According to Bass and Riggio (2006), transformational leadership consists of four key components:

1. **Idealized Influence** – Leaders act as role models and gain the trust and respect of their followers.
2. **Inspirational Motivation** – Leaders inspire employees by communicating a clear vision and motivating them to achieve organizational goals.
3. **Intellectual Stimulation** – Leaders encourage innovation, creativity, and critical thinking among employees.
4. **Individualized Consideration** – Leaders provide personal support and mentoring to help employees grow professionally.

Collectively, these four dimensions foster an environment in which employees feel empowered, valued, and motivated to enhance their performance.

Transformational Leadership Model



Research indicates that transformational leadership is particularly effective in healthcare environments, as it supports teamwork, encourages innovation, and promotes a culture of continuous improvement (Northouse, 2022).

2.3 Job Satisfaction in Healthcare Organizations

Job satisfaction is a widely studied concept in organizational psychology and management research. It refers to the extent to which employees feel positively about their work and workplace environment (Judge et al., 2017).

Job satisfaction is especially important in healthcare, where professionals face demanding workloads, emotional strain, and significant responsibility for patient outcomes. Low job satisfaction may lead to burnout, absenteeism, and increased turnover among healthcare workers.

Supportive leadership has been shown to significantly enhance job satisfaction among healthcare professionals. Transformational leaders, in particular, foster constructive workplaces by involving staff in decision-making, recognizing achievements, and promoting professional development (Boamah et al., 2018).

Factors Influencing Job Satisfaction in Healthcare



Elevated job satisfaction is associated with improved organizational performance, increased employee engagement, and enhanced patient care outcomes.

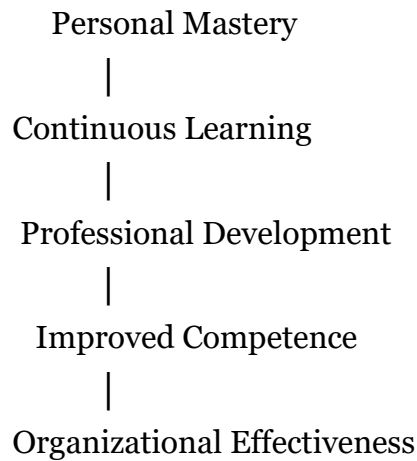
2.4 Personal Mastery and Professional Development

Peter Senge introduced the concept of personal mastery in his influential book *The Fifth Discipline*. Personal mastery refers to an individual's commitment to continuous learning and self-improvement within an organization (Senge, 2006).

Within learning organizations, employees continuously develop their abilities, refine their skills, and align personal ambitions with organizational objectives. Personal mastery encourages individuals to reflect on experiences, identify opportunities for growth, and pursue excellence in their roles.

Transformational leaders facilitate personal mastery by supporting learning, fostering innovation, and encouraging professional development.

Personal Mastery within Learning Organizations



Promoting personal mastery is especially important in public health institutions, where continuous training and professional development are essential for addressing emerging health challenges.

2.5 International Studies on Transformational Leadership in Healthcare

To understand the global context, a substantial body of international research has examined the relationship between transformational leadership and employee outcomes in healthcare settings, examining the impact of transformational leadership on nursing outcomes in Canadian hospitals. The results showed that transformational leadership positively influenced job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and patient safety outcomes.

Additional studies indicate that transformational leadership increases engagement, reduces stress, and enhances collaboration within healthcare teams.

These findings indicate that transformational leadership contributes to supportive work environments, thereby improving both employee well-being and organizational performance.

2.6 Studies in Arab Countries

Recent studies in Arab countries have examined the influence of leadership styles in healthcare organizations. Research from Middle Eastern healthcare settings demonstrates that transformational leadership is associated with higher employee satisfaction, improved teamwork, and enhanced organizational performance.

Studies conducted in Jordan, Egypt, and the United Arab Emirates have found that healthcare workers who perceive their leaders as supportive and inspirational report higher job satisfaction and greater organizational commitment.

These findings underscore the importance of adopting leadership styles that foster employee engagement and professional development in healthcare institutions throughout the region.

2.7 Studies in Gulf Countries

Research in Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries has highlighted the positive impact of transformational leadership within healthcare organizations.

Studies in the United Arab Emirates and Qatar demonstrate that transformational leadership enhances employee motivation and organizational commitment. Furthermore, healthcare organizations led by transformational leaders exhibit greater innovation and adaptability in response to healthcare reforms and policy changes. The growing emphasis on healthcare transformation across Gulf countries has further

increased interest in leadership development as a key factor in improving healthcare system performance.

2.8 Studies in Saudi Arabia

Leadership research in Saudi Arabian healthcare has expanded considerably in recent years, particularly amid reforms associated with Saudi Vision 2030.

Several studies conducted in Saudi hospitals have reported positive relationships between transformational leadership and job satisfaction among nurses and healthcare professionals. For instance, Al-Yami et al. (2017) found that nurses who perceived their leaders as transformational reported higher levels of job satisfaction and professional engagement.

Other studies conducted in various regions of Saudi Arabia have demonstrated that transformational leadership improves employee motivation, enhances teamwork, and contributes to improved organizational outcomes in healthcare institutions.

However, the majority of these studies have concentrated on hospital environments, particularly among nursing staff. Research on leadership dynamics within public health institutions remains limited, especially in the southern regions of the country, such as Jazan.

2.9 Research Gap

Despite evidence of the positive effects of transformational leadership in healthcare settings, several research gaps persist.

First, most existing research focuses on hospital settings rather than public health institutions. Second, few studies have simultaneously examined the relationships among

transformational leadership, job satisfaction, and personal mastery. Third, empirical evidence from the southern regions of Saudi Arabia is limited.

This study aims to address these gaps by examining the impact of transformational leadership on job satisfaction and personal mastery among public health leaders and their subordinates in Jazan, Saudi Arabia.

❧ Research Aim

This study aims to examine the impact of transformational leadership on job satisfaction and personal mastery among public health leaders and their subordinates in the Jazan Region of Saudi Arabia.

❧ Research Objectives

1. To assess the extent to which transformational leadership is practiced.
2. To measure job satisfaction among public health leaders and their subordinates.
3. To assess the levels of personal mastery among public health leaders and their subordinates.
4. To examine the correlation between transformational leadership and job satisfaction.
5. To examine the correlation between transformational leadership and personal mastery.
6. To determine whether transformational leadership predicts job satisfaction and personal mastery among public health leaders and their subordinates.

4 Hypotheses Development

This section develops hypotheses concerning the relationships among transformational leadership, job satisfaction, and personal mastery.

4.1 Transformational Leadership and Job Satisfaction

Leadership style is recognized as a critical factor shaping employees' attitudes and behaviors within organizations. In healthcare, leadership influences workplace culture, facilitates collaboration, and motivates effective performance. Among various approaches, transformational leadership is consistently associated with positive employee outcomes, particularly job satisfaction.

Bernard M. Bass advanced the theory of transformational leadership, expanding upon the work of James MacGregor Burns. According to this theory, leaders motivate employees by articulating a clear vision, fostering innovation, and providing individualized support (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Through these practices, transformational leaders build trust, offer recognition, and enhance job satisfaction.

Empirical studies in healthcare demonstrate that transformational leadership increases job satisfaction among healthcare professionals. For instance, Boamah et al. (2018) found that nurses led by transformational leaders reported higher job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Additional research indicates that supportive leadership enhances morale and reduces workplace stress.

In public health organizations, where employees frequently work under demanding conditions and limited resources, leadership practices that foster encouragement, recognition, and empowerment can enhance job satisfaction. Thus, transformational leadership is expected to positively affect job satisfaction among public health professionals.

H1: Transformational leadership has a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction among public health professionals.

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4.2 Transformational Leadership and Personal Mastery

Personal mastery denotes an individual's continuous effort to learn, improve, and achieve professional growth. Senge introduced this concept within the learning organization framework (Senge, 2006).

In organizations that support personal mastery, employees continuously develop skills, reflect on experiences, and pursue professional growth. Leadership plays a critical role in this process by creating learning opportunities and encouraging employees to realize their potential.

Transformational leaders are particularly effective in promoting personal mastery by fostering intellectual stimulation, creativity, and innovation among employees. By challenging existing assumptions and supporting professional growth, transformational leaders contribute to a culture of continuous learning within organizations.

Studies in organizational leadership indicate that employees led by transformational leaders are more likely to engage in professional development and pursue continuous

learning opportunities. In healthcare organizations, this leadership style encourages the development of new competencies and adaptation to evolving healthcare environments.

Healthcare systems are emphasizing workforce development, especially amid reforms under Saudi Vision 2030. In this environment, leadership that supports personal mastery is increasingly important and transformational leadership is expected to contribute to its development among public health professionals.

H2: Transformational leadership has a positive and significant effect on personal mastery among public health professionals.

4.3 Job Satisfaction and Personal Mastery

Job satisfaction may influence employees' motivation to develop skills and pursue continuous learning. Satisfied employees are typically more motivated, engaged, and committed to their organizations. When employees feel valued and supported in the workplace, they are more likely to invest effort in skill development and professional growth.

Research in organizational psychology suggests that job satisfaction promotes employee behaviors that enhance personal development. In healthcare, satisfied employees often demonstrate greater commitment to professional excellence and continuous learning.

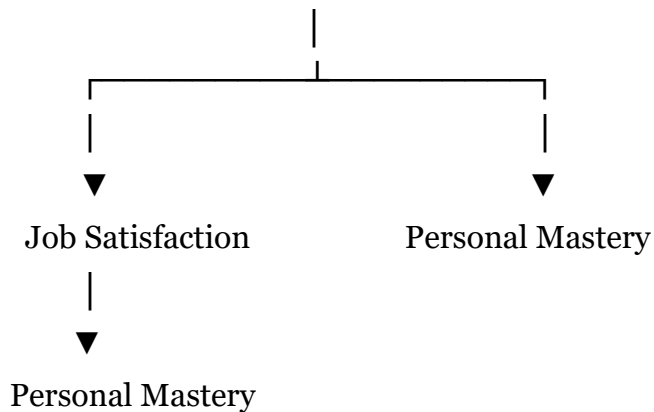
Job satisfaction is likely to promote personal mastery among public health professionals.

H3: Job satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on personal mastery among public health professionals.

4.5 Conceptual Relationship Among Variables

Transformational leadership is likely to influence both job satisfaction and personal mastery, while job satisfaction may also contribute to the development of personal mastery.

The proposed conceptual framework in this study posits that transformational leadership directly affects both job satisfaction and personal mastery, and that job satisfaction also directly influences personal mastery.



This framework suggests that transformational leadership may directly influence both job satisfaction and personal mastery, while job satisfaction may further enhance personal mastery among public health professionals.

Hypotheses Summary

- **H1:** Transformational leadership positively influences job satisfaction.
- **H2:** Transformational leadership positively influences personal mastery.
- **H3:** Job satisfaction positively influences personal mastery.

Research Methodology

Study setting

The study is to be conducted in the Jazan region of Saudi Arabia.

Research design

A cross-sectional study design will be employed to address the research objectives.

Research sample size

Based on a previous study (Notarnicola, 2024) and assuming an expected effect size of 0.30 (medium), a significance level of 0.05, and a statistical power of 0.80, the minimum required sample size was calculated to be 175 participants.

Study population

The study population consists of public health leaders and their subordinates in the Jazan region.

Sampling technique

All identified public health leaders and subordinates within the region will be included in the study.

Data collection tool

The evaluation instruments include the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ-6S), the Satisfaction of Employees in Health Care (SEHC) questionnaire, and the Personal Mastery Scale (PMS).

Statistical analysis

The data will be analyzed using descriptive statistics, correlation, and regression analyses to examine relationships among transformational leadership, job satisfaction, and personal mastery. SPSS software will be used to ensure accuracy and consistency. The analysis will focus on identifying significant relationships between transformational leadership practices and the outcomes of interest. Data interpretation will align with the study objectives, and robustness will be ensured through cross-validation.

Ethical consideration

Prior to data collection, participants will be informed of the study's purpose, procedures, research methods, data anonymity, and their right to withdraw at any time without consequences. Comprehensive information regarding the study, including its objectives, procedures, potential risks, and benefits, will be provided. Explicit informed consent will be obtained, and participants will be required to sign a consent form before completing the questionnaires. Only individuals who provide signed consent will be included in the study. This process ensures that all participants understand their involvement and voluntarily agree to participate. Ethical approval will be obtained from the Jazan Health Directorate and the relevant Ethical Committees.

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