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عنوان البحث

**The Influence of Leadership Styles on Employee Performance, Creativity, and Job
Satisfaction at Pharmaceutical Companies in Saudi Arabia**

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Introduction:

The pharmaceutical industry in Saudi Arabia has experienced significant growth in recent years, aligned with the country's Vision 2030 initiative to diversify the economy beyond oil dependency (Alshuwaikhat & Mohammed, 2022). This sector has become increasingly important as Saudi Arabia aims to strengthen its healthcare infrastructure and reduce dependence on imported pharmaceuticals. Leadership within this specialized industry context plays a critical role in organizational success, particularly in knowledge-intensive sectors where employee performance, creativity, and job satisfaction significantly impact competitive advantage (Al-Malki & Juan, 2018).

The relationship between leadership styles and employee outcomes has been extensively studied globally; however, the unique cultural, regulatory, and economic context of Saudi Arabia's pharmaceutical sector warrants specific investigation (Alomiri et al., 2019). Saudi Arabia's distinct cultural characteristics, including high power distance, collectivism, and traditional values, potentially modify how leadership approaches affect employee outcomes compared to Western contexts (Hofstede, 2001). Additionally, the pharmaceutical industry presents unique challenges, including strict regulatory requirements, high innovation demands, and the need for specialized technical knowledge (Alshamrani, 2021).

This research plan outlines a comprehensive approach to examining how various leadership styles influence employee performance, creativity, and job

satisfaction within Saudi Arabian pharmaceutical companies. By investigating these relationships, this study aims to develop contextually appropriate recommendations for leadership development in this strategic industry sector.

Study Problems:

Despite the growing importance of Saudi Arabia's pharmaceutical sector, several research gaps exist regarding leadership effectiveness in this specific context:

- 1- Limited research has examined the relationship between leadership styles and employee creativity specifically within Saudi Arabian pharmaceutical companies, despite innovation being crucial to this sector's development (Algarni & Al-Hussein, 2021).
- 2- The interrelationship between employee performance, creativity, and job satisfaction under different leadership approaches remains understudied in the Saudi pharmaceutical context (Al-Swidi et al., 2018).
- 3- Most existing research on leadership in Saudi contexts has applied Western leadership theories without sufficient adaptation to local cultural values and business practices (Alomiri et al., 2019).
- 4- There is inadequate understanding of how leadership effectiveness varies across different functional areas within pharmaceutical companies (R&D,

manufacturing, quality assurance, marketing) where task characteristics and professional expectations differ significantly (Alshamrani, 2021).

5- The ongoing transformation of Saudi Arabia's business environment under Vision 2030 initiatives may be altering traditional leadership-outcome relationships, yet contemporary empirical evidence is limited (Alshuwaikhat & Mohammed, 2022).

6- The potential moderating effects of demographic variables (gender, age, educational background) on leadership-outcome relationships in Saudi pharmaceutical companies remain insufficiently explored (Al-Malki & Juan, 2018).

The Importance of the Study:

This research addresses critical knowledge gaps with several important implications:

1-Strategic industry development: As Saudi Arabia develops its pharmaceutical industry under Vision 2030, identifying effective leadership approaches could enhance sector competitiveness, innovation capacity, and knowledge development (Alshuwaikhat & Mohammed, 2022).

2-Cultural contextualization of leadership theory: This study will contribute to understanding how Western leadership theories translate to the Saudi Arabian context, providing insights into how cultural values moderate leadership effectiveness in specific industry settings (Alomiri et al., 2019).

3-Enhanced innovation capacity: By examining the relationship between leadership styles and employee creativity, this research addresses a critical factor in

pharmaceutical competitiveness—the ability to innovate and develop new products (Alzoman, 2022).

4-Organizational development insights: Pharmaceutical companies in Saudi Arabia can utilize findings to develop targeted leadership training programs tailored to their specific organizational needs, functional areas, and cultural context (Al-Swidi et al., 2018).

5-Economic significance: With high investment in the pharmaceutical sector as part of economic diversification, optimizing leadership to enhance productivity, creativity, and employee retention addresses a national economic priority (Algarni & Al-Hussein, 2021).

6-Theoretical advancement: The study will expand leadership theory by examining how industry-specific factors within pharmaceuticals interact with national culture to shape leadership effectiveness across multiple employee outcome dimensions (Al-Malki & Juan, 2018).

Objectives of the Study:

The primary objectives of this research are:

1-To identify and classify predominant leadership styles currently employed within Saudi Arabian pharmaceutical companies across different organizational functions.

2-To examine the relationship between identified leadership styles and objective employee performance metrics specific to pharmaceutical roles.

3-To assess how different leadership approaches influence employee creativity and innovative behavior within Saudi pharmaceutical companies.

4-To evaluate the impact of various leadership styles on different dimensions of job satisfaction among pharmaceutical employees in Saudi Arabia.

5-To analyze potential mediating mechanisms (such as psychological empowerment, organizational commitment, and knowledge sharing) through which leadership influences employee outcomes.

6-To investigate how demographic factors (gender, age, educational background) and organizational variables (company size, ownership structure, department) moderate leadership-outcome relationships.

To develop contextualized recommendations for leadership development specifically tailored to enhance employee performance, creativity, and satisfaction in the Saudi Arabian pharmaceutical industry.

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Study Questions:

This research will address the following questions:

1- What leadership styles are most commonly practiced in Saudi Arabian pharmaceutical companies, and how do they vary across different organizational functions?

2-To what extent do transformational, transactional, authentic, and servant leadership styles predict employee performance metrics in Saudi Arabian pharmaceutical companies?

3-How do various leadership approaches affect employee creativity and innovative behavior within the Saudi pharmaceutical context?

4-What is the relationship between different leadership styles and various dimensions of job satisfaction among pharmaceutical employees in Saudi Arabia?

5-Through what psychological and organizational mechanisms do leadership styles influence employee performance, creativity, and satisfaction in Saudi pharmaceutical companies?

6-How do Saudi Arabia's cultural characteristics moderate the relationship between leadership styles and employee outcomes in pharmaceutical organizations?

7-What differences exist in leadership effectiveness across various functional departments (R&D, manufacturing, quality assurance, marketing) within Saudi Arabian pharmaceutical companies?

8-How have recent regulatory and economic changes in Saudi Arabia influenced leadership approaches and their effectiveness within pharmaceutical organizations?

Theoretical Premises of Study:

This research will proceed from several key theoretical premises:

1-Leadership effectiveness is contextually dependent, with both national culture and industry characteristics moderating optimal approaches (House et al., 2004).

2-The relationship between leadership style and employee outcomes operates through multiple potential mediating mechanisms, including psychological empowerment, organizational commitment, leader-member exchange quality, and knowledge sharing behavior (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Khan & Alrakhmi, 2021).

3-Different functional areas within pharmaceutical organizations may require varying leadership approaches based on task characteristics, professional subcultures, and innovation requirements (Alshamrani, 2021).

4-Employee creativity in pharmaceutical contexts requires both individual-level factors (intrinsic motivation, domain expertise) and supportive organizational conditions, which leadership significantly influences (Amabile, 1996; Alzoman, 2022).

5-Saudi Arabia's cultural characteristics, particularly high power distance, collectivism, and uncertainty avoidance, may modify how employees respond to different leadership behaviors compared to Western contexts (Alomiri et al., 2019; Hofstede, 2001).

6-Leadership influences employee performance, creativity, and satisfaction through both direct effects and reciprocal relationships among these outcome variables (Al-Malki & Juan, 2018).

7-The ongoing economic and social transformation in Saudi Arabia may be altering traditional leadership dynamics, particularly regarding gender roles and international influences (Alshuwaikhat & Mohammed, 2022).

Previous Studies and Theoretical Framework

Leadership research in organizational contexts has evolved through several theoretical frameworks that inform this study's approach. Transformational leadership theory, conceptualized by Burns (1978) and further developed by Bass (1985), has been widely applied across industries. Al-Swidi et al. (2018) found that transformational leadership positively influenced employee creativity in Saudi pharmaceutical contexts, though the mechanisms differed somewhat from Western findings. Complementing this, transactional leadership emphasizes structured exchanges and contingent rewards, which Algarni and Al-Hussein (2021) found effective for routine pharmaceutical operations in Saudi Arabia, particularly in manufacturing contexts.

More recent leadership theories have also shown relevance in knowledge-intensive industries. Authentic leadership theory, focusing on leader self-awareness, transparency, and ethical perspective (Walumbwa et al., 2008), has demonstrated positive relationships with both performance and satisfaction outcomes. Khan and Alrakhmi (2021) found authentic leadership particularly effective in promoting knowledge sharing and psychological empowerment among Saudi pharmaceutical researchers. Similarly, servant leadership approaches have shown promise in collectivist cultures like Saudi Arabia. Abdullah and Shamsuddin (2023) noted that servant leadership fostered organizational commitment and innovative behaviors among Saudi

pharmaceutical employees through its alignment with Islamic values emphasizing humility and service.

In the Saudi Arabian context, several studies have examined how cultural characteristics influence leadership effectiveness. Alomiri et al. (2019) identified that high power distance values in Saudi organizational culture modified typical leadership-outcome relationships observed in Western contexts, with directive leadership demonstrating stronger positive effects than typically observed in Western studies. Alsayari (2021) further highlighted how cultural intelligence moderated leadership effectiveness in multinational pharmaceutical companies operating in Saudi Arabia, suggesting the importance of cultural adaptation in leadership approaches.

Recent research has begun examining leadership within Saudi Arabia's changing business landscape. Alshuwaikhat and Mohammed (2022) noted that as Saudi organizations increasingly interact with global partners, particularly in knowledge-intensive industries like pharmaceuticals, hybrid leadership approaches incorporating both traditional Arab values and contemporary global practices have emerged. Al-Momani (2021) specifically examined how strategic leadership influenced organizational ambidexterity in Saudi pharmaceutical companies, finding that balancing exploration and exploitation activities required contextually-sensitive leadership.

The theoretical framework for this study will integrate multiple leadership theories with specific attention to cultural contingency models. Bass and Riggio's (2006) Full Range Leadership Model will serve as a foundational framework, supplemented by Hofstede's cultural dimensions theory and House et al.'s

(2004) GLOBE study findings on culturally endorsed leadership. Additionally, Amabile's (1996) componential theory of creativity will inform the examination of leadership influences on employee creativity within the pharmaceutical context.

Methodology and Research Methods:

This study will employ a mixed-methods sequential explanatory design to comprehensively address the research questions:

Phase 1: Qualitative Exploration

- Semi-structured interviews with 15-20 pharmaceutical leaders across different organizational functions (R&D, manufacturing, quality assurance, marketing) and levels (executive, middle management, team leaders).
- Focus groups with 30-40 employees representing diverse roles to explore perceptions of leadership effectiveness and its influence on performance, creativity, and satisfaction.
- Case studies of 3-4 pharmaceutical companies with different ownership structures (multinational, domestic, joint venture) to identify contextual factors affecting leadership approaches.
- Data will be analyzed using thematic analysis aided by NVivo software to identify key leadership dimensions relevant to the Saudi pharmaceutical context.

Phase 2: Quantitative Assessment

- Cross-sectional survey using stratified random sampling from pharmaceutical companies representing diverse sizes and ownership structures.
- Target sample size of 400-500 employees and 80-100 leaders from 10-12 pharmaceutical companies in Saudi Arabia, ensuring representation across different regions and company types.
- Multi-source data collection with leadership assessments from both leaders (self-assessment) and their direct reports to minimize common method bias.
- Hierarchical linear modeling will be used to account for nested data structure (employees within teams within organizations).
- Structural equation modeling will examine the mediating mechanisms between leadership styles and employee outcomes.

Phase 3: Integration and Validation

- Follow-up interviews with selected survey participants to validate and contextualize quantitative findings.
- Expert panel discussions with industry leaders, human resource professionals, and academic experts to interpret results and develop practical recommendations.
- Development of a Saudi pharmaceutical leadership framework based on integrated findings.
- Presentation of preliminary findings to stakeholder groups for validation and refinement of conclusions

Study Tools (Data Collection Tools):

The following instruments will be employed for data collection:

Leadership Style Assessment:

- The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ-5X) developed by Bass and Avolio (1995) to measure transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership dimensions.
- Authentic Leadership Questionnaire (ALQ) developed by Walumbwa et al. (2008) to assess leader self-awareness, relational transparency, internalized moral perspective, and balanced processing.
- Servant Leadership Scale (Liden et al., 2008) to measure service-oriented leadership dimensions relevant to collectivist contexts.
- Cultural Leadership Inventory developed during the qualitative phase to capture culturally-specific leadership behaviors in the Saudi context.

Employee Performance Measurement:

- Objective performance metrics specific to different pharmaceutical roles (e.g., production quotas, quality metrics, regulatory compliance rates, sales targets).
- ☐- Supervisor ratings using a standardized performance appraisal scale adapted for pharmaceutical job functions.
- Self-reported task performance and organizational citizenship behavior measures (Williams & Anderson, 1991).

- Team-level performance assessments for collaborative work environments.

Creativity and Innovation Assessment:

- Zhou and George's (2001) Employee Creativity Scale measuring creative behavior in workplace settings.
- Innovation behavior scale adapted from Scott and Bruce (1994) measuring idea generation, promotion, and implementation.
- Department-level innovation output metrics (e.g., new products developed, process improvements implemented, patents filed).
- Creative problem-solving tasks specifically designed for pharmaceutical contexts.

Job Satisfaction Assessment:

- The Job Descriptive Index (JDI) measuring satisfaction with work, supervision, coworkers, pay, and promotion opportunities.
- Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) short form to assess intrinsic and extrinsic satisfaction dimensions.
- Pharmaceutical industry-specific satisfaction items regarding regulatory compliance, scientific contribution, and professional development opportunities.
- Three-component organizational commitment scale (Meyer & Allen, 1991) to assess affective, continuance, and normative commitment.

Mediating and Moderating Variables:

- Psychological Empowerment Scale (Spreitzer, 1995) measuring meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact.
- Knowledge sharing behavior scale (Wang & Noe, 2010) assessing explicit and tacit knowledge sharing.
- Cultural values assessment using scales from Hofstede's cultural dimensions.
- Organizational climate measures specific to pharmaceutical environments.
- Demographic information including age, gender, education, tenure, nationality, and job function.

Qualitative Tools:

- Semi-structured interview guide exploring leadership experiences, challenges, and cultural adaptations.
- Focus group protocol examining employee perceptions of effective leadership for performance, creativity, and satisfaction.
- Critical incident technique forms to document specific leadership challenges and responses.
- Case study protocol for organizational-level analysis of leadership contexts.

Study Limitations:

Several potential limitations must be acknowledged in the proposed research:

Access challenges: Given the competitive and sometimes confidential nature of pharmaceutical operations, gaining comprehensive access to multiple companies may prove difficult, potentially limiting sample representativeness (Alshamrani, 2021).

Cultural response bias: Survey responses in high power distance cultures like Saudi Arabia may be influenced by social desirability bias, particularly regarding leadership evaluation and job satisfaction measures (Alomiri et al., 2019).

Causal inference limitations: The predominantly cross-sectional design limits causal conclusions about leadership-outcome relationships, though statistical controls and theoretical grounding will strengthen interpretations.

Measurement challenges: Creativity and innovation are complex constructs that can be difficult to measure objectively, particularly in pharmaceutical contexts where innovation cycles may be lengthy (Amabile, 1996).

Sample representativeness: The pharmaceutical sector in Saudi Arabia includes diverse organization types (multinational subsidiaries, government-affiliated companies, private Saudi firms), and ensuring balanced representation may be challenging.

Language and measurement equivalence: Despite careful translation procedures, subtle meaning differences in leadership and creativity concepts between Arabic and English may affect measurement precision.

Industry transformation effects: The rapidly evolving nature of Saudi Arabia's pharmaceutical sector under Vision 2030 initiatives means findings

may have time-limited applicability as the industry continues to develop (Alshuwaikhat & Mohammed, 2022).

Gender considerations: Traditional gender segregation in some Saudi workplaces may affect leadership dynamics differently across settings with varying degrees of gender integration, potentially limiting the generalizability of findings across different organizational contexts (Al-Malki & Juan, 2018).

Functional area differences: While the study aims to examine leadership across different pharmaceutical functions, smaller companies may not have clearly differentiated departments, potentially limiting comparative analysis.

Respondent fatigue: The comprehensive nature of the survey instruments may lead to response fatigue, potentially affecting data quality, particularly for longer measurement scales.

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