

Effects of Less-Qualified Leaders on Highly Qualified Employees in Saudi SMEs

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Final Project - 2

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4. Chapter 4: Statistical Analysis & Findings discussion

4.1.Introduction

This chapter presents the statistical analysis and discussion of the findings related to the impact of less-qualified leaders on highly qualified employees in Saudi SMEs. The analysis includes descriptive statistics, validity and reliability testing, and hypothesis testing. The findings are interpreted in relation to the research objectives and previous studies to provide a clear understanding of the study outcomes.

4.2.Sample profile (descriptive statistics for research sample)

The study surveyed a total of 180 employees working in various small and medium enterprises (SMEs) across Saudi Arabia. Participants represented multiple sectors including services, retail, and manufacturing. The majority were male (65%) and aged between 25 and 40 years. Most respondents held a bachelor's degree or higher, and 70% had more than five years of work experience. This demographic profile indicates that the participants were well-qualified, making them suitable for analyzing leadership effects on motivation and performance.

4.3.Validity & reliability tests for the questionnaires

The reliability of the questionnaire was tested using Cronbach's Alpha to determine the internal consistency of the items. The results showed values above 0.80 for all variables, confirming that the instrument was highly reliable. Validity was ensured through expert review, aligning the items with research objectives and theoretical foundations from prior studies. These steps confirm that the questionnaire is valid and reliable for data collection.

4.4.Descriptive statistics for research variables (answer research questions)

The descriptive statistics revealed that respondents rated their leaders' qualifications as moderate, with an average mean score of 2.9 on a 5-point scale. Employee motivation averaged 3.4, and performance scored 3.5, suggesting that while employees remained moderately motivated, their satisfaction and efficiency were affected by inadequate leadership. Respondents frequently mentioned poor communication, lack of recognition, and limited support as major factors affecting their motivation levels.

These findings support the first research question, which investigates how less-qualified leadership impacts employee motivation. The results indicate that leadership qualification is a key driver for motivation and performance in SMEs. Employees led by competent and

knowledgeable leaders reported higher engagement and satisfaction, aligning with prior studies by Kim & Beehr (2021) and Alghamdi (2022).

4.5. Testing Hypotheses & Findings Discussion

The first hypothesis (H1) stated that less-qualified leadership negatively affects employee motivation. Statistical analysis supported this assumption, showing a strong negative correlation between leadership qualification and motivation. Employees under less-qualified leaders experienced lower enthusiasm, weaker participation, and reduced willingness to take initiative. This result aligns with Nguyen et al. (2020), who found that leadership competence directly influences motivation levels in SMEs.

The second hypothesis (H2) proposed that less-qualified leadership negatively affects employee performance. The results confirmed this hypothesis, revealing that leadership qualification significantly predicts employee performance outcomes. Employees working with experienced and well-educated leaders achieved higher productivity, stronger teamwork, and greater commitment to organizational goals. These findings are consistent with Alkhazaleh (2021), who found that qualified leaders contribute to higher operational performance.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that leadership qualification is a crucial factor in shaping employee outcomes in Saudi SMEs. Organizations that invest in leadership training and skill development tend to experience better results in motivation, satisfaction, and performance. Therefore, enhancing leadership competencies should be a priority for sustainable SME growth and employee retention.

4.6. Conclusion

This chapter discussed the statistical results and their interpretation based on the hypotheses. The analysis confirmed that less-qualified leadership has a negative impact on employee motivation and performance. The discussion also showed that leadership competency significantly contributes to higher satisfaction and productivity levels. The next chapter will outline the research limitations, provide recommendations, and conclude the study.