



**Impact of Leadership Style and Job Satisfaction on Project Success:
The Mediating Role of Employee Engagement – A Field Study in Saudi
Arabia**

Department / Major:

Management College/ Master Degree in Project Management

Research Ethics Report

Prepared by:

Sharifa Mohammad AlMarhoon

Supervised by:

Dr. Al-Faisal Abdul Hamid

Dr. Fayez Jarrad

Academic Year: 2026

Table of Contents

1. Introduction	3
2. Importance of Research Ethics	3
3. Core Principles of Research Ethics	4
4. Ethics in Scientific Research	5
5. Research Ethics Rules and Regulations	6
6. Practical Application to the Current Research Topic.....	7
7. Conclusion	8
References	9

1. Introduction

Research Ethics involves ethical and professional practices of researchers planning and conducting studies in a manner that is responsible, honest and respectful. It guarantees that research is conducted honestly, the dignity and rights of the research subjects are respected, and the credence of academic knowledge remains unaffected. Ethics plays particular significance in social science and management research because research may be conducted involving people and opinions related to the workplace that may be sensitive (Berekeyeva et al., 2023). This study examines effect of transformational and transactional leadership styles and job satisfaction on Project success in Saudi Arabian Project Based Organizations, by examining the role of Employee engagement as a mediator. As this study is based on employees' responses in an online questionnaire, ethical concerns obviously need to be addressed to this study including informed consent, confidentiality, voluntary participation, protection of personal information and honest reporting. Hence, this report focuses on the main tenets of research ethics and how it may be practically applicable to the present thesis to make it academically reliable, ethically correct and socially responsible.

2. Importance of Research Ethics

Research Ethics is very crucial as it guarantees the credibility of the work done in the research world and it ensures that the knowledge produced is done in honesty, fairness and responsibility. Ethical standards in academic research do not just constitute formal requirements but are also a key pillar of trustworthy research. Adhering to ethical principles gives greater confidence in the data that is generated, in the analysis process, and in the findings that will be read by anyone, including future researchers, readers, supervisors, and institutions.

In the current study, the issue of research ethics is highly significant since the research is conducted with project-based organizations' employees in Saudi Arabia. These participants can be requested to voice their opinions concerning leadership styles, job satisfaction, employee engagement or project success. These responses may be sensitive because of implications for workplace relationships, workplace management practices and workplace performance (Dunn et al., 2016). Thus, it is necessary that the participants are made to feel safe, respected and protected before they

can give honest answers. Unless confidentiality and anonymity are guaranteed, employees may not answer the questions truthfully, fearing adverse repercussions.

Research ethics also enhances the quality of the research, minimizes bias, manipulation of data and gives research participants a fair deal. The researcher may not alter responses on the surveys in order to fit the hypotheses that transformational leadership is more effective for employee engagement than transactional leadership, or that transactional leadership is more effective for employee engagement than transformational leadership. Ethical research also serves the purpose of pro erases as it can be helpful in generating accurate recommendations which in turn can be used by organizations to enhance their leadership practices, employee well-being, and performance of their projects. Thus, research ethics enhances the academic value and practicality of the research.

3. Core Principles of Research Ethics

Research ethics includes principles that guide researchers in a responsible conduct of their research and safeguard the quality of academic research. This is particularly essential in the context of the current study where the opinions of the employees have been used. This includes opinions with regard to leadership, job satisfaction, engagement, and project success.

To write about research in an honest manner, involving facts and the information that has been generated from the research itself without fiction, concealment or alteration. For instance, if from the statistical results, it is found that there's no significant relationship between transactional leadership and project success, the researcher cannot change it to get the result to correspond to the hypothesis (Faulkner et al., 2017).

Integrity means that the research is carried out in a responsible and transparent fashion. For the purpose of this study, the researcher must demonstrate integrity in the forms of appropriate questionnaire items, presentation of method and analysis, refer to all sources using APA referencing.

Objectivity is the absence of personal bias in the data collection, analysis and interpretation process. For instance, the researcher should not have an expectancy that transformational

leadership is always the best leadership model, rather she or he should let the data reflect the conclusions.

Confidentiality is keeping participant's information and responses private. Employees will include opinions about the management of the organization, satisfaction with the workplace and so forth, and since there are many sensitive opinions they may have, it would be inappropriate to collect and publicize identities and results should only be shown in groups.

Informed consent involves informing subjects before their participation. Prior to filling out the online survey, participants should be told the purpose of the study, there is no obligation to participate, it is anonymous, how it will be used, and that they have the right to refuse to enter it with no consequences.

4. Ethics in Scientific Research

The ethical concerns related to scientific research can have significant consequences on the validity, credibility, and social benefits of a study. The large problem is plagiarism, in which researcher uses the other author's ideas, theories, and/or words without crediting them. For this study, a person who copied the definition of transformational leadership, job satisfaction, employee engagement or project success without referencing the source in APA format (or any other citation style) would be engaging in unethical behavior and this would compromise academic integrity.

There is also a very serious problem: Data falsification/fabrication. Falsification involves altering collected data; fabrication involves making up data that is not collected (MacLean et al., 2019). For instance, if the researcher alters the results of the survey to reflect the impact of the relationship between leadership style and project success as being strong mediator, the results shown would be misleading and thereby academically invalid.

The issue of researcher bias is also significant with regard to ethics. Bias is the act of letting the personal expectations to influence the result of research or the process of conducting research. For example, if the researcher has a bias towards transformative leadership over transactional leadership, then they might be misreading the results.

An additional concern is privacy violation as the study collects employees' opinions on leadership, satisfaction and engagement within the workplace. When results are disclosed to managers or organizations, individual responses might lead to embarrassment, pressure or harm to participants' professional lives.

Lastly, conflict of interest may arise when personal or academic/ organizational relationships impact the research. The researcher should not, for instance, be in any collaborative relationship with one of the participating organizations that influences or benefits data collection, analysis or reporting. It is important to resolve these problems as it is necessary to safeguard those participating in the research and ensure the research is credible.

5. Research Ethics Rules and Regulations

The set of rules and regulations determine the ethical codes for research and ensure the responsible, transparent and safe conduct of research in a formal fashion. The one of the strongest mechanisms is the function of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) or university ethics committee. Data collection involves human participants and proposals are reviewed by an IRB prior to start of data collection. It is meant to secure that the rights, privacy, dignity and welfare of the partakers are not violated. IRB or ethics approval is essential for the current study thus it captures the views of employees in Saudi Arabian organizations regarding the leadership styles, job satisfaction, employee engagement and project success (Nakray, 2015).

Relevant international ethical codes, including those of the APA (American Psychological Association), also instruct the researcher in handling informed consent, confidentiality, accurate citation and honest reporting. The standards outlined here are particularly applicable to this piece of research as participants are invited to share opinions which can be of a sensitive nature with regard to their workplace. Because of this, the researcher needs to make it very clear beforehand, what are the goals for the study; participation must be voluntary and anonymousness must also be safeguarded, and that the material received during the survey can be used only for academic purposes.

Ethical guidelines also aid in regulating the entire research process to exclude misconduct like plagiarism, data falsification, invasion of privacy, biased reporting and so on. It involves

employing proper techniques, safeguarding data, and reporting results accurately. In this thesis, these are rules that guarantee the just distribution of the online questionnaire, a confidential treatment of the respondents' answers and a correct reporting of the statistical findings. So, rules of research ethics are not just administrative procedures; they are quality assurance measures necessary to develop credible and reliable academic research which has social responsibility.

6. Practical Application to the Current Research

Topic

The current study examines the effect of transformational leadership style and transactional leadership style as well as the employee satisfaction on the successful project under a mediation model in project-based organizations in the Saudi Arabia. The data for the research is collected via an online questionnaire, and employees and members of the project team are involved, meaning that ethical considerations need to be taken in all aspects of the research.

Respondents should be provided with a consent statement before taking part that is easily understood about the purpose of the study, the kind of questions that are being asked, participation is voluntary, and they can stop any time prior to sending the survey. This can be critical as the participants might ask questions related to their chiefs, job satisfaction, level of involvement in projects and work performance, all of which could be sensitive in the work place setting (Nakray, 2015). The questionnaire doesn't contain names, employee ID numbers, phone numbers, or other identifying organization information, which can lead to fear or pressuring.

Confidentiality will be ensured by storing collected data in a locked filing cabinet in a password protected file and sharing access with the researcher and the authorized academic supervisor. Results should be reported in a statistical (aggregated rather than individual participant or organization) format including means, correlations, regression results and mediation analysis.

Primary threats of this study refer to psychological and professional issues that a person may experience as evaluating the leadership practices or fearing negative consequences that could lead to job loss. The following measures can minimize these risks: using neutral language in the questionnaires, maintaining confidentiality/ making it clear that answers are for academic purposes

only. Last, the researcher must be honest in analyzing and reporting the findings whether or not it was as expected and whether or not the results were significant.

7. Conclusion

Research ethics is a key prerequisite to valid, reliable and responsible research in the academic world. Ethical principles, including scientific honesty, integrity, objectivity, confidentiality, and informed consent, have been discussed and the application of such principles on the current research on leadership styles, job satisfaction, employee engagement, and project success on project-based organizations in Saudi Arabia has been illustrated. Because this study consists of opinions of employees related to their workplace, ethical precautions are required to ensure that the participants will not be exposed to privacy hazards, pressures or potential professional damage. The researcher is obligated to maintain the principle of voluntary response and anonymous response, assure secure data, and to honestly report the results of the statistics. To maintain academic integrity, plagiarism, bias, data manipulation and breaches in confidentiality must be avoided. Research ethics overall has been observed and positively assists the quality of the research to ensure that the findings uphold the standards of research and practice within that organization.

References

- Berekeyeva, A., Sharplin, E., Courtney, M., & Sagitova, R. (2023). Ethical human participant research in Central Asia: a quantitative analysis of attitudes and practices among social science researchers based in the region. *Research Ethics*, 20(2), 304–330. <https://doi.org/10.1177/17470161231202232>
- Dunn, A. G., Coiera, E., Mandl, K. D., & Bourgeois, F. T. (2016). Conflict of interest disclosure in biomedical research: a review of current practices, biases, and the role of public registries in improving transparency. *Research Integrity and Peer Review*, 1(1). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s41073-016-0006-7>
- Faulkner, M., Simpson, B., Martinez, E., & McMurray, J. (2017). The formalization of social-science research ethics. *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory*, 7(1), 71–79. <https://doi.org/10.14318/hau7.1.010>
- MacLean, L., Posner, E., Thomson, S., & Wood, E. J. (2019, February 12). *Research Ethics and Human Subjects: A Reflexive Openness Approach*. Papers.ssrn.com. https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3332887
- Nakray, K. (2015). Social Science Research Ethics for a Globalizing World. *Routledge EBooks*, 5–28. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315880020-2>