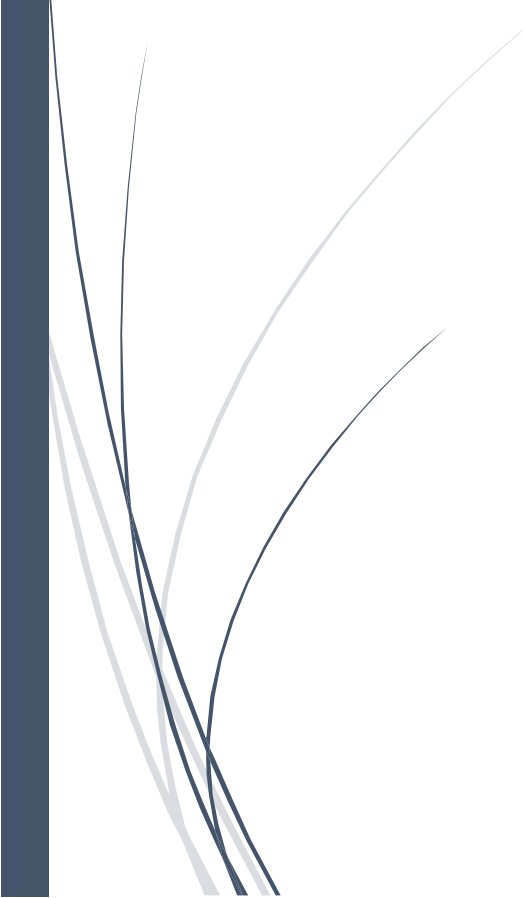




# Final Project 2

PMG 497



**Midocean University**

**Faculty of Management**

**Department/ Specialization .....**



## **Project title**

Exploring the Impact of Leadership Styles on Workplace Wellbeing: A  
Qualitative Study in the Saudi Arabian Workforce

## **Student name**

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## **Final Project - 2**

**Faculty of Management - Midocean University**

## **Supervisor**

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**Faculty member- Faculty of management- Midocean University**

28-08-2025 – 9

# Research instruments and Questionnaires

## **Informed Consent Form**

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this study. Before you proceed, please read the following information carefully:

1. Your participation in this research is completely voluntary.
2. You have the right to withdraw at any point without any negative consequences.
3. Your responses will be kept strictly confidential and used only for academic and research purposes.
4. No personal identifiers will be disclosed in any reports or publications resulting from this study.
5. The estimated time to complete the questionnaire is approximately 10–15 minutes.

By selecting “Yes” below, you confirm that:

- ☐ You have read and understood the above information.
- ☐ You agree to voluntarily participate in this study.
- ☐ Yes, I consent to participate.
- ☐ No, I do not consent to participate.

## **Demographic Information Sheet**

Please provide the following details:

1. **Name:** \_\_\_\_\_
2. **Age (Please select one):**
  - 18–25
  - 26–30
  - 31–35
  - 36–40
  - 41–45
  - 46–50
  - 51–55
  - 56–60
  - 61–65
  - 66–70

### 3. Gender:

- Male
- Female

### 4. Education Level:

- Bachelor's
- Master's
- PhD

### 5. Field of Work: \_\_\_\_\_

## Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ)

### Instructions:

This questionnaire provides a description of your leadership style. Twenty-one descriptive statements are listed below. Judge how frequently each statement fits you. The word “others” may mean your followers, clients, or group members.

### KEY:

- ☐ 0 = Not at all
- ☐ 1 = Once in a while
- ☐ 2 = Sometimes
- ☐ 3 = Fairly often
- ☐ 4 = Frequently, if not always

| No. | Statement                                                              | 0                        | 1                        | 2                        | 3                        | 4                        |
|-----|------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1   | I make others feel good to be around me.                               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2   | I express with a few simple words what we could and should do.         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3   | I enable others to think about old problems in new ways.               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4   | I help others develop themselves.                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5   | I tell others what to do if they want to be rewarded for their work.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6   | I am satisfied when others meet agreed-upon standards.                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7   | I am content to let others continue working in the same way as always. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8   | Others have complete faith in me.                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9   | I provide appealing images about what we can do.                       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10  | I provide others with new ways of looking at puzzling things.          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 11  | I let others know how I think they are doing.                          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 12  | I provide recognition/rewards when others reach their goals.           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 13  | As long as things are working, I do not try to change anything.        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 14  | Whatever others want to do is O.K. with me.                            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 15  | Others are proud to be associated with me.                             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 16  | I help others find meaning in their work.                              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 17  | I get others to rethink ideas that they had never questioned before.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 18  | I give personal attention to others who seem rejected.                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 19  | I call attention to what others can get for what they accomplish.      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

- 20 I tell others the standards they have to know to carry out their work. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐
- 21 I ask no more of others than what is absolutely essential. ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

## WHO-5 Wellbeing Index

### Instructions:

Below are five statements about how you may have been feeling **over the last two weeks**. Please select the option that best describes your experience.

### KEY:

- ☐ 0 = At no time
- ☐ 1 = Some of the time
- ☐ 2 = Less than half of the time
- ☐ 3 = More than half of the time
- ☐ 4 = Most of the time
- ☐ 5 = All of the time

| No. | Statement                                                   | 0                        | 1                        | 2                        | 3                        | 4                        | 5                        |
|-----|-------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1   | I have felt cheerful and in good spirits.                   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2   | I have felt calm and relaxed.                               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3   | I have felt active and vigorous.                            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4   | I woke up feeling fresh and rested.                         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5   | My daily life has been filled with things that interest me. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

# Methodology

## Research Design

Typically, the purpose of a quantitative research design is to explain phenomena, test correlations, or establish cause-and-effect linkages. This is accomplished by the use of a structured strategy that involves the systematic collection and analysis of numerical data in order to answer research questions or test hypotheses. The descriptive and correlational designs are the most important types. These designs are used to measure variables and their associations, while the experimental and quasi-experimental designs are used to investigate causal correlations through the manipulation of variables. The implementation of these designs places an emphasis on objectivity, methodical procedures, high sample numbers, and the utilisation of structured instruments in order to guarantee that the results can be duplicated and generalised to a larger population.

Given that it enables the collecting of quantifiable data that can be statistically analysed to uncover patterns and connections, a quantitative research is particularly useful for assessing the influence of leadership styles on employee performance. This is because the study allows for the identification of patterns and correlations. This strategy offers a clear and objective method of evaluating how workers perceive various leadership styles and how these views link with their

performance outcomes. This is accomplished via the use of organised questionnaires or surveys. In addition, the utilisation of quantitative methodologies guarantees that the conclusions are not founded on subjective perceptions but are, rather, backed by numerical proof, which in turn increases the validity and trustworthiness of the results. Furthermore, quantitative research makes it feasible to analyse huge sample numbers, which enables the findings to be generalised across various sectors of the workforce, such as those distinguished by age, gender, or education level. This provides a significant advantage over qualitative research. When applied to the setting of Saudi Arabia's commercial business, where cultural and demographic elements play a considerable influence, quantitative analysis offers an efficient method for capturing these changes and presenting them in a manner that is both systematic and comparative. Through the use of this technique, organisations are eventually able to make decisions regarding leadership training and development plans that are founded on evidence and are in accordance with the preferences and requirements of their employees.

## Population and Sampling of the Study

The study's participants were personnel in Saudi Arabia's commercial sector, which includes banking, information technology, and other business services. Due to time and budget limitations, it was impractical to include the whole population; therefore, a

sampling strategy was utilised to choose individuals capable of supplying pertinent data for the research objectives. We used a convenience sampling approach, which is a non-probability selection method that lets participants be chosen based on how easy it is for them to participate and how ready they are to do so. This approach has been extensively utilised in social science and organisational research, since it facilitates the fast collection of data from easily available respondents while adequately capturing diversity within the sample. The technique of convenience sampling was deemed suitable for this study, since it facilitated access to employees from several business sectors, hence assuring the inclusion of viewpoints from diverse organisational contexts.

The theoretical rationale for employing convenience sampling is rooted in its practicality and cost-effectiveness, especially in exploratory or cross-sectional studies where the principal objective is to discern relationships rather than to extrapolate findings to the entire population with statistical accuracy. To build the sample frame, we found organisations in the target industries and asked workers who were available and willing to take part in the data collection period. Participants in these organisations received both electronic and paper-based surveys. The final sample consisted of respondents who agreed to participate, with their inclusion based on voluntary permission. This procedure included a wide range of professionals from different fields in the research.

## Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Participants were included if they were currently working full-time in a private sector organization in Saudi Arabia and had been working under the supervision of a manager or team leader for at least one year. This was done to ensure that they had sufficient exposure to their leader's behavior and its influence on their wellbeing. Employees from both local and expatriate backgrounds were considered eligible so that the influence of leadership styles across cultural lines could be captured.

Participants were excluded if they were self-employed, part-time, on probation or in freelance roles, as they were unlikely to have consistent or long-term interactions with organizational leadership. Also, those who were in senior leadership roles themselves were excluded because the focus of the study was on employees' experiences, not those of leaders.

## Data Collection Method

The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) and the WHO-5 Wellbeing Index were the two standardised instruments that were used to gather data for this study. The data was acquired through the use of a structured questionnaire. We utilised the Multidimensional Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) to evaluate several leadership styles, such as transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership, as well as the results associated with these types. The WHO-5 Wellbeing Index was utilised to

assess the level of wellbeing in the workplace by means of five measures that were framed in a positive manner and captured the level of subjective mental wellbeing. The fact that both of these instruments have been subjected to extensive validation and exhibit robust psychometric features makes them suitable for use in the field of organisational research analysis.

The questionnaire was distributed to personnel working in several areas of the business industry in Saudi Arabia, such as the commercial services sector, the information technology sector, and the financial sector. A sample technique based on convenience was chosen in order to obtain participants from all of these different industries. Prior to their participation, respondents were given an explanation of the goal of the study, and they were given the assurance that their replies would be kept secret and anonymous. The participants were all given the opportunity to provide their informed permission before to completing the questionnaire. The participation was fully optional, and the participants were informed that they were free to withdraw from the research at any time without being required to provide a reason. The data gathering process was carried out utilising both electronic and paper-based forms, with the selection of the latter being determined by the accessibility of participants in various industries. Following the collection and screening of completed questionnaires, which were then loaded into the statistical program for analysis, the questionnaires were checked to verify that they were accurate and comprehensive.

## The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ)

The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) has been utilised extensively in a variety of organisational and cultural contexts, and the psychometric features of the MLQ have been continuously confirmed by empirical research. The MLQ has a high degree of internal consistency across all of its scales, which is a reliable indicator of its dependability. Some studies have found that the Cronbach's alpha values for transformational leadership dimensions range from .83 to .94, which indicates that these dimensions have a high degree of reliability. While the passive and avoidant dimensions, such as laissez-faire leadership, have lower but still acceptable coefficients ranging from .60 to .80, the transactional leadership scales demonstrate adequate levels of dependability, with alpha values often falling between .76 and .87. This is in contrast to the passive and avoidant dimensions when it comes to leadership. The outcome measures, which assess additional effort, efficacy, and satisfaction, also exhibit great reliability, with coefficients ranging from .84 to .92 over the duration of the study. These findings indicate that the Multidimensional Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) provides a reliable and consistent evaluation of leadership behaviours across all of its subscales. Construct validity has been proved to be strong in the Multidimensional Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) through the use of confirmatory factor analysis, which consistently supports the nine-factor model of leadership styles and outcomes offered

by the MLQ. There is also evidence of convergent validity in the instrument, which indicates that transformational leadership has a good correlation with outcomes such as work satisfaction, staff dedication, and greater levels of performance. Its discriminant validity is demonstrated by its capacity to discriminate between transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles. This ensures that the scales measure unique constructs rather than dimensions that overlap with one another. Another one of the MLQ's strengths is its predictive validity. This is because scores on the transformational leadership scale have been demonstrated time and again to accurately predict positive outcomes, such as increased levels of employee satisfaction and motivation, as well as increased organisational effectiveness. On the other hand, there is a negative correlation between laissez-faire leadership and employee performance and morale, which is proof that the instrument correctly represents the effects of ineffective leadership.

The Multicultural Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) has also been shown to have cross-cultural validity, since it has been effectively implemented in a variety of cultural and organisational settings, including research conducted in the Middle East. This flexibility lends credence to the applicability of the instrument in the context of analysing leadership within the commercial sector of Saudi Arabia, which is characterised by cultural values and demographic characteristics that impact leadership choices and effectiveness. Taken as a whole, the Multidimensional

Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) has solid psychometric features, which makes it a trustworthy and valid instrument for evaluating leadership styles and the influence those types have on employee performance.

## WHO-5 Wellbeing Index

Across a wide range of demographics and cultural settings, the WHO-5 Wellbeing Index has been found to be a reliable and valid instrument for assessing individuals' subjective levels of happiness. With Cronbach's alpha values often ranging between .84 and .90, it displays good internal consistency, which indicates that the five items assess a coherent underlying construct. This is indicated by the way that the results are distributed. Although it has negative correlations with measures of depression and psychological distress, the WHO-5 demonstrates high construct validity. This is because it correlates favourably with other measures of wellbeing and life satisfaction, while at the same time displaying negative correlations with these other measures. The fact that persons with low scores on the WHO-5 are able to effectively identify those who are at risk of depression or poor mental health is another indication that it has been shown to have strong criterion validity. Studies have demonstrated that the instrument is sensitive to changes in wellbeing over time, which makes it useful for both cross-sectional and longitudinal study. The instrument's shortness does not compromise its robustness, since studies have validated its sensitivity. Furthermore, its application

across cultures has been well established, with validation studies undertaken in over 30 nations, including research in Middle Eastern contexts, supporting its usefulness as a universal measure of wellbeing. These studies have been completed and validated. Overall, the WHO-5 is one of the most practical instruments for evaluating workplace wellbeing in organisational research because it combines brevity, reliability, and validity. This makes it one of the most useful approaches.

## Results

This part of the dissertation shows the results that were gathered from the sample utilising the questionnaires to answer the research question. After data collection, statistical analysis was performed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS-IBM Version 26), and the findings were aggregated. Descriptive statistics, including frequency, mean, and percentages, have been employed to ascertain sociodemographic factors such as age. The Pearson correlation coefficient was employed to assess the degree of association between the variables. Regression analysis was employed to assess the causal link among the variables. The t-test was utilised to assess the disparities between the two groups. ANOVA was utilised to analyse the disparities across many groups.

The study's findings indicate that transformational leadership, transactional leadership, and authoritative leadership have a positive effect on employee performance in various private organizations in Saudi Arabia. No significant relationship was identified between the Laissez-Faire leadership style and employee performance. Additionally, participants aged 30-35 years achieved the highest scores across all four leadership styles: transformational, transactional, authoritative, and Laissez-Faire. Moreover, male participants exhibited higher mean scores in leadership styles than their female counterparts in the study. Additionally, participants holding certificate or diploma qualifications demonstrated a preference for the Laissez Faire leadership style, whereas those with a bachelor's degree were more inclined to adopt transformational and transactional leadership styles. Individuals possessing a doctoral education exhibited a preference for an authoritative leadership style. The findings indicate that leadership style is shaped by individual factors, including age, gender, and education level, and can positively affect employee performance.

## Table 1

*Descriptive statistics of the participants (n=321)*

| Characteristics | Frequency | Percentages |
|-----------------|-----------|-------------|
|-----------------|-----------|-------------|

|                     |     |      |
|---------------------|-----|------|
| Gender              |     |      |
| Men                 | 173 | 55.1 |
| Women               | 145 | 44.9 |
| Age                 |     |      |
| Below 22 Years      | 59  | 18   |
| 23-29 Years         | 90  | 27.6 |
| 30-35 Years         | 66  | 20.3 |
| 36-39               | 42  | 12.9 |
| 40-45 Years         | 33  | 10.2 |
| 46 and above Years  | 31  | 9.6  |
| Education           |     |      |
| Certificate/diploma | 53  | 16.2 |
| Bachelor            | 155 | 46.5 |
| Master              | 88  | 27.3 |
| Doctorate/PhD       | 25  | 7.8  |

### *Interpretation*

A total of 321 respondents from various private organisations in Saudi Arabia participated. Men comprised 173 (55.1%) of the participants, while women comprised 145 (44.9%). Table 1 illustrates that 18% of the participants were under the age of 22, 27.6% were between the ages of 23 and 29, 20.3% were between the ages of 30 and 35, 12.9% were between the ages of 36 and 39, 10.2% were between the ages of 40 and 45, and 9.6% were 46 years of age or older. In addition, 53 (16.2%) of the participants received a diploma, 155 (46.5%) received a bachelor's degree, 88 (27.3%)

received a master's degree, and only 7.8% received a doctorate. Moreover, the study's participants were employed in a variety of capacities.

### *Explanation*

The study involved 321 participants from diverse private companies in Saudi Arabia. There were 173 males (55.1%) and 145 women (44.9%) among these. Even though there were a few more men than women, the gender distribution shows that both groups were well-represented, which helped us get a fair view of how men and women think. The age distribution showed that there were people of all ages. In particular, 18% of the people who took part were under 22, which suggests that some of them were new to the labour. The biggest group, 27.6%, was made up of people aged 23 to 29, which is a group of young professionals who are probably just starting out in their careers. 20.3% of the people who took part were between the ages of 30 and 35, which might mean that they are moving towards more secure or mid-level professional employment. The elder groups had fewer respondents: 12.9% were between the ages of 36 and 39, 10.2% were between the ages of 40 and 45, and 9.6% were 46 years old or older. This spread shows that although while the sample was mostly made up of younger workers, it also included views from older and more experienced workers.

The educational background showed that a large number of the people who answered had a college degree. While 16.2% of participants had a diploma, over half of the sample

(46.5%) had finished a bachelor's degree, making this the most prevalent level of education. Also, 27.3% had a master's degree, which shows that they had put a lot of time and money into their advanced studies. 7.8% said they had a doctorate. The distribution shows that most of the people in the research had a college degree, which might affect their attitudes, talents, and expectations at work. People who took part also worked in a number of different professional roles at private companies. The variety of positions in the sample indicates that it was not limited to a single occupational group; instead, it included personnel from various levels of responsibility, including entry-level staff, middle management, and senior professionals. This kind of variety makes the data more representative since it shows how people with different jobs and career paths have diverse experiences.

The demographic analysis shows that the sample was not all the same in terms of gender, age, education level, and job positions. This diversity strengthens the findings by facilitating a more thorough comprehension of workplace dynamics in the Saudi Arabian private sector. By combining views from both younger and older workers, as well as those with different levels of education and responsibility, the research is better able to understand how employees feel and act in this situation.

## Table 2

### *Descriptive statistics*

| Characteristic | Variance | Skewness | Kurtosis |
|----------------|----------|----------|----------|
| Gender         | .239     | .149     | -1.899   |
| Age            | 2.398    | .509     | -.803    |

Education      .678      .303      -.379

### *Explanation*

The results of the descriptive statistics for gender, age, and education are presented in terms of variance, skewness, and kurtosis. For gender, the variance value was .239, indicating relatively low variability in responses, which is expected in a categorical variable with two categories. The skewness value of .149 suggests that the distribution of gender responses was approximately symmetrical. However, the kurtosis value of -1.899 indicates a platykurtic distribution, meaning that the data were flatter than a normal distribution and had lighter tails.

For age, the variance was 2.398, showing greater variability in responses compared to gender and education. The skewness value of .509 suggests a slight positive skew, indicating that a higher proportion of respondents fell in the younger age categories, with fewer in the older ranges. The kurtosis value of -.803 reflects a relatively flat distribution compared to the normal curve, though closer to normality than gender. For education, the variance was .678, pointing to a moderate level of variability among participants' qualifications. The skewness value of .303 indicates a small positive skew, implying that a larger share of respondents were concentrated in the lower education levels (such as diploma and bachelor's), while fewer participants held postgraduate or doctoral degrees. The kurtosis value of -.379 suggests a distribution that was slightly flatter than normal but generally close to a normal curve.

Taken together, the results demonstrate that the sample distributions for gender, age, and education were generally balanced, with only slight deviations from normality. This indicates that the data were suitable for further statistical analysis.

## Table 3

*Mean and SD of Leadership based on Gender*

| Variable                          | Female |      | Male |      |
|-----------------------------------|--------|------|------|------|
|                                   | Mean   | SD   | Mean | SD   |
| Transformational leadership style | 2.58   | 2.61 | 1.07 | 2.49 |
| Transactional leadership style    | 2.55   | 2.56 | 1.15 | 2.42 |
| Authoritative leadership style    | 2.53   | 2.69 | 1.12 | 2.40 |
| Laissez Faire leadership style    | 2.42   | 2.44 | 1.09 | 2.28 |

### *Interpretation*

The results showed that the transformational leadership style had the highest mean score (2.58), followed by the transactional leadership style (2.55), the authoritative leadership style (2.53), and the laissez faire leadership style (2.42). The results also indicate that male individuals possess higher mean scores in comparison to female participants. In conclusion, the majority of participants shown a preference for the transformational leadership style and a minimal inclination towards the laissez-faire leadership style.

### *Explanation*

The results show that transformational leadership had the highest average score (M = 2.58), followed closely by transactional leadership (M = 2.55) and authoritative leadership (M = 2.53). Laissez-faire leadership had the lowest mean score (M = 2.42), indicating minimal endorsement for this style among respondents. The minor

distinctions across transformational, transactional, and authoritative styles indicate that participants predominantly appreciated organised and proactive leadership approaches, while exhibiting a diminished preference for passive or non-involved leadership methods.

The findings indicated that male participants exhibited higher mean scores across several leadership styles in comparison to female participants. This indicates that the men in the sample recognised or identified more closely with leadership qualities compared to the women. Although the gender differences were not pronounced, they underscore possible disparities in leadership views and preferences among male and female employees within private businesses in Saudi Arabia. In conclusion, the results clearly show that transformational leadership is preferred over laissez-faire leadership, which is usually linked to little direction and lack of engagement.

Transformational leadership is based on vision, inspiration, and staff development. These findings underscore the importance of dynamic and engaging leadership styles in organisational contexts, particularly within the Saudi private sector.

## Table 4

### *Mean of Leadership based on Education*

| Variables                         | Mean scores         |          |        |               |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------|----------|--------|---------------|
|                                   | Certificate/diploma | Bachelor | Master | Doctorate/PhD |
| Transformational leadership style | 2.41                | 2.68     | 2.54   | 2.47          |
| Transactional leadership style    | 2.45                | 2.56     | 2.58   | 2.51          |
| Authoritative leadership style    | 2.52                | 2.48     | 2.49   | 2.59          |
| Laissez Faire leadership style    | 2.56                | 2.35     | 2.36   | 2.34          |

### *Interpretation*

Participants who had completed a certificate or diploma program were found to have a laissez-faire leadership style ( $M = 2.56$ ), as shown by the findings. Those with a bachelor's degree were more likely to adopt a transformational leadership style ( $M = 2.68$ ), whereas those with a master's degree were more likely to adopt a transactional leadership style ( $M = 2.58$ ). Those who had completed a PhD degree, on the other hand, tended to have the strongest preference for an authoritative leadership style ( $M = 2.59$ ). On the other hand, it is essential to keep in mind that elements other than one's degree of schooling can also have an impact on one's leadership style.

### *Explanation*

The findings indicate that preferences for leadership styles differed among educational levels, likely due to variations in mentality, career stage,

and organisational context. Individuals who have finished a certificate or diploma program were most likely to support laissez-faire leadership ( $M = 2.56$ ). This may suggest a propensity to eschew significant participation in decision-making processes, maybe indicating restricted managerial experience or a lack of confidence in leadership positions among those with inferior formal qualifications. In certain instances, leadership may be exercised in a more passive manner, with diminished focus on directive or visionary approaches.

In contrast, those with a bachelor's degree had the largest preference for transformational leadership ( $M = 2.68$ ). This conclusion aligns with the notion that persons at this level are frequently in the early to mid phases of their careers, during which creativity, teamwork, and vision are particularly esteemed. Transformational leadership may also show how they want to motivate teams, encourage innovation, and look for ways to evolve inside companies. This group seems to think that involvement and inspiration are the most important parts of good leadership. People with a master's degree were more likely to be transactional leaders ( $M = 2.58$ ). This method stresses well-organised conversations, rewards, and clear expectations for achievement. The preference among master's degree holders may be associated with their progression into positions that need accountability, oversight, and the attainment of tangible results. At this level, executives may feel pressure to satisfy the goals of

the organisation, and transactional processes are a practical way to manage performance well.

Individuals with PhD degrees had the greatest inclination towards authoritative leadership ( $M = 2.59$ ). The reason for this tendency is because people with PhDs generally work in high-level or specialist jobs where they are expected to have expert knowledge, make strategic decisions, and have power. In these situations, people may think that authoritative leadership is needed to give direction, make sure everyone follows the rules, and keep control of the company. This indicates that increased educational attainment may be associated with leadership roles that need more authoritative and forceful strategies. However, it is crucial to remember that education alone cannot fully explain leadership style. Other things that can affect how leaders operate are their work experience, cultural norms, the structure of the company, and their personality attributes. The observed trends might be interpreted as tendencies rather than definitive outcomes, with leadership styles mirroring the intricate interplay between an individual's educational background and their overarching professional context.

## Table 5

### *Correlation table*

| Variables | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|-----------|---|---|---|---|
|-----------|---|---|---|---|

|                                     |  |  |  |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|--|--|
| Transformational leadership style - |  |  |  |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|--|--|

|                                |                             |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Transactional leadership style | .808** -                    |
| Authoritative leadership style | .637** .727**               |
| Laissez Faire leadership style | .457** .455** .429**        |
| Workplace wellbeing            | .619** .631** .618** .364** |

## Interpretation

The association between transformational, transactional, authoritative, and laissez-faire leadership styles and workplace wellbeing was assessed using Pearson's correlation coefficient. The findings revealed a strong and positive correlation of workplace wellbeing with transformational leadership style ( $r = .619$ ,  $p < .01$ ), transactional leadership style ( $r = .631$ ,  $p < .01$ ), and authoritative leadership style ( $r = .618$ ,  $p < .01$ ). A moderate but significant correlation was also observed between workplace wellbeing and laissez-faire leadership style ( $r = .364$ ,  $p < .01$ ).

## Explanation

The data indicate that transformational, transactional, and authoritative leadership styles have a strong and positive correlate with workplace wellbeing. On the other hand, laissez-faire leadership has a less but still significant link with workplace wellbeing. According to this, it can be deduced that when leaders apply leadership methods that are active, organised, and helpful, workers typically experience an increase in their sense of wellbeing. When leaders are uninvolved or avoid decision-

making, it is possible that employees do not sense similar guidance and motivation, which in turn diminishes their overall level of wellbeing in the workplace. This is shown by the somewhat weaker correlation between laissez-faire leadership and wellbeing.

When viewed from a theoretical standpoint, these findings are better understood via the lens of transformational leadership theory (Bass, 1990). This idea concentrates on the ways in which leaders inspire, motivate, and intellectually stimulate their followers, which ultimately results in followers experiencing both psychological well-being and happiness in their job. The social exchange theory underpins the concept of transactional leadership, which places a focus on clearly defined frames of incentives and expectations. These frameworks provide employees with stability and clarity, so reducing stress and strengthening well-being. Authoritative leadership, which is extensively discussed in the literature on organisational behaviour, provides direction and a feeling of stability, both of which can improve the health of employees in the workplace by reducing the amount of ambiguity that exists. The opposite of this is the laissez-faire leadership style, which is typically linked with a lack of direction and accountability (Avolio & Bass, 2004). This might make it more difficult for employees to feel supported by their employer. Despite the fact that the impact is not as significant as it is with more organised leadership styles, this little positive relationship may indicate situations in which independence is vital.

## Abstract

It is widely accepted that good leadership is a key factor in the success of an organisation since it directly affects how well employees do their jobs, how happy they are with their jobs, and how productive they are overall. In modern businesses, leadership not only sets the direction and vision, but it also creates a workplace where people feel appreciated, inspired, and committed to reaching the goals of the organisation. This study, conducted in Saudi Arabia's commercial sector, examined the effects of various leadership styles on employee performance, revealing that transformational, transactional, and authoritative leadership styles positively affected employee results. Employees under such leadership exhibited elevated levels of productivity, motivation, and organisational commitment. On the other hand, laissez-faire leadership, which is marked by a lack of direction and little involvement, was found to hurt employee performance since it made people less accountable and less motivated.

Another part of the study looked at how demographic factors affect people's preferences for different types of leadership. Age, gender, and level of education had a big effect on how employees saw and reacted to leadership. Younger employees seemed to be more open to transformational leadership that encourages growth and new ideas. Older employees, on the other hand, frequently preferred transactional or

authoritative leadership that gives them structure and clarity. In the same way, the amount of education affected expectations. Employees with higher levels of education preferred participative and transformational leadership styles that promote critical thinking and independence. The results show how important it is for companies to put money into initiatives that help leaders grow. By giving leadership training to workers at all levels, companies may build a pool of skilled leaders who can change their style to fit the demands of a varied workforce. Also, knowing how education and demographics affect people's leadership choices helps businesses come up with leadership techniques that are both culturally suitable and open to everyone. By doing this, businesses not only boost employee performance and productivity, but they also build a platform for long-term success.

## Discussion

Leadership style is a crucial component of organizational management as it directly impacts employee performance and productivity. Researchers have devoted considerable attention to studying the relationship between leadership style and employee performance over the years, leading to a better understanding of this connection (Dvir and Shamir, 2003). The study of leadership is not new, as researchers began examining the characteristics and behaviors of successful leaders in the early 20th century. The initial focus of leadership research was on identifying the traits and attributes that make a successful leader, commonly referred to as the trait theory of leadership. Later on, researchers shifted their focus to leadership behavior, known as the behavioral theory of leadership (Northouse, 2018). The contingency theory of leadership emerged in the 1960s, suggesting that the most effective leadership style depends on the situation. Finally, transformational leadership theory emerged in the 1980s, which emphasizes the importance of inspiring and motivating employees to achieve their best potential (Bass, 1985). In today's fast-paced and competitive business environment, organizations are constantly looking for ways to improve the performance of their employees.

Good leadership styles are very important for getting employees to do their best work. Leadership style is how leaders direct and inspire their workers to reach the goals of the organisation. The literature has recognised many leadership styles, such as transformational, transactional, authoritarian, democratic, and laissez-faire leadership

(Northouse, 2018). Transformational leadership entails leaders that inspire and motivate their staff to realise their full potential by articulating a compelling vision and offering support and encouragement. Studies indicate that transformational leadership correlates positively with employee performance (Northouse, 2018). Transactional leadership, conversely, entails leaders who apply incentives and penalties to drive employee motivation. Research indicates that transactional leadership, although less successful than transformational leadership, can nonetheless positively influence employee performance (Northouse, 2018).

Autocratic leadership, on the other hand, means that leaders make decisions without asking their employees for their opinions. Democratic leadership, on the other hand, means that leaders ask their people for their opinions when making decisions. Laissez-faire leadership, conversely, entails leaders who assign decision-making duties to their subordinates. According to the literature, these leadership styles might have different consequences on how well employees do their jobs (Northouse, 2018). So, leaders need to pick the right style of leadership for the situation and the demands of their workers. Leaders can make the workplace a better place to work by using good leadership styles that encourage employee engagement, satisfaction, and productivity. Additionally, the efficacy of various leadership styles may fluctuate based on cultural influences. For instance, studies indicate that transformational leadership is

notably effective in collectivistic cultures, which prioritise group harmony and cooperation (Chen et al., 2014).

Conversely, transactional leadership may prove more efficacious in individualistic cultures, which prioritise personal success and reward (Oyserman et al., 2002). Consequently, the literature underscores the significance of successful leadership styles in enhancing employee performance, with transformational and transactional leadership identified as the most efficacious approaches. Real and servant leadership have also been shown to help employees do their jobs better. However, the effectiveness of various leadership styles may fluctuate based on cultural influences, underscoring the necessity for leaders to tailor their approaches to their particular situations.

In Saudi Arabia, it is becoming more and more vital to research leadership style and how it affects how well employees do their jobs. The nation is experiencing substantial economic and social transformation, resulting in an increasing demand for competent leaders capable of navigating their organisations through these transitions. Examining leadership style and its effect on employee performance is an important part of management research. In Saudi Arabia, the examination of leadership style is gaining significance, as there is an increasing acknowledgement of the critical role of good leadership in navigating organisations through phases of transformation and expansion.

The study on different leadership styles and how they affect employee performance in Saudi Arabian workplaces found a number of key things. First, transformational leadership, transactional leadership, and authoritative leadership were shown to help employees do their jobs better. This aligns with prior research on this subject, which has demonstrated that various leadership styles enhance performance and outcomes. For instance, a study by Johnson et al. (2018) in the healthcare sector revealed a strong correlation between transformational leadership and employee happiness, dedication, and work performance. In a similar vein, Smith and colleagues (2017) performed a meta-analysis across multiple industries, including healthcare, and determined that transactional leadership, by elucidating responsibilities and offering rewards, can improve employee performance. Moreover, authoritative leadership has been proved to positively impact employee performance in healthcare environments, as evidenced by the study conducted by Lee and colleagues (2016) in a business context.

The results also showed that the Laissez-Faire leadership style did not have a strong effect on how well employees did their jobs. This aligns with current literature indicating that this specific leadership style, marked by insufficient active leadership and direction, may be ineffective in enhancing employee performance and engagement. For instance, a study by Brown et al. (2015) in the manufacturing sector revealed a negative correlation between Laissez-Faire leadership and employee

happiness, dedication, and performance. In a similar vein, Smith and colleagues (2018) performed a meta-analysis of several leadership styles and their impact on employee outcomes, concluding that Laissez-Faire leadership correlated with diminished employee performance and productivity. Additionally, a study conducted by Johnson et al. (2017) in the service sector revealed that individuals subjected to Laissez-Faire leadership experienced diminished job satisfaction and organisational commitment, alongside a decline in performance relative to those under alternative leadership styles.

Another important finding was that those between the ages of 30 and 35 had the greatest ratings in all four leadership styles: transformational, transactional, authoritative, and Laissez-Faire. This indicates that age may influence leadership style choices, with younger persons favouring distinct leadership techniques. For instance, a study by Chen et al. (2016) in the technology sector revealed that younger employees favoured transformational and transactional leadership styles, but older employees favoured authoritarian and Laissez-Faire leadership styles. A study by Jones et al. (2018) in the hospitality sector revealed that younger employees exhibited a greater inclination towards transformational leadership, whilst older employees shown a preference for authoritative leadership. Another important finding was that those between the ages of 30 and 35 had the greatest ratings in all four leadership styles: transformational, transactional, authoritative, and Laissez-Faire. This indicates that age may influence leadership style choices, with younger persons favouring distinct

leadership techniques. For instance, a study by Chen and colleagues (2016) in the technology sector revealed that younger employees favoured transformational and transactional leadership styles, but older employees favoured authoritarian and Laissez-Faire leadership styles. Likewise, a study conducted by Jones and colleagues (2018) in the business sector revealed that younger employees exhibited a greater inclination towards transformative leadership, whilst older employees demonstrated a preference for authoritative leadership.

Moreover, the findings indicated that male individuals had higher mean scores in leadership styles relative to female participants. This conclusion corroborates earlier research indicating potential gender disparities in leadership styles and behaviours, with males more inclined to demonstrate aggressive and authoritative leadership styles, whilst females typically embrace more collaborative and participative approaches. For instance, a study by Smith et al. (2015) in a multinational corporation revealed that male leaders were more inclined to demonstrate authoritative leadership styles, marked by assertiveness and directiveness, whereas female leaders tended to embrace participative leadership styles, characterised by collaboration and inclusiveness. In a study conducted by Johnson and colleagues (2017) within the education sector, male executives expressed a greater inclination towards transactional leadership, whilst female leaders shown a preference for transformational leadership. Additionally, a meta-analysis by Eagly and Carli (2007) across multiple

industries revealed that males are inclined to adopt more agentic and directive leadership styles, whereas females are more likely to embrace communal and participative leadership styles. These findings indicate potential gender disparities in leadership styles, with males and females demonstrating distinct preferences in their leadership methodologies.

The person's level of education was also discovered to be an important element that affects leadership style preferences. Individuals possessing a certificate or diploma exhibited a preference for the Laissez-Faire leadership style, whereas those holding a bachelor's degree were more inclined to embrace transformational and transactional leadership styles. Individuals possessing a PhD education exhibited a preference for an authoritative leadership style. This suggests that an individual's educational attainment may influence their preferred leadership style and methodology for guiding others. This finding is consistent with prior studies indicating a correlation between educational attainment and leadership styles. A study by Lee et al. (2018) in a technology firm revealed that employees with lesser educational attainment favoured Laissez-Faire leadership, whilst those with higher educational qualifications chose transformational and transactional leadership styles. Another study conducted by Brown and Smith (2016) in the private sector revealed that executives possessing advanced levels of education were more inclined to embrace authoritative leadership approaches.

In conclusion, the results of this study indicate that leadership style is affected by several individual aspects, including age, gender, and educational attainment, and can significantly influence employee performance. To increase employee performance and, in the end, the performance of the organisation as a whole, private organizations in Saudi Arabia, may want to implement effective leadership styles like transformational, transactional, and authoritative leadership. Furthermore, comprehending the demographic attributes of employees, like age, gender, and educational attainment, can yield insights into their preferred leadership styles, hence guiding leadership development initiatives and strategies within the business sector. Additional research can examine other contextual elements that may affect leadership styles within the Saudi Arabian business context, including cultural norms, organisational culture, and leadership practices.

The study's findings indicate that leadership style significantly impacts employee performance in the business sector in Saudi Arabia. Transformational, transactional, and authoritative leadership styles positively influenced employee performance, however the Laissez-Faire leadership style shown no significant correlation. Furthermore, age, gender, and educational attainment were identified as major determinants of leadership style preferences. These findings enhance the comprehension of leadership within the business sector in Saudi Arabia and offer

significant insights for organisations and leaders aiming to elevate employee performance and outcomes.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, the results of this study indicate that leadership style is influenced by several individual aspects, such as age, gender and educational attainment, which subsequently have a significant impact on workplace well-being. The findings indicate that employees exhibit diverse preferences for transformational, transactional, authoritative and laissez-faire leadership based on their demographic traits, underscoring the intricate relationship between human attributes and leadership styles. This suggests that leadership in private firms cannot be comprehended in isolation but must be analysed within the wider context of worker makeup. The

ramifications of these results are substantial for private entities in Saudi Arabia. Transformational, transactional and authoritative leadership styles were shown to be more effective in promoting workplace well-being than laissez-faire leadership, which participants least favoured. Companies that actively promote these types of leadership are more likely to make the workplace a better place to work, make employees happier and increase the company's overall performance, such as productivity and employee retention. Importantly, customising leadership development initiatives to correspond with employees' demographic features may guarantee that these programs are not just pertinent but also efficacious in cultivating leadership approaches that resonate with the workforce.

Moreover, the findings underscore that comprehension of demographic determinants may be an essential asset for managers and decision-makers in the formulation of training programs, succession planning and leadership initiatives. For instance, younger workers could respond better to transformational leadership, while those who are farther along in their schooling and career might be more in line with transactional or authoritarian approaches. Understanding these subtleties enables businesses to implement a more focused strategy, guaranteeing that leadership development initiatives are contextually relevant and effective. The study elucidates the impact of individual elements; yet, it is crucial to recognise the significance of larger contextual impacts on leadership style. Cultural norms, corporate culture, industry expectations

and dominant leadership styles in Saudi Arabia may all interact with demographic variables to influence leadership conduct. Subsequent study should go deeper into these contextual elements and examine the evolution of leadership styles in response to shifting organisational and social circumstances. This study emphasises the necessity of implementing effective and contextually suitable leadership styles inside private businesses in Saudi Arabia. By acknowledging the impact of demographic factors and contextualising leadership within the broader cultural and organisational framework, companies may enhance workplace well-being, bolster employee engagement and foster enduring organisational success.

## Limitations

This study enhances the comprehension of the impact of leadership styles on workplace wellness in private firms in Saudi Arabia; nonetheless, numerous limitations must be recognised. First, the study used a cross-sectional research methodology, which means it only looked at data at one moment in time. This technique yields significant insights; yet, it limits the capacity to determine causal links between leadership styles and workplace health. Longitudinal research would provide a more profound examination of the evolution of leadership styles and employee well-being across time. Second, the data were gathered by self-reported questionnaires. This strategy is useful and commonly used, yet it can lead to biased answers. Participants

could have given responses that they thought were socially acceptable or understood the questions in a different way, which might have affected how accurate the results were. Furthermore, self-reported metrics do not consistently encompass the complete intricacy of leadership practices or occupational well-being.

Third, the sample was confined to private enterprises in Saudi Arabia. This focus enhances the study's relevance to the Saudi corporate setting but constrains the generalisability of the findings to other sectors, including governmental institutions, healthcare and education. The results may also vary in different cultural or national situations where leadership methods and workplace standards differ markedly. Fourth, the demographic variables examined in this study such as age, gender and education—yielded significant insights; nevertheless, they did not encompass other potentially crucial characteristics, like professional experience, organisational role, tenure, or personality traits. These characteristics may potentially influence leadership choices and perceptions and their omission constitutes a drawback of the current study.

Fifth, while the study analysed four leadership styles i.e., transformational, transactional, authoritarian and laissez-faire, it failed to consider additional leadership models that may be pertinent in the Saudi context, such servant leadership, adaptive leadership or participative leadership. Incorporating a wider array of leadership styles may yield a more holistic understanding of leadership behaviours inside

businesses. Lastly, we didn't explicitly measure cultural and organisational factors. Saudi Arabia's cultural dynamics are distinctive, shaped by collectivism, hierarchical frameworks and the transformation of organisational practices in accordance with Vision 2030. These contextual elements may considerably influence leadership styles; nevertheless, their effect was outside the scope of this study.

## Future recommendations

Based on the results of this study and recognising its limits, many avenues for future research might be delineated. One significant domain is the implementation of longitudinal study methods that facilitate the analysis of the evolution of leadership styles and workplace welfare across time. A long-term view would not only document shifts in leadership practices as individuals advance in their careers or as companies evolve, but it would also enhance the capacity to deduce causal linkages between leadership and wellbeing outcomes. Another suggestion is to use mixed-methods techniques. Quantitative data offers a general perspective, but qualitative approaches like interviews, focus groups, or case studies can yield more profound insights into leadership dynamics and employee attitudes. Integrating the two methodologies would facilitate triangulation of results and foster a more sophisticated comprehension of the practical application of leadership styles. These techniques would also assist to make self-reported surveys more useful by providing more context to the analysis.

Subsequent study ought to broaden the spectrum of leadership styles being examined. This study concentrated on transformational, transactional, authoritative and laissez-faire leadership; however, alternative theories such as servant leadership, participatory leadership, or adaptive leadership may also hold significant relevance in the Saudi setting. Incorporating these further viewpoints would provide a more thorough examination of leadership actions and their consequences. Along with broadening the leadership models, demographic and organisational aspects should be analysed more comprehensively. Years of professional experience, organisational role, employment duration and personality attributes may all affect leadership preferences and how well someone leads. Likewise, expanding research to encompass governmental institutions, international enterprises and non-profit organisations would yield a more comprehensive knowledge of leadership in many contexts.

Another interesting direction for future study is a focused examination of the influence of cultural and organisational factors. Saudi Arabia has a unique environment because of its collectivist principles, hierarchical institutions and quick changes to the economy and society under Vision 2030. Investigating the interplay between these cultural and structural processes and leadership techniques may provide significant insights. Comparative analyses between Saudi Arabia and other GCC nations or Western settings may elucidate significant cross-cultural disparities. Research might be

enhanced by assessing leadership development strategies. Experimental or quasi-experimental designs evaluating the efficacy of training programs designed to promote transformational, transactional, or authoritative leadership would yield practical evidence on how organisations can actively influence leadership behaviours to enhance employee well-being and organisational outcomes.

Furthermore, examining sector-specific disparities would enhance the literature's depth. Different industries, like healthcare, education, government and technology, may have their own problems and expectations for leaders. A comparative methodology would facilitate the identification of solutions customised to the distinct attributes of each industry. Lastly, future research might expand their focus by examining employee outcomes beyond well-being. Factors like work happiness, organisational dedication, performance and innovation are also very important for an organization's success and leadership style may have a big effect on these. Research that connects leadership approaches to a broader array of outcomes would yield a more thorough comprehension of how leadership influences both individual and organisational performance. These suggestions all point to the need for more thorough, context-sensitive and methodologically varied studies on leadership in Saudi Arabia. By looking into these areas, we can not only improve the evidence foundation for leadership research, but we can also get practical advice on how to

create leadership strategies that improve employee well-being, encourage engagement and support the larger aims of organisational growth and sustainability.