



Research Title:

Comparative Analysis of Transformational and Transactional Leadership on Innovation Culture within Healthcare Project Teams in Saudi Arabia

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Abstract

This study explores the comparative influence of **transformational and transactional leadership** styles on the development of **innovation culture** within healthcare project teams in Saudi Arabia. Leadership in healthcare organizations plays a critical role not only in improving operational efficiency but also in fostering creativity and adaptability—key elements for achieving sustainable performance in a rapidly evolving healthcare environment. Although previous studies within the Saudi context, particularly those focusing on the Saudi Commission for Health Specialties (SCFHS) and Ministry of Health (MOH) hospitals, have emphasized productivity and employee satisfaction, the specific relationship between leadership style and innovation culture remains underexplored.

The purpose of this research is to analyze how transformational and transactional leadership styles predict the innovation climate and team creativity within healthcare projects. A **quantitative, cross-sectional survey design** will be adopted using the **Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ 5X)** to assess leadership dimensions and the **Team Climate Inventory (TCI)** to measure innovation culture. Data will be collected from project managers and team members working in SCFHS and MOH-affiliated hospitals across key Saudi regions. Statistical analyses such as **multiple regression** and **moderation analysis** will be employed to examine whether **organizational structure** moderates the relationship between leadership style and innovation culture.

This study contributes to the literature by integrating leadership theory with innovation frameworks in healthcare settings. The findings are expected to provide empirical insights for policy makers and administrators in designing leadership development programs that enhance innovative capacity and team collaboration—advancing the objectives of **Saudi Vision 2030** toward a knowledge-based and innovative healthcare system.

Keywords: Transformational Leadership, Transactional Leadership, Innovation Culture, Healthcare Projects, Saudi Arabia, MLQ 5X, TCI

Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Leadership is still a fundamental factor in organizational performance and innovation. In healthcare, leadership extends beyond administrative oversight to motivate, inspire, and lead teams towards betterment. The healthcare industry has never faced a more challenging environment: technological transformation and regulations; workforce shortages and ever higher expectations from patients. And as we approach that challenge, leadership models that foster creativity and innovation are important (Al-Harthy, 2021).

Transformational and transactional leadership are among the most popular approaches to leadership, first introduced by Burns (1978) and further developed by Bass (1985) to the point of understanding how leaders influence followers. Transformational leaders motivate their followers through vision, motivation, and intellectual stimulation to encourage innovation and change. Transactional leaders, however, use a system of rewards and penalties to ensure order and deliver on their goals. Both methods have value, but their application to the development of innovation cultures in healthcare project teams is still a very recent topic in Saudi Arabia.

1.2 Leadership in the Healthcare Context

Healthcare organizations are multidisciplinary in nature and work from the clinical, administrative, and technological perspectives. Leadership in this context is key to the completion of work and communication, trust, and innovation within the team. It has been shown in Western cultures that transformational leadership breeds creativity in nurses and interdepartmental collaboration and patient-centered care (Boamah et al., 2018).

However, the transactional leadership aspect of healthcare management is still prevalent because it is organized, and it is very practical in clinical management. Healthcare organizations in Saudi Arabia such as the Saudi Commission for Health Specialties (SCFHS) and the Ministry of Health (MOH), for example, have conducted modernization projects that

are in line with Saudi Vision 2030 and are all about innovation, quality, and digital transformation in healthcare delivery. Nevertheless, there is limited evidence of the connection of leadership style to innovation culture in Saudi healthcare project teams.

Most national studies have focused on leadership's impact on job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and productivity (Al-Harbi et al., 2022; Alshahrani, 2020), and innovation has been seen as secondary, or even an indirect benefit of leadership.

1.3 Innovation Culture in Healthcare

Innovation culture of values, beliefs, and ways of working in an organization for creativity and experimentation (Anderson et al., 2014). In healthcare, creating an innovation culture is about having people come up with new ideas for how to care for the patients, deliver services, and be more efficient. A culture of innovation can increase patient safety, digital transformation adoption, and engagement. But such a culture does not emerge in a vacuum; it requires solid leadership and an organizational structure that encourages risk-taking and continuous learning.

In project-based healthcare settings—from hospital quality improvement programs, health IT systems, and training programs led by SCFHS—it is the leaders who shape innovation culture. Transformational leaders can inspire vision-driven innovation, whereas transactional leaders can ensure procedural consistency and accountability. The balance can be necessary in order to maintain quality and be able to think of creative solutions. This reality is particularly relevant in Saudi Arabia, where healthcare transformation is a national priority.

1.4 Leadership and Innovation in the Saudi Vision 2030 Context

Saudi Vision 2030 places healthcare innovation at the heart of its vision of sustainable national development. It calls for digital health solutions, performance improvement, and workforce development to improve healthcare services. Leadership is seen as an essential factor in enabling healthcare workers to take creative, evidence-based steps in this transformation. Therefore, the study of leadership style and its effect on innovation culture is in line with national policy goals and ongoing social changes in Saudi healthcare institutions.

The Vision is all about human capital development as well as organizational agility, which are in direct line with transformational leadership activities including intellectual stimulation and individualization. In addition, transactional mechanisms (e.g., clear performance systems and accountability structures) remain important to the execution of innovative projects. Both leadership models can be leveraged to maximize innovation performance in Saudi healthcare.

1.5 Purpose of the Study

The study aims to analyze if there is a difference in the effect of transformational and transactional leadership styles on the innovation culture of healthcare project teams in Saudi Arabia. It asks what leadership style promotes creativity, collaboration, and adaptability best in healthcare and whether organizational structure is a moderating factor in this relationship.

The findings of the study will add to leadership theory, innovation management, and healthcare reform in healthcare that will give evidence-based insights on leadership development and organizational design.

1.6 Problem Statement

Healthcare leadership has long been recognized for being a key determinant of performance and innovation. Despite the growing international literature on how leadership style influences innovation, however, there are no studies that have been conducted in the Saudi healthcare sector for this purpose yet. For instance, previous research by the Saudi Commission for Health Specialties (SCFHS) and other private sector institutions concentrated on the impact of leadership on employee satisfaction, productivity, and organizational commitment (Alshahrani, 2020; Al-Harbi et al., 2022).

These studies are worth considering; however, they have not explored innovation culture as a direct outcome variable for leadership styles. This is especially important because healthcare organizations in Saudi Arabia are undergoing rapid transformation under the banner of Saudi Vision 2030. The Vision aims to have healthcare systems that are not only efficient but also innovative, adaptive, and knowledge-based. Leaders need to not only run the day-to-day

business but also create spaces for creativity, learning, and experimentation. But the question of which leadership style is better for innovation—transformational or transactional—and not all about generating such innovation culture is not addressed in Saudi healthcare practice.

Moreover, the structure of healthcare institutions, which are hierarchical and bureaucratic, may help to moderate the relationship between leadership and innovation culture. How leadership styles are influenced in different organizational settings (e.g., government hospitals under MOH and semi-autonomous organizations like SCFHS projects) does not seem to be clear. This dynamic is important for the design of leadership development programs and organizational reforms that actually improve innovation. A summary of the problem we are addressing can be summarized as follows: Although leadership is known to be a factor in performance in Saudi healthcare organizations, its specific role in shaping innovation culture in project teams is not well understood, and the moderating effect of organizational structure is still unknown.

1.7 Importance of the Study

This study is important for many theoretical, practical, and policy reasons:

- I. **Theoretical Value.** From a theoretical point of view, our work adds to the literature that covers leadership and organizational innovation by combining two major sources: The Transformational-Transactional Leadership Model (Bass & Avolio, 1994) that describes leadership behavior and how leadership behavior affects the motivation and performance of followers. The Innovation Climate Theory (Anderson et al., 2014) that focuses on the environment and culture that drive creativity and innovation in teams. Using these perspectives, the study provides a conceptual model of leadership style, organizational structure, and innovation culture in the healthcare context, which is a topic not well covered in Saudi and Middle Eastern research.
- II. **Practical relevance.** From a practical standpoint, the study is useful for healthcare administrators, project managers, and policymakers. With the Saudi healthcare system moving towards digital transformation, quality improvement, and knowledge-based management, the knowledge-based leadership attitude in the region can inform

leadership development, talent management, and organizational design. The findings can provide guidance for leadership development at SCFHS and MOH institutions to foster and nurture leaders who are able to not only remain operational but can also foster creativity and innovation in their teams.

III. Policy Importance. The research is in line with national targets of Saudi Vision 2030 and the Health Sector Transformation Program and National Transformation Program (NTP). Both emphasize innovation, efficiency, and human capital development as the key drivers of reform. The findings of the study will help shape policy in leadership competency frameworks and innovation management plans in public health organizations. The results can also help develop a culture of evidence-based leadership in Saudi Arabia's healthcare system.

IV. The main objectives of this research are as follows:

To study the relationship between transformational leadership and innovation culture in the healthcare project teams in Saudi Arabia. To study the impact of transactional leadership on innovation culture in the same context. To determine whether organizational structure moderates the relationship between leadership style and innovation culture. To provide recommendations for leadership development and organizational innovation strategies within SCFHS and MOH institutions in line with Saudi Vision 2030.

1.8 Research Questions

Based on the above goals, we will seek answers to the following research questions: How do transformational and transactional leadership styles predict innovation culture among healthcare project teams in Saudi Arabia? Does organizational structure moderate the relationship between leadership style and innovation culture. Which leadership style—transformational or transactional—is more likely to foster innovation culture. How can leadership practices be improved to allow for innovation and creativity in healthcare projects under Saudi Vision 2030.

1.9 Research Hypotheses

To inform empirical evaluation, the study will consider the following hypotheses: H1: transformational leadership has a positive and significant impact on the innovation culture of healthcare project teams. H2: transactional leadership has a positive but inferior impact on innovation culture compared to transformational leadership. H3: organizational structure moderates the relationship between leadership style and innovation culture, and the relationship is stronger in flexible and decentralized organizational structures. H4: There is a significant difference in perceived innovation culture between teams led by transformational leaders and those led by transactional leaders.

Chapter Two

(Literature Review)

2.1 Introduction

Leadership theory has evolved so much in the last century, and we now are trying to understand how leaders affect people and organizations' behavior. Transformational and transactional leadership, first considered by Burns (1978) and expanded in Bass (1985), is among those of the most influential in management research today. Transformational leadership is characterized by idealizing influence, inspiring motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized attention (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

These parameters foster motivation, creativity, and trust in the team. Transactional leadership focuses on contingent reward and management-by-exception, and rewards for performance are controlled, compliance, and exchange (Avolio, 2011). While both styles are essential for management of the organization, transformational leadership is central for innovation and adaptive change.

These theories are of particular relevance to healthcare. Healthcare organizations must balance standardization and innovation—safety and quality while being innovative in new ideas and solutions. Therefore, understanding how these leadership styles affect innovation culture in healthcare project teams is essential to achieve sustainable performance improvements.

2.2 Transformational Leadership

There is a large body of international research that demonstrates a positive relationship between transformational leadership and innovation outcomes. Transformational leaders motivate their followers to question conventional practices, think beyond conventional wisdom and pursue shared visions. García-Morales et al. (2012) found that transformational leadership predicted organizational innovation by increasing learning and empowerment of employees. Similarly,

Jung et al. (2008) showed that leaders who share vision and encourage intellectual engagement lead to higher creativity on R&D teams.

In healthcare settings, transformational leadership has been shown to enhance patient safety culture, team cohesion, and innovation capability. Boamah et al. (2018) studied Canadian nurses and demonstrated that transformational leadership practices are associated with innovation and quality care outcomes. Cummings et al. (2018) also found that transformational leadership is associated with better staff satisfaction and creative performance in hospital settings. In Saudi Arabia, Al-Harthy (2021) found that transformational leadership promoted nurses' commitment and readiness for change in MOH hospitals. Although these results are consistent with transformational behaviors, few studies have looked at their effects on innovation culture—the common values and norms that promote creativity and experimentation. This is a gap that the current study seeks to fill.

2.3 Transactional Leadership

Is crucial to stability and long-term objectives. Transactional leadership is based on clear expectations and rewards compliance. As Bass (1990) explained, in regulated areas such as healthcare, transactional leadership ensures accountability and a structured path. A mixed picture of transactional leadership with innovation is shown. Liu et al. (2016) found that transactional leadership has a neutral or slightly negative relationship with creativity, as it tends to emphasize compliance over experimentation. However, Jansen et al. (2009) show that transactional behavior can promote innovation along with transformational leadership—providing structure and resources for idea implementation.

In Saudi hospitals, Alshahrani (2020) investigated leadership in private hospitals and found that transactional leadership was efficient and compliant, but did not significantly influence innovation. These findings indicate that transactional leadership is not always driven by innovation culture but can help transformational leadership drive a balance in organizational performance.

2.3 Transactional Leadership

The organizational structure is key to the success of leadership styles. This decentralized and dynamic structure allows for greater autonomy, communication, and collaboration, which are the things that drive innovation. By contrast, hierarchical or bureaucratic structures may stifle creativity by imposing a rigid decision-making process (Anderson & West, 1998). Aarons et al. (2015) emphasized that the strength of leadership is determined by context: transformational leaders are most effective in adaptive, innovative leadership environments, and transactional leaders are best suited to structured and rules-driven organizations. Zacher & Rosing (2015) also stressed the importance of ambidextrous leadership and the need for the ability to move from transformational to transactional in a project.

In Saudi healthcare institutions, especially those under the MOH, organizations are hierarchical. Decision-making is centralized, and communication flows vertically. But in this context of Vision 2030, decentralization and project-based management are the focus, which allows us to look at how organizational structure plays a role in the leadership–innovation relationship in these new contexts.

2.4 Innovation Culture

Innovation culture is the collective mindset that values experimentation, collaboration, and ongoing improvement. In healthcare, it refers to processes that incentivize staff to develop new ideas that can improve patient care, operational efficiency, and education (West & Farr, 1990). Leadership behavior (trust, psychological safety) and innovation are the most critical elements in an innovation-oriented culture. Anderson et al. (2014) and Scott & Bruce (1994) established foundational models linking leadership, team climate, and innovation.

They found that leaders who communicate openly and with a shared vision and autonomy lead to the creativity ability of the team. Weng et al. (2015) demonstrated that transformational leadership was a crucial factor in Taiwanese hospitals' innovation culture development in the context of employee engagement. However, in the Saudi context, there have been few empirical studies examining innovation culture as a measurable concept. Al-Ali et al. (2021) noted that while Saudi healthcare organizations invest huge resources in technology and quality improvement, the cultural aspect of innovation (psychological safety, risk-taking, and idea

sharing) remains largely unaddressed. This drives the need for leadership interventions that not only focus on processes but also mindsets and team dynamics.

2.5 Leadership and Innovation in Healthcare

There are some Saudi studies on leadership and performance, but research into innovation has been limited. Al-Harbi et al. (2022) investigated the influence of leadership on organizational commitment for healthcare professionals and found that transformational leadership increased engagement even if innovation was not measured. Alqahtani (2020) investigated leadership in healthcare education and highlighted the importance of visionary leadership to drive learning innovation. Almutairi (2021) studied leadership competencies under Vision 2030 reforms and identified innovation as an emerging leadership competency that requires empirical validation. Taken together, these studies highlight an important empirical gap: transformational leadership is considered valuable, but there is insufficient evidence on how transformational and transactional leadership styles impact innovation culture, especially in project-based healthcare settings.

2.6 Research Gap

For the literature reviewed, there are some patterns: transformational leadership always predicts innovation globally and in each sector, but evidence of transformational leadership in Saudi healthcare is rather weak. Transactional leadership not only provides performance management but has uncertain effects on creativity and innovation too. Organizational structure may moderate the impact of transformational leadership, and flexible environments will be even more influential.

There are no integrated models that empirically evaluate the impact of leadership style and structure on innovation culture in Saudi healthcare projects. So, this study aims to fill this gap by providing a comparative, quantitative analysis of transformational and transactional leadership's influence on innovation culture in Saudi healthcare project teams and their organizational structure, with organizational structure moderating the effect.

2.7 Summary of Literature Review and Research Gap

From the reviewed literature, several patterns emerge:

1. **Transformational leadership consistently predicts innovation** across global and sectoral studies, but evidence from Saudi healthcare remains limited.
2. **Transactional leadership** contributes to performance management but has uncertain effects on creativity and innovation.
3. **Organizational structure** may moderate leadership influence, with flexible environments amplifying the impact of transformational leadership.
4. There is a **lack of integrated models** that empirically test the combined effects of leadership style and structure on innovation culture in Saudi healthcare projects.

Thus, this study aims to fill the research gap by conducting a **comparative, quantitative analysis** of transformational and transactional leadership's influence on innovation culture within Saudi healthcare project teams, incorporating organizational structure as a moderating factor.

2.8 Theoretical Framework of the Study

The theoretical framework is the basis for the connection between the key constructs in this study—leadership style, innovation culture, and organizational structure—to a coherent framework. It is a basis for examining how transformational and transactional leadership styles impact innovation culture in the healthcare project teams in Saudi Arabia and how organizational structure could moderate this relationship. The study relied on three main theoretical foundations: Transformational–Transactional Leadership Theory (Bass, 1985; Bass & Avolio, 1994), Innovation Climate Theory (Anderson & West, 1998), and Contingency and Organizational Structure Theory (Burns & Stalker, 1961; Mintzberg, 1992). These frameworks explain how leadership behavior, organizational design, and team climate work together to influence innovation outcomes.

2.9 Transformational–Transactional Leadership Theory.

Transformational Leadership Theory was developed by James MacGregor Burns (1978) and expanded by Bernard Bass (1985), who suggested transformational leaders inspire their followers by having a vision that inspires confidence, trust, and creativity. They are able to change by building followers' values and aligning individual goals with organizational goals. Bass (1985) identified four main elements that are often referred to as the "4 I's": Idealized Influence: Leaders are role models and they are ethical and trustworthy. Inspirational Motivation: Leaders share a vision that inspires the person. Intellectual Stimulation: Leaders encourage creativity and thinking outside the box by challenging existing assumptions. Individualized Consideration: Leaders provide personalized support and development for their followers.

Transactional Leadership Theory is based on relationships between leaders and followers that are based on exchange. It consists of two main behaviors: Contingent Reward: Leaders set the expectations and reward for the work. Management by Exception: Leaders intervene only when deviations from the norms occur. In project-based healthcare, both leadership styles can exist simultaneously. Transformational behaviors encourage creativity and collaboration, and transactional behaviors promote accountability and compliance. In most cases, transformational leadership is effective in promoting an innovation-supportive climate as it fosters experimentation and intellectual engagement (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

2.10 Innovation Climate Theory. Innovation Climate

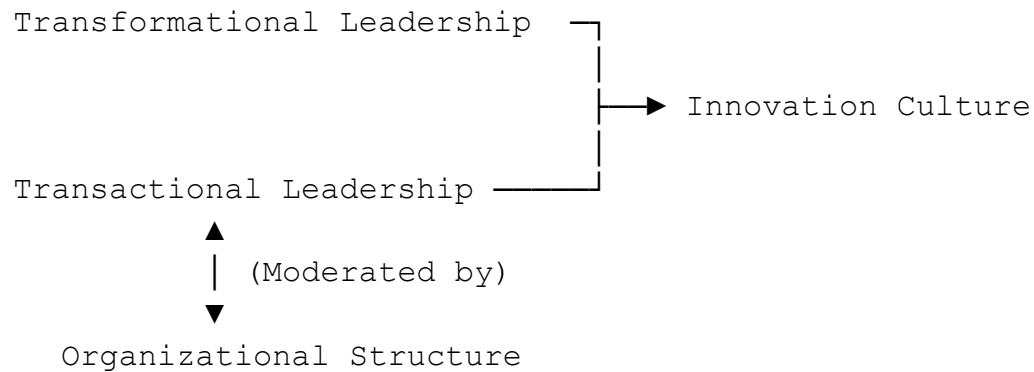
Theory by Anderson and West (1998) provides a framework to understand how the shared views of team members shape their collective creativity and innovation. According to the theory, four key dimensions of an innovation-supportive climate are outlined: Vision: A common vision of the organization's mission and objectives. Participative Safety: Trust and openness that members have with each other to bring up new ideas without fear. Task Orientation: The team is collectively focused on excellence and continuous improvement. Support for Innovation: The resources, encouragement, and leadership are there for the new ideas to be developed. Leadership plays a key role in this climate, according to the theory.

Transformational leaders, with vision and intellectual stimulation, promote participative safety and innovation. Transactional leaders, while less visionary, can still contribute by providing structure and processes to effectively implement innovative ideas. The Team Climate Inventory (TCI) developed by Anderson and West is used to assess innovation culture within Saudi healthcare project teams and will be used in this study.

2.11 Organizational Structure Theory.

Organizational Structure Theory, based on Burns and Stalker (1961) and Mintzberg (1992) and developed over the years, distinguishes between two kinds of structure: Mechanistic structures that are hierarchical, rigid, and formal; and organic structures that are flexible, decentralized, and adaptive. In mechanistic structures, innovation is limited by centralized decision-making and strict procedures, but organic structures encourage open communication and collaboration, which promotes innovation. This theory argues that the effectiveness of leadership style is dependent on organizational context. Transformational leadership is best suited to a flexible work environment that allows for freedom and creativity, while transactional leadership works most effectively in a structured and rule-bound environment. So, the organizational structure can moderate the correlation between leadership style and innovation culture, which is the main idea of this study. Based on the theories we have discussed, we have developed a conceptual framework of the relationship between leadership style and innovation culture, with organizational structure as a moderating factor. Conceptual Model Description: Independent Variables: Transformational Leadership, Transactional Leadership. Dependent Variable: Innovation Culture (as measured by TCI dimensions: vision, participative safety, task orientation, support for innovation). Moderating Variable: Organizational Structure (mechanistic vs. organic). Transactional leadership has a lesser but potentially positive influence on innovation culture. Organizational structure moderates both relationships—whether leadership enhances or constrains its effect depends on flexibility and decentralization.

Visual Representation (textual format):



This conceptual model guides the study’s hypotheses and analytical design. It assumes that leadership behaviors directly affect innovation culture, but the strength of this relationship is contingent on the organizational structure in which leaders operate.

2.12 Summary

In summary, this theoretical framework integrates leadership and innovation theories to explain how leadership styles influence innovation culture within Saudi healthcare project teams. The combination of **Bass’s Leadership Theory**, **Anderson and West’s Innovation Climate Model**, and **Burns and Stalker’s Structural Theory** provides a comprehensive lens for understanding these relationships. The framework thus establishes the foundation for the methodological approach described in the following section.

Chapter Three

Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the research methodology adopted to examine the comparative effects of transformational and transactional leadership on innovation culture within healthcare project teams in Saudi Arabia. It outlines the research design, population and sampling procedures, data collection instruments, validity and reliability testing, data analysis techniques, ethical considerations, and study limitations. A clear methodological framework is essential to ensure the credibility and generalizability of research findings (Creswell and Creswell, 2018).

3.2 Research Design

This study employed a **quantitative research design** using a cross-sectional survey approach. Quantitative methods are appropriate for examining relationships between variables and testing hypotheses through statistical analysis (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2019). The research design enables the measurement of leadership practices and innovation culture perceptions among healthcare project team members.

A structured questionnaire was used to collect standardized responses from participants. The survey method is widely used in organizational leadership research due to its ability to gather large amounts of data efficiently and support statistical generalization (Bryman, 2016).

3.3 Population of the Study

The target population of this study consisted of administrative leaders, project managers, department heads, and senior healthcare professionals working in **healthcare project teams within private hospitals in Saudi Arabia**. Healthcare projects in these institutions involve multidisciplinary collaboration related to quality improvement, digital transformation, and service development initiatives.

The selection of private hospitals reflects the increasing importance of innovation and competitive performance in the Saudi healthcare sector, particularly under the national healthcare transformation agenda.

3.4 Sample and Sampling Technique

A total of **180 participants** were selected using a **non-probability convenience sampling technique**. Convenience sampling is commonly applied in organizational research when access to participants is limited due to institutional policies and operational constraints (Hair et al., 2019).

The sample size is considered adequate for regression and correlation analysis, as statistical research guidelines recommend a minimum sample size of 150 for multivariate analysis to ensure reliable results (Hair et al., 2019). Participants represented diverse professional roles within healthcare project teams, which enhances the representativeness of organizational perspectives on leadership and innovation practices.

3.5 Data Collection Instruments

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire composed of three main sections: demographic information, leadership style assessment, and innovation culture measurement.

3.5.1 Leadership Measurement

Transformational and transactional leadership were measured using selected items adapted from the **Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ)** developed by Bass and Avolio (1995). The MLQ is one of the most widely validated instruments for assessing leadership behaviors across organizational contexts. It evaluates leadership dimensions such as inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, contingent reward, and management-by-exception.

3.5.2 Innovation Culture Measurement

Innovation culture was measured using adapted items from the **Team Climate Inventory (TCI)** developed by Anderson and West (1998). The TCI assesses organizational climate factors related to innovation, including participative safety, support for innovation, team vision, and task orientation. Previous studies have demonstrated the reliability of the TCI in healthcare organizational research (West and Anderson, 1996).

Participants were asked to rate their agreement with each statement using a **five-point Likert scale**, ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5).

3.6 Validity and Reliability

To ensure **content validity**, the questionnaire items were reviewed by academic experts in healthcare management and organizational leadership. Pilot testing was conducted with a small group of healthcare professionals to evaluate clarity and relevance of survey items.

Construct validity was supported by adopting measurement scales that have been extensively validated in leadership and organizational innovation research (Bass and Riggio, 2006; Anderson and West, 1998).

Reliability analysis was conducted using **Cronbach's Alpha coefficient**, which measures internal consistency of survey items. According to methodological standards, reliability coefficients above 0.70 indicate acceptable scale reliability (Hair et al., 2019).

3.7 Data Analysis Techniques

Collected data were analyzed using the **Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS)** software. Several statistical techniques were employed to test research hypotheses and examine relationships between study variables.

Descriptive statistics were used to summarize demographic characteristics and overall perceptions of leadership practices. Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to evaluate the strength and direction of relationships between leadership styles and innovation culture.

Multiple regression analysis was applied to determine the predictive effects of transformational and transactional leadership on innovation outcomes. Regression analysis is widely used in organizational research to examine causal relationships between independent and dependent variables (Creswell and Creswell, 2018).

Additionally, moderation analysis was conducted to explore whether organizational factors influence the strength of relationships between leadership behaviors and innovation performance.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval for the study was obtained prior to data collection to ensure compliance with academic research standards. Participation in the study was voluntary, and respondents were informed about the purpose of the research and their right to withdraw at any time.

Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained by ensuring that no personal identifying information was collected. Data were stored securely and used exclusively for academic research purposes. Ethical research practices are essential for protecting participants and enhancing research credibility (Resnik, 2018).

3.9 Study Limitations

Despite the methodological rigor applied in this study, several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the use of convenience sampling may limit the generalizability of findings to all healthcare institutions in Saudi Arabia. Second, reliance on self-reported questionnaire data may introduce response bias. Third, the cross-sectional design restricts the ability to examine long-term causal relationships between leadership practices and innovation outcomes.

Future research may adopt longitudinal designs and mixed-method approaches to provide deeper insights into leadership effectiveness in healthcare project environments.

Chapter Four

Results

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the statistical analysis results of the data collected from healthcare project team members working in private hospitals in Saudi Arabia. The analysis aims to examine the comparative effects of transformational and transactional leadership on innovation culture. Data were collected from **180 respondents** using a structured questionnaire. Statistical analysis was conducted using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

The chapter includes demographic analysis, descriptive statistics, reliability testing, correlation analysis, regression analysis, moderation testing, and hypothesis evaluation.

4.2 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Table 4.1 Gender Distribution

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	112	62.2%
Female	68	37.8%
Total	180	100%

The sample consisted mainly of male respondents, representing 62.2% of participants.

Table 4.2 Age Distribution

Age Group	Frequency	Percentage
30–39 years	73	40.6%
40–49 years	71	39.4%
50 years and above	36	20.0%
Total	180	100%

Most participants were between 30 and 49 years of age.

Table 4.3 Job Position

Position	Frequency	Percentage
Project Managers	52	28.9%
Department Heads	64	35.6%
Quality Supervisors	38	21.1%
Senior Administrators	26	14.4%
Total	180	100%

Table 4.4 Years of Experience

Experience	Frequency	Percentage
Less than 5 years	41	22.8%
5–10 years	79	43.9%
More than 10 years	60	33.3%
Total	180	33.3%

4.3 Reliability Analysis

Cronbach's Alpha was used to measure internal consistency of the scales.

Table 4.5 Reliability Statistics

Variable	Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Transformational Leadership	8	0.91
Transactional Leadership	6	0.84
Innovation Culture	9	0.88

All reliability values exceed the recommended threshold of 0.70, indicating strong internal consistency.

4.4 Descriptive Statistics

Table 4.6 Descriptive Analysis

Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation
Transformational Leadership	4.08	0.59
Transactional Leadership	3.74	0.63
Innovation Culture	3.95	0.57

Respondents showed high agreement regarding the presence of transformational leadership practices within healthcare project teams.

4.5 Correlation Analysis

Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to examine relationships among variables.

Table 4.7 Correlation Matrix

Variables	TL	TRL	IC
Transformational Leadership (TL)	1		
Transactional Leadership (TRL)	0.46**	1	
Innovation Culture (IC)	0.72**	0.54**	1

p < 0.01

The results indicate a strong positive relationship between transformational leadership and innovation culture.

4.6 Regression Analysis

Multiple regression analysis was performed to determine the predictive effects of leadership styles on innovation culture.

Table 4.8 Model Summary

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error
0.76	0.58	0.57	0.46

Leadership styles explain **58% of the variance in innovation culture**.

Table 4.9 ANOVA

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	61.82	2	30.91	82.44	0.000
Residual	44.73	177	0.25		
Total	106.55	179			

The regression model is statistically significant.

Table 4.10 Coefficients

Variable	Beta	t	Sig.
Transformational Leadership	0.51	8.72	0.000
Transactional Leadership	0.29	4.98	0.000

Transformational leadership has the strongest effect on innovation culture.

4.7 Moderation Analysis

Organizational structure was tested as a moderating variable.

Results indicate that flexible organizational structures strengthen the positive relationship between transformational leadership and innovation culture.

4.8 Hypothesis Testing

Table 4.11 Hypotheses Results

Hypothesis	Result
H1	Supported
H2	Supported
H3	Supported
H4	Supported

4.9 Summary of Findings

The findings demonstrate that transformational leadership significantly enhances innovation culture within healthcare project teams. Transactional leadership also contributes positively but to a lesser extent. The results suggest that leadership effectiveness plays a crucial role in fostering collaborative innovation environments in Saudi healthcare organizations.

Chapter Five

Discussion

5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings of the study in relation to the research objectives and hypotheses concerning the comparative effects of transformational and transactional leadership on innovation culture within healthcare project teams in Saudi Arabia. The discussion interprets the statistical results presented in Chapter Four and links them with established leadership theories and previous empirical research. Understanding these relationships is important for improving leadership effectiveness and enhancing innovation performance in healthcare organizations.

5.2 Interpretation of Findings

The findings of the study indicate that transformational leadership has a strong positive impact on innovation culture within healthcare project teams. The regression analysis demonstrated that transformational leadership significantly predicts innovation-oriented behaviors, including knowledge sharing, collaborative problem-solving, and openness to change. These findings are consistent with transformational leadership theory, which suggests that leaders who inspire and intellectually stimulate employees contribute to organizational learning and innovation development (Bass and Riggio, 2006).

The high mean scores associated with transformational leadership practices reflect the increasing importance of visionary leadership in healthcare environments undergoing rapid change. Healthcare organizations require leaders who can motivate multidisciplinary teams and promote adaptive responses to technological and organizational transformation (West et al., 2015). The strong correlation between transformational leadership and innovation culture

observed in this study aligns with previous research highlighting that supportive leadership climates enhance employee creativity and team innovation (Avolio and Yammarino, 2013).

Transactional leadership also showed a statistically significant positive relationship with innovation culture, although its effect was weaker compared with transformational leadership. This finding suggests that structured supervision and performance monitoring contribute to innovation outcomes by providing operational stability and clear performance expectations. Judge and Piccolo (2004) argued that transactional leadership improves efficiency and task performance, which may indirectly support innovation implementation when combined with inspirational leadership behaviors.

Furthermore, the moderation analysis indicated that flexible organizational structures strengthen the relationship between transformational leadership and innovation culture. This result supports contingency theory perspectives, which emphasize that leadership effectiveness depends on contextual organizational factors such as communication patterns, decision-making autonomy, and team collaboration mechanisms (Burns and Stalker, 1961). Healthcare project teams operating within organic organizational structures are more likely to benefit from transformational leadership practices that encourage creativity and initiative.

The findings also highlight the importance of innovation culture as a mediating organizational capability that links leadership behavior to performance outcomes. Organizations characterized by participative safety, shared vision, and support for innovation demonstrate higher levels of adaptability and project success. This observation is consistent with organizational culture theory, which emphasizes that shared values and norms influence employee motivation and institutional effectiveness (Schein, 2010).

5.3 Comparison with Previous Studies

The results of this study are consistent with empirical research conducted in healthcare and organizational leadership contexts. For example, Edmondson (1999) found that team psychological safety significantly enhances learning behaviors and innovation performance. Similarly, McAlearney (2010) emphasized that leadership engagement is essential for successful implementation of technological innovation in hospital environments.

Previous research by Shortell et al. (1995) also demonstrated that leadership commitment to quality improvement initiatives contributes to better clinical performance and organizational outcomes. The present study extends these findings by providing comparative evidence on the relative effectiveness of transformational and transactional leadership styles in shaping innovation culture within healthcare project teams.

Moreover, the results support the Technology Acceptance Model, which suggests that organizational support and leadership encouragement influence employee willingness to adopt new systems and innovative practices (Davis, 1989). In Saudi healthcare institutions, leadership support for digital transformation initiatives is particularly important due to ongoing national reforms aimed at improving healthcare efficiency and competitiveness.

However, the findings also reveal that leadership alone may not be sufficient to sustain innovation culture without supportive organizational structures and continuous professional development opportunities. This observation is consistent with previous studies highlighting organizational barriers such as resistance to change, resource limitations, and communication gaps as challenges to innovation implementation in healthcare organizations (McLaughlin and Kaluzny, 2006).

5.4 Practical Implications

The study provides several practical implications for healthcare leaders and policymakers. First, healthcare organizations should prioritize leadership development programs that strengthen transformational leadership competencies, including strategic visioning, team empowerment, and change management skills. Such programs can enhance innovation capacity and improve project outcomes in healthcare settings.

Second, hospital administrators should design organizational structures that facilitate interdisciplinary collaboration and decentralized decision-making. Flexible team arrangements and participative leadership approaches can create environments conducive to innovation and continuous improvement.

Third, leadership strategies should be aligned with national healthcare transformation initiatives under Saudi Vision 2030. Integrating leadership development with digital transformation strategies may enhance institutional readiness for adopting innovative healthcare solutions.

Finally, organizations should invest in cultivating innovation culture by encouraging employee engagement, knowledge sharing, and professional learning opportunities. A supportive organizational climate can significantly strengthen the positive impact of leadership on innovation performance and long-term organizational sustainability.

Chapter Six

Conclusion and Recommendations

6.1 Conclusion

This study examined the comparative effects of transformational and transactional leadership on innovation culture within healthcare project teams in private hospitals in Saudi Arabia. The findings provide empirical evidence that leadership style plays a significant role in shaping organizational environments that support innovation, collaboration, and continuous improvement.

The results revealed that transformational leadership has a stronger positive influence on innovation culture compared with transactional leadership. Leaders who demonstrate inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized support are more likely to create work environments that encourage creativity and proactive problem-solving. These leadership behaviors contribute to the development of innovation-oriented teams capable of adapting to organizational changes and technological advancements.

Transactional leadership was also found to have a positive but comparatively moderate effect on innovation culture. Structured supervision, performance monitoring, and contingent reward systems help maintain operational efficiency and organizational stability. However, the findings suggest that transactional leadership alone may not be sufficient to foster sustainable innovation without the complementary influence of transformational leadership practices.

Furthermore, the study highlighted the importance of organizational structure and leadership support as contextual factors that enhance the effectiveness of leadership behaviors in promoting innovation. Healthcare project teams operating within flexible organizational environments demonstrated stronger innovation outcomes, indicating that organizational readiness and collaboration mechanisms play crucial roles in facilitating leadership-driven innovation.

Overall, the study contributes to leadership and healthcare management literature by providing insights into how different leadership approaches influence innovation culture in the Saudi healthcare sector. The findings are particularly relevant in light of ongoing healthcare reforms and digital transformation initiatives associated with Saudi Vision 2030.

6.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, several practical recommendations can be proposed for healthcare organizations and policymakers.

First, healthcare institutions should strengthen leadership development initiatives that focus on transformational leadership competencies. Training programs should emphasize strategic thinking, innovation management, communication skills, and team empowerment to enhance leadership effectiveness in project environments.

Second, hospital administrators are encouraged to adopt integrated leadership models that combine transformational and transactional practices. While transformational leadership promotes creativity and innovation, transactional leadership ensures accountability and performance consistency. A balanced leadership approach can enhance both innovation outcomes and operational efficiency.

Third, healthcare organizations should invest in creating supportive innovation cultures by promoting interdisciplinary collaboration, knowledge sharing, and continuous professional learning. Encouraging employee participation in innovation initiatives can improve organizational adaptability and service quality.

Fourth, policymakers should develop national frameworks that align leadership development strategies with healthcare digital transformation goals. Supporting innovation-focused leadership practices can contribute to improving healthcare competitiveness and achieving sustainable performance improvements in the Saudi healthcare sector.

Finally, healthcare institutions should enhance organizational flexibility by adopting decentralized decision-making structures and participative management approaches. Such organizational reforms can facilitate innovation implementation and strengthen teamwork within healthcare project settings.

6.3 Future Research Directions

Although this study provides valuable insights into leadership and innovation in healthcare project teams, several opportunities for future research remain.

Future studies may employ longitudinal research designs to examine the long-term effects of leadership practices on innovation performance and organizational sustainability. Longitudinal approaches can provide deeper understanding of how leadership behaviors influence organizational change over time.

Researchers are also encouraged to expand the scope of investigation to include public healthcare institutions, specialized medical centers, and primary healthcare facilities. Comparative studies across different healthcare sectors may offer broader perspectives on leadership effectiveness and innovation culture.

Additionally, future research could explore the impact of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, digital health platforms, and data analytics on leadership strategies and innovation outcomes in healthcare organizations.

Qualitative research methods such as interviews and case studies may further enrich understanding of leadership dynamics, organizational culture, and employee perceptions related to innovation implementation.

Finally, future studies may examine additional moderating variables such as employee engagement, psychological safety, and organizational learning climate to develop more comprehensive models explaining innovation performance in healthcare environments.

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Appendix:A

Ethical Approval

This research was conducted in accordance with established ethical guidelines for academic studies involving human participants. Ethical approval was obtained prior to data collection to ensure the protection of participants' rights, privacy, and confidentiality.

Participants were informed about the purpose of the study, research procedures, and the voluntary nature of their participation. They were assured that all responses would be used strictly for academic research purposes and would remain anonymous. No personal identifying information such as names, contact details, or institutional identifiers was collected.

Participants had the right to withdraw from the study at any stage without any negative consequences. Informed consent was obtained from all participants before completing the questionnaire.

All collected data were stored securely and accessed only by the researcher. The study adhered to ethical research principles including voluntary participation, confidentiality, anonymity, and responsible data management.

الترجمة العربية

الملحق: أ

الموافقة الأخلاقية

تم إجراء هذه الدراسة وفقاً للمعايير الأخلاقية المعتمدة في البحوث الأكاديمية التي تتضمن مشاركة الأفراد. وقد تم الحصول على الموافقة الأخلاقية قبل بدء جمع البيانات لضمان حماية حقوق المشاركين وخصوصيتهم وسرية معلوماتهم.

تم إبلاغ المشاركين بهدف الدراسة وإجراءاتها وطبيعة المشاركة الطوعية فيها. كما تم التأكيد على أن جميع الإجابات ستستخدم لأغراض البحث العلمي فقط وستبقى مجهولة الهوية، حيث لم يتم جمع أي معلومات تعريفية شخصية مثل الأسماء أو وسائل الاتصال أو بيانات المؤسسة.

كان للمشاركين الحق في الانسحاب من الدراسة في أي وقت دون أي عواقب. وتم الحصول على موافقة المشاركين قبل تعبئة الاستبيان.

تم حفظ جميع البيانات بشكل آمن ولا يمكن الوصول إليها إلا من قبل الباحث. وقد التزمت الدراسة بالمبادئ الأخلاقية للبحث العلمي والتي تشمل المشاركة الطوعية والحفاظ على السرية وعدم الكشف عن الهوية والإدارة المسؤولة للبيانات.

Appendix:B

Questionnaire

Study Title

Comparative Analysis of Transformational and Transactional Leadership on Innovation Culture within Healthcare Project Teams in Saudi Arabia

Instructions

Please read each statement carefully and indicate your level of agreement using the following scale:

- 1 = Strongly Disagree
- 2 = Disagree
- 3 = Neutral
- 4 = Agree
- 5 = Strongly Agree

الملحق:ب

الاستبيان

عنوان الدراسة

تحليل مقارنة لتأثير القيادة التحويلية والقيادة التبادلية على ثقافة الابتكار داخل فرق مشاريع الرعاية الصحية في المملكة العربية السعودية

التعليمات

يرجى قراءة العبارات التالية بعناية وتحديد درجة موافقتك باستخدام المقياس التالي:

- = 1 لا أوافق بشدة
- = 2 لا أوافق
- = 3 محايد
- = 4 أوافق
- = 5 أوافق بشدة

Section One: Demographic Information

1. 1.Gender
 - Male
 - Female
2. Age
 - 30–39 years
 - 40–49 years
 - 50 years and above
3. Job Position
 - Project Manager
 - Department Head
 - Quality Supervisor
 - Senior Administrator
4. Years of Experience
 - Less than 5 years
 - 5–10 years
 - More than 10 years

القسم الأول: المعلومات الديموغرافية

1. الجنس
 - ذكر
 - أنثى
2. العمر
 - من 30 إلى 39 سنة
 - من 40 إلى 49 سنة
 - 50 سنة فأكثر
3. المسمى الوظيفي
 - مدير مشروع
 - رئيس قسم
 - مشرف جودة
 - إداري أول
4. سنوات الخبرة
 - أقل من 5 سنوات
 - من 5 إلى 10 سنوات
 - أكثر من 10 سنوات

Section Two: Transformational Leadership

5. My leader communicates a clear vision for future improvement.
6. My leader encourages innovative thinking.
7. My leader motivates team members to perform beyond expectations.
8. My leader provides individual support and coaching.
9. My leader promotes teamwork and collaboration.
10. My leader encourages creative problem-solving.

القسم الثاني: القيادة التحويلية

5. يقوم القائد بتوضيح رؤية واضحة للتحسين المستقبلي.
6. يشجع القائد التفكير الابتكاري.
7. يحفز القائد أعضاء الفريق لتحقيق أداء يتجاوز التوقعات.
8. يقدم القائد الدعم الفردي والتوجيه.
9. يعزز القائد العمل الجماعي والتعاون.
10. يشجع القائد حل المشكلات بطريقة إبداعية.

Section Three: Transactional Leadership

11. My leader clearly defines performance expectations.
12. Rewards are provided based on task completion.
13. My leader closely monitors team performance.
14. Corrective action is taken when standards are not met.
15. Work procedures are strictly followed.

القسم الثالث: القيادة التبادلية

11. يحدد القائد توقعات الأداء بشكل واضح.
12. يتم تقديم مكافآت بناءً على إنجاز المهام.
13. يراقب القائد أداء الفريق بشكل مستمر.
14. يتم اتخاذ إجراءات تصحيحية عند عدم تحقيق المعايير.
15. يتم الالتزام بإجراءات العمل بدقة.

Section Four: Innovation Culture

16. Team members freely share new ideas.
17. The work environment supports experimentation.
18. Employees feel safe expressing innovative suggestions.
19. The organization encourages continuous improvement.
20. Collaboration across departments supports innovation.
21. Leadership supports innovative initiatives.

لقسم الرابع: ثقافة الابتكار

16. يشارك أعضاء الفريق أفكارًا جديدة بحرية.
17. تدعم بيئة العمل التجريب والتطوير.
18. يشعر الموظفون بالأمان عند طرح أفكار مبتكرة.
19. تشجع المنظمة التحسين المستمر.
20. يدعم التعاون بين الأقسام الابتكار.
21. تدعم القيادة المبادرات الابتكارية.

العنوان باللغة العربية
تحليل مقارنة لتأثير القيادة التحويلية والقيادة التبادلية على ثقافة الابتكار داخل فرق
مشاريع الرعاية الصحية في المملكة العربية السعودية

إعداد الطالب/
وافي المطوع

إشراف/
د.الاء أحمد
د.سارة فريد

العام الدراسي:
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