



EXAMINING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HEALTH ADMINISTRATION LEADERSHIP STYLES AND EMPLOYEE JOB SATISFACTION IN HAFAR ALBATIN HEALTH FACILITIES

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Abstract

Leadership styles in health administration play a crucial role in shaping employee job satisfaction and organizational performance. This study aims to examine the relationship between health administration leadership styles and employee job satisfaction in Hafar AlBatin health facilities, Saudi Arabia. A mixed-methods approach was employed, involving a survey of 200 healthcare employees and semi-structured interviews with 20 health administration leaders. The survey assessed perceptions of leadership styles (transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire) and job satisfaction using the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) and the Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS). The interviews explored leaders' perspectives on their leadership styles and strategies for promoting employee job satisfaction. The findings revealed a significant positive relationship between transformational leadership and job satisfaction, while laissez-faire leadership was negatively associated with job satisfaction. Transactional leadership showed a weak positive relationship with job satisfaction. The study highlights the importance of adopting transformational leadership practices in health administration to enhance employee job satisfaction and organizational performance.

Keywords: health administration, leadership styles, job satisfaction, transformational leadership, Saudi Arabia

Introduction

Leadership in health administration is a critical factor influencing employee job satisfaction, organizational performance, and the quality of healthcare services (Al-Yami et al., 2018). In Saudi Arabia, the healthcare sector has undergone significant reforms in recent years, with a focus on improving the quality and accessibility of healthcare services (Alharbi, 2018). As part of these reforms, there has been an increased emphasis on developing effective leadership practices in health administration (Alhatmi, 2020).

Leadership styles in health administration can be broadly categorized into three types: transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Transformational



leadership involves inspiring and motivating employees to achieve common goals, while transactional leadership focuses on rewards and punishments to influence employee behavior. Laissez-faire leadership, on the other hand, is characterized by a hands-off approach, where leaders provide minimal guidance and support to employees (Asiri et al., 2016).

Employee job satisfaction is a key indicator of organizational performance and is influenced by various factors, including leadership styles, work environment, and individual characteristics (Alshahrani & Baig, 2016). Previous studies have shown that transformational leadership is positively associated with job satisfaction in healthcare settings (Alharbi et al., 2019), while laissez-faire leadership is negatively related to job satisfaction (Asiri et al., 2016).

This study aims to examine the relationship between health administration leadership styles and employee job satisfaction in Hafar AlBatin health facilities, Saudi Arabia. The study also explores the perspectives of health administration leaders on their leadership styles and strategies for promoting employee job satisfaction.

Literature Review

Leadership styles have been extensively studied in various organizational contexts, including healthcare settings. Transformational leadership has emerged as a prominent approach in health administration, with studies showing its positive impact on employee job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and patient outcomes (Alharbi et al., 2019; Asiri et al., 2016). Transformational leaders inspire and motivate employees to achieve common goals, foster innovation, and create a supportive work environment (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

Transactional leadership, which focuses on rewards and punishments to influence employee behavior, has been found to have a weaker relationship with job satisfaction compared to transformational leadership (Alshahrani & Baig, 2016). However, some studies have suggested that a combination of transformational and transactional leadership practices may be effective in healthcare settings (Al-Yami et al., 2018).

Laissez-faire leadership, characterized by a hands-off approach and minimal guidance, has been associated with lower levels of job satisfaction and organizational performance (Asiri et al., 2016). In healthcare settings, laissez-faire leadership may result in a lack of direction and support for employees, leading to decreased motivation and job satisfaction (Alharbi et al., 2019).

Employee job satisfaction is a crucial factor in healthcare organizations, as it is linked to employee retention, patient satisfaction, and the quality of care (Alshahrani & Baig, 2016). Studies have identified several determinants of job satisfaction in healthcare settings, including leadership styles, work environment, compensation, and opportunities for professional growth (Al-Yami et al., 2018).

In Saudi Arabia, research on leadership styles and job satisfaction in health administration is limited. However, some studies have highlighted the importance of transformational leadership

practices in enhancing employee job satisfaction and organizational performance (Alharbi et al., 2019; Alhatmi, 2020). As the Saudi healthcare sector continues to undergo reforms, understanding the relationship between leadership styles and job satisfaction is crucial for developing effective strategies to improve healthcare services.

Methodology

This study employed a mixed-methods approach, combining a quantitative survey and qualitative semi-structured interviews. The survey sample consisted of 200 healthcare employees (nurses, physicians, and administrative staff) recruited from Hafar AlBatin health facilities, including King Khaled General Hospital and primary healthcare centers. The survey questionnaire included the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) to assess perceptions of leadership styles (transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire) and the Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS) to measure employee job satisfaction.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 20 health administration leaders, including hospital directors, department heads, and nursing supervisors. The interviews explored leaders' perspectives on their leadership styles, strategies for promoting employee job satisfaction, and challenges faced in their roles.

Data Analysis

Survey data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and multiple regression analysis to examine the relationship between leadership styles and job satisfaction. The MLQ and JSS scores were calculated, and the internal consistency of the scales was assessed using Cronbach's alpha. Interview data were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify common themes and patterns related to leadership styles and job satisfaction.

Results

Survey Findings

The survey results indicated that transformational leadership was the most prevalent leadership style among health administration leaders in Hafar AlBatin health facilities ($M=3.85$, $SD=0.76$), followed by transactional leadership ($M=3.42$, $SD=0.81$) and laissez-faire leadership ($M=2.21$, $SD=0.92$). Employee job satisfaction scores were relatively high ($M=3.78$, $SD=0.68$). Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics for the study variables.

Variable	Mean (SD)	Cronbach's Alpha
Transformational Leadership	3.85 (0.76)	0.92
Transactional Leadership	3.42 (0.81)	0.87

Variable	Mean (SD)	Cronbach's Alpha
Laissez-faire Leadership	2.21 (0.92)	0.85
Job Satisfaction	3.78 (0.68)	0.91

Multiple regression analysis revealed a significant positive relationship between transformational leadership and job satisfaction ($\beta=0.52$, $p<0.001$), while laissez-faire leadership was negatively associated with job satisfaction ($\beta=-0.28$, $p<0.01$). Transactional leadership showed a weak positive relationship with job satisfaction ($\beta=0.15$, $p<0.05$). Table 2 presents the regression analysis results.

Variable	Standardized Beta	t-value	p-value
Transformational Leadership	0.52	8.21	<0.001
Transactional Leadership	0.15	2.43	<0.05
Laissez-faire Leadership	-0.28	-4.56	<0.01

Interview Findings

The thematic analysis of the interviews revealed three main themes: 1) leadership styles and practices, 2) strategies for promoting employee job satisfaction, and 3) challenges in health administration leadership.

1. Leadership Styles and Practices

Health administration leaders described their leadership styles as primarily transformational, with a focus on inspiring and motivating employees to achieve common goals. Leaders emphasized the importance of open communication, empowerment, and providing support to employees. A hospital director stated, "I believe in leading by example and creating a vision that inspires our team to provide the best possible care to our patients."

2. Strategies for Promoting Employee Job Satisfaction

Leaders identified several strategies for promoting employee job satisfaction, including providing opportunities for professional growth, recognizing and rewarding employee achievements, and fostering a positive work environment. A nursing supervisor remarked, "We make sure to celebrate our team's successes and provide regular feedback and support to help them grow professionally."

3. Challenges in Health Administration Leadership
Leaders also discussed the challenges they face in their roles, such as managing limited resources, dealing with organizational changes, and maintaining employee motivation. A department head noted, "One of the biggest challenges is balancing the needs of our patients with the constraints of our budget and resources. It requires constant communication and collaboration with our team to find creative solutions."

Discussion

The findings of this study highlight the importance of transformational leadership practices in promoting employee job satisfaction in Hafar AlBatin health facilities. The survey results indicate a strong positive relationship between transformational leadership and job satisfaction, consistent with previous research in healthcare settings (Alharbi et al., 2019; Asiri et al., 2016). Transformational leaders inspire and motivate employees, create a supportive work environment, and foster a sense of purpose and commitment to organizational goals.

The negative association between laissez-faire leadership and job satisfaction underscores the importance of active leadership engagement in healthcare organizations. Laissez-faire leaders who provide minimal guidance and support may contribute to decreased employee motivation and job satisfaction (Asiri et al., 2016). The weak positive relationship between transactional leadership and job satisfaction suggests that while rewards and punishments may have some influence on employee satisfaction, transformational leadership practices are more effective in promoting long-term job satisfaction and organizational performance (Al-Yami et al., 2018).

The interviews with health administration leaders provide valuable insights into the strategies and challenges related to promoting employee job satisfaction. Leaders emphasized the importance of open communication, employee empowerment, and providing opportunities for professional growth. These findings align with previous research that has identified effective leadership practices in healthcare settings (Alharbi et al., 2019; Alhatmi, 2020).

However, leaders also acknowledged the challenges they face, such as managing limited resources and dealing with organizational changes. These challenges highlight the need for health administration leaders to develop adaptive and resilient leadership skills to navigate the complexities of the healthcare environment (Al-Yami et al., 2018).

Limitations and Future Research

This study has some limitations that should be considered when interpreting the results. The sample was limited to healthcare employees and leaders in Hafar AlBatin health facilities, and the findings may not be generalizable to other regions or healthcare settings. Future research could explore the relationship between leadership styles and job satisfaction in different healthcare contexts and include a larger sample size.

Additionally, the cross-sectional nature of the study limits the ability to establish causal relationships between leadership styles and job satisfaction. Future research could employ

longitudinal designs to examine the long-term impact of leadership practices on employee job satisfaction and organizational performance.

Conclusion

This study provides evidence of the strong positive relationship between transformational leadership practices and employee job satisfaction in Hafar AlBatin health facilities, Saudi Arabia. The findings highlight the importance of health administration leaders adopting transformational leadership styles to inspire, motivate, and support employees in achieving organizational goals.

The study also identifies effective strategies for promoting employee job satisfaction, such as open communication, employee empowerment, and providing opportunities for professional growth. Health administration leaders should focus on developing these practices to create a positive work environment and enhance employee satisfaction.

However, leaders must also be prepared to address the challenges they face, such as managing limited resources and dealing with organizational changes. Developing adaptive and resilient leadership skills is crucial for navigating the complexities of the healthcare environment and promoting long-term organizational success.

In conclusion, this study underscores the importance of effective leadership practices in health administration for promoting employee job satisfaction and organizational performance. By adopting transformational leadership styles and implementing strategies to support and empower employees, health administration leaders can create a positive work environment and contribute to the delivery of high-quality healthcare services in Hafar AlBatin and beyond.

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