

Leadership Style Adaptability as a Theoretical Framework for Understanding Job Satisfaction

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Abstract

In the modern world, leadership styles play an important role in company and employee performance. This research examines how the transformational and transactional leadership styles affect job satisfaction among the employees of both the public and the private sectors in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. Data became available through a survey that was sent to 89 employees via Google Forms and was analyzed with the statistical program SPSS version 26. Frequencies, percentages, and means of the scores were used in descriptive analysis, and correlation and regression analyses were done to understand the relationship between leadership styles and job satisfaction. The results showed that both transformational and transactional leadership styles have a positive relationship with job satisfaction, and both leadership styles significantly influence staff satisfaction. Notably, transformational leadership had more of an effect. The study highlights the role of effective leadership in boosting employee satisfaction and performance of an organization. Through the prism of the leadership adaptability and social exchange theory, the research creates an integrative conceptual framework that connects leadership behaviors and employee outcomes in different environments, and the theoretical contribution to the literature of HRD and leadership practice, especially in emerging markets.

Keywords: *Transformational leadership, Transactional leadership, Leadership adaptability, Job satisfaction, HRD theory, Leadership model.*

INTRODUCTION

The most important factor to take into account in order to achieve success or prime in any firm is employee work happiness. The success of every company can be positively impacted by employee engagement. An employee's experience at the company over the years they have worked there can result from their contacts with a leader's method statement. In order to exceed job expectations and be in line with corporate goals, we want to provide the significant elements and connections between leadership management and job happiness in this study. This study focuses specifically on how a leader's transformational and transactional traits affect achieving job satisfaction. The human resources management, comprising the management staff, is important to organizations in boosting the morale, well-being, and output of the employees as influenced by leaders such as the leadership style and the job satisfaction (Aziz et al., 2022).

Job satisfaction can be achieved by providing a good working environment and opening doors for communication and top management support. Any department in the organization can strive for job satisfaction through its leaders since they play a key role in creating such factors. Their communication style can have a major influence on the overall employee performance. A transformational leader is recognized by being an inspirational and motivational team member to unlock the employee's full capacity, which results in better communication and bringing better ideas into the plan. A transactional leader is characterized by giving appreciation or rewards and penalties to encourage employees to exceed key descriptions of the responsibilities of their roles

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(Bekele, 2021).

According to research, transformational leadership outweighs transactional leadership as in the process, an employee has been provided with good communication and feedback, encouragement, and a feeling of stability in the working environment. On the other hand, a transactional leader relies solely on rewards and punishment, in which the high-performing employee benefits from the reward, and the low-performing employee gets punishment (Lin et al., 2020). Shareholders and upper management initiatives must be approached with careful study to indicate which style of leaders is beneficial for both employee job advancement and the firm's success, eventually leading to job satisfaction. Overall, companies should outsmart the vital leadership style needed for the employee to obtain the balance of a good working environment, mental stability, and at last the satisfaction of their roles (Odumeru & Ogbonna, 2013).

Job satisfaction among employees is becoming a key human resource development (HRD) concern, which directly influences the organizational performance, employee retention, and competitiveness. This paper highlights the importance of learning about leadership style flexibility, which is an important aspect of job satisfaction. Leadership is not a fixed trait, but a dynamic process that depends on context and the expectations of the employees and organisational objectives.

Historically, literature has distinguished between transformational and transactional leadership, with transformational leadership praised because of its ability to motivate and transactional leadership disparaged because of its reliance on rewards and punishments. This dichotomy is however facing a challenge; transactional leadership can be more practical in formal settings. The fact of leaders adapting styles according to circumstances is common, but the research has not explored the flexibility of such styles and how they interact to affect job satisfaction.

One of the areas of scholarship that is under-theorised currently is the topic of leadership adaptability as a factor between the leadership style and employee satisfaction. Further, in certain settings, such as the Kurdistan Region, the organizations do not have evidence-based models of leadership that capture the local cultural and organizational realities.

The objectives of this study are twofold: first, to examine the relationship between transformational and transactional leadership characteristics and their interaction in relation to job satisfaction and secondly, to determine the effect of adaptable leadership styles in promoting job satisfaction in different organizational settings. It aims to answer two key questions: the theoretical one is about the role of leadership adaptability in the leadership style-job satisfaction relationship, and the practical one is how organisations can foster a flexible leadership practice that combines both styles to enhance employee satisfaction in the Kurdistan Region. Through answering these questions, this study aims to advance the HRD theory of leadership adaptability and offer practical conclusions to leaders who seek to improve employee satisfaction.

LITERATURE REVIEW

To achieve organizational success, leaders must recognize their working environment and challenges, which helps them determine the style they need to adapt to achieve their goals. In this chapter, we will be discussing two major leadership styles while finding their strengths and weaknesses, and how they affect job satisfaction. Transactional leadership is a style that relies on the method of punishment and reward, where employees are given a specific task and required to achieve the goal by following the provided rules and guidelines.

The transactional leader sets the systematic structure for employees with gain and consequence. This approach will balance the work environment for the employee. The transformational style depends more on mentoring the employees while aiming for their creative side to shine and bringing on their ideas to be discussed and applied. Their reward would be the

motivation provided by their superior and the encouragement they receive, which leads to their skills and confidence development. This type of leadership style offers an open stage of idea discussion and shared communications; in this style, employees will be compensated with motivation, developed skills, and rising in confidence among the team members (Adler & Reid, 2008). According to a study done by the College of Management Sciences in the United Kingdom, is that leadership has no specific definition, but a simple way to explain it is the direction and guidance that is set by a leader to motivate, inspire, and develop the subordinates. Leadership is known to have two categories, which are the task and the personal relationships (Asghar & Oino, 2018). One of the essential concepts in leadership is the theory of social exchange, corresponding to research done by the University of Venda, South Africa, in 2016, which links the social exchange theory with the impact of job satisfaction on leadership. This theory, in general, is a sociological one where the social behavior determines the benefits and risks based on a psychological analysis of costs and benefits. In simpler terms, society would mentally evaluate the general worth of a relationship by evaluating the rewards and deducting the costs. To put this theory in perspective, our topic is to use it to aid the structure of a healthy working culture that stages and upraises the importance of a responsive and kind environment where the employees develop a personal safe connection to their jobs (Babalola, 2016a).

Leadership Style

Styles of leadership have an important influence on job fulfilment and organizational objectives. Managers ought to give priority to employees because they are the most valuable resource, and only by doing so can they help maintain employee welfare and job satisfaction (Sarkar et al., 2023). Leadership has emerged in recent years as a successful new approach to managing staff members and the company overall. Human resource management has regularly replaced the traditional notion of personnel management. It emphasizes the strategic incorporation of new leadership styles for ineffective employee management and progress employee performance (Aziz et al., 2022). Indicated that an effective leader must be a good pathologist and accept a style that meets the difficulties of the situation in which they work.

Various leadership styles are used for employees based on the amount of direction, empowerment, and decision-making authority (Ramakanth, 1988). Leadership style also depends on the leader's characteristics and management beliefs; as a result, it is structured based on the leader's personality, experience, and skills. In the same study, researchers have examined the relation and impact of the leadership styles that are being used and how they affect job satisfaction. It shows that there is a very direct influence of the leadership styles, and not admitting this influence leads to a negative outcome on the job satisfaction (Al-maaitah et al., 2021). It can also be defined as the adaptability of behaviors and characters; it emphasizes the importance of a leader's adjustability for approaching situations and organizational culture (Heifetz, 2006; Heifetz & Linsky, 2014). Furthermore, leadership style can be identified as situational style, since the leader must have the capability to guide, direct, and mentor employees to overcome any circumstances that may arise (Hersey & Blanchard, 1969).

The recent researches focus on adaptability and leadership HRD. (Ghosh, 2019) emphasize the way in which the development of leadership in HRD is geared towards building both transformational and transactional skills that can be used to promote the development of employees. Uhl-Bien and Arena (2018) suggest that a complex environment is vital in terms of leadership flexibility, about which leaders can and should be flexible in switching styles to maintain performance. Cross-cultural research indicates that transformational and transactional leadership are equally efficient based on the cultural norms, i. e. transactional leadership can be more acceptable in high power-distance culture, whereas transformational leadership can be successful

in individualistic or innovation-driven culture ([Rockstuhl et al., 2019](#)).

Leadership and Employee Motivation- transformational vs. transactional (comparing intrinsic/relational focus with extrinsic/reward focus). Leadership and Job Satisfaction Pathways - investigating the difference in influence of each style on job satisfaction (creativity vs. compliance, stability vs. growth). Adaptability and Contextual Factors - demonstrating that leaders who alternate between styles get higher levels of satisfaction in dynamic or cross-cultural situations. Theoretical Lens and HRD Implications - Based on the theoretical discussion on the social exchange and adaptability frameworks, the linkage between theory and HRD practices was made. This assures the synthesis and flow of logic.

Transformational Leadership Style

Transformational leadership is a style of leading employees by aiming to motivate and encourage their talents, as the objective of the leader is to develop and focus on the skills of their team. They aim to be creative by giving challenging tasks that show their abilities. A leader of a transformational leadership team is more of a mentor. It doesn't focus only on hitting the sales or production goals but rather aims to advance the team while creating an innovative, productive environment ([Sarwar, 2015](#)). Transformational leaders do extra alongside colleagues and followers than set up easy exchanges or agreements. Transformational leaders use one or more of the four fundamental elements of transformational leadership to achieve better results. As improvements have been made to the understanding and measurement of transformative leadership, the elements of transformational leadership have changed. Theoretically, leadership is charismatic and followers strive to recognize alongside the head and emulate him or her ([Long et al., 2014](#)).

Besides, transformational leadership is used by managers who stimulate their employees intellectually by allowing them to think and work in new directions, which results in their professional development. In addition, it allows creativity and suggestions on the organization's vision. As a result, it shows that the motivation that transformational leadership shows positively influences job satisfaction rather than micromanaging ([Babalola, 2016b](#)). It also suggests that transformational leadership prevents the occurrence of work-related issues, as it eliminates them before they happen. Additionally, it allows the employees to be more adaptable to different working conditions and environments ([Al-maaitah et al., 2021](#)). [Bass and Riggio \(2006\)](#) indicate that the transformational leadership style is a modern initiative to encourage and inspire employees to reach their peak performance by focusing on sharing ideas and bonding team members. This initiative will secure the employee's full potential and aid the overall company's success.

To illustrate, transformational leadership is habitually associated with intrinsic motivation and creativity ([Bass and Riggio, 2006](#); [Babalola, 2016b](#)), and transactional leadership tends to enable clarity and stability by introducing rewards and punishments ([Alshahrani and Baig, 2016](#)). Nonetheless, the evidence is still inconclusive: there are studies indicating that transformational leadership has a greater positive effect on long-term job satisfaction ([Aziz et al., 2022](#); [Al-maaitah et al., 2021](#)), and there are also studies suggesting that transactional leadership is more effective in more structured or crisis-driven settings ([Asghar and Oino, 2018](#)).

Transactional Leadership Style

The transactional style works on the method of penalty and reward. Where employees have a specific goal, and by achieving those goals, they are rewarded. However, they would face punishment in case of failure or delay. Nonetheless, the reward they are promised does motivate them, but the motivation styles differ from the transformational style since they do not focus on the purpose and meaning of the given task. This is more commonly found in structured management, where they function on the method of command and control. Moreover, the hierarchy system is

more definitive as people know where to get their commands from and function based on that, the management expects the desired result due to their belief that employees are supposed to follow the rules and policies since it's part of their job (Asghar & Oino, 2018). According to Alshahrani and Baig (2016), there are different forms of transactional leadership. A passive form is where the leader intervenes in case an objective or task fails to be completed to meet the expectation. An active form is where the manager is actively involved in the given tasks and observes the progress while guiding and adjusting based on the situation. Moreover, when the leader shares his ideas and expectations toward the task by offering feedback and expectations, this is called a constructive form (Alshahrani & Baig, 2012). Bass and Riggio (2006) described the transactional leadership style as a systematic implementation of rewards and punishments. This style focuses on roles and responsibilities to be followed, and if the employee does not comply with the guidelines set will outcome in a corrective action that concludes this leadership style will sustain the stability of performance throughout the whole organization.

Social Exchange Theory (SET) is the main theoretical prism used in this study, which is supported by the use of leadership adaptability/contingency frameworks. According to SET, transformational leadership will help develop high-quality exchanges (trust, reciprocity, emotional support), whereas transactional leadership will use economic ones (rewards, punishments). But, SET alone fails to explain situational or cultural variation and thus contingency/adaptability theories (Hersey and Blanchard, 1969; Uhl-Bien and Arena, 2018) complement the framework, demonstrating that leaders need to tailor their exchange style to the organizational or cultural circumstances. The combined lens integrates the three concepts HRD, leadership style and job satisfaction as a consistent theoretical standard.

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction means how the employee feels and thinks about the job. Employees with positive thinking are always actively involved in their duties, but employees with negative emotions cannot actively participate in their duties (Aziz et al., 2022; Hussain et al., 2013). Moreover, it shows that the level of satisfaction is an essential part of success. However, on the contrary, a negative feeling results in unfavorable emotions toward their job, which causes job dissatisfaction (Al-maaitah et al., 2021). The importance of job satisfaction is emphasized by its positive and reciprocated relationship with life satisfaction (Judge & Watanabe, 1993) and its influence on personal, social, and work-life (Roodt et al., 2002). Job satisfaction is based on the satisfaction that employees feel and it is the total amount of influence that people have on their work (Aziz et al., 2022). Extrinsic satisfaction is when the employee feels satisfied based on the external rewards he receive from the occupation. This could be the salary, benefits, work, and life balance that the job offers. On the other side, intrinsic satisfaction is the sense of fulfillment on a deeper level, where the employee feels satisfied by the purpose of their job as they find it more meaningful, as it allows them to develop and improve while satisfying their sense of achievement. However, to have the job satisfaction required for the business's success, the leadership style should offer both extrinsic and intrinsic satisfaction (Alshahrani & Baig, 2016; Bekele, 2021).

Research Hypothesis

According to the integrated review, the hypotheses are the following:

H1: Transformational leadership has a positive impact on job satisfaction through increased intrinsic motivation, trust, and engagement of the employees.

H2: The transactional leadership favors the job satisfaction through extrinsic rewards, role clarity and stability.

H3: The job satisfaction relationship between leadership style and adaptability is that those leaders

who flexibly switch between transformational and transactional leadership styles produce more positive results.

The hypotheses are supported by the previous studies ([Bass & Riggio, 2006](#); [Babalola, 2016b](#); [Uhl-Bien & Arena, 2018](#)) and are based logically on the theoretical framework of social exchange and adaptability.

RESEARCH METHOD

To investigate the impact of leadership style on job satisfaction, researchers used quantitative research and a descriptive approach, and collected data by creating survey forms in the form of Google Forms. Due to time and cost constraints in reaching the entire population under consideration, the study prescribes probability sampling – simple random sampling method in employee selection ([Faraj et al., 2024](#)). Staff will answer questions online and without registration. For the data gathering step, the information of this study requires 89 public and private sector employees. That is why prior Human Resource Development and leadership studies have employed similar or smaller sample sizes while still producing generalizable insights, and on the other hand, the use of probability sampling (simple random sampling) strengthens the representativeness of the sample. Even with a modest sample size, random selection ensures that findings are less likely to be systematically biased and can be generalized with caution to the broader employee population of public and private sector organizations ([Alshahrani & Baig, 2016](#)).

The study survey questions are divided into two main groups. The first group includes several specific questions, such as demographic questions that employees are required to answer, which are (gender, age, organization status, and education level). The second type of questions is divided into three main questions on which employees express their opinions about (Transformational leadership, Transactional leadership, and Job satisfaction) ([Babalola, 2016b](#)). The questions are multiple choice as a Likert Scale form, giving the following options to the participants (strongly agree = 5, agree = 4, neutral = 3, disagree = 2, strongly disagree=1) for all Likert scale questions ([Faraj et al., 2024](#); [Nicola & Faraj, 2020](#)).

Data were analyzed using SPSS V.26. Descriptive analysis was used to show frequency, percentage, and mean scores, and correlation and regression analysis to find the relationship between variables and the impact of leadership style on job satisfaction. This method permits the observational testing of theoretical models, particularly whether transformational and transactional leadership styles significantly influence employee satisfaction. Moment, by applying quantitative methods, the ponder gives objective, generalizable proof that can bolster or challenge existing HRD systems. Finally, the integration of statistical tools such as correlation and regression enables researchers to move beyond description toward theory building, as findings can be used to refine our understanding of how leadership practices affect human resource outcomes in organizational settings.

Data Analysis

Correlation analysis was used to find out the relationship between independent and dependent variables ([Azam et al., 2025](#)). Regression analysis is a statistical method used to perform and model the functional relationship between a response variable and a set of explanatory or predictor variables ([Faraj et al., 2024](#); [Saeed et al., 2024](#); [Sharif et al., 2025](#)). Subsequently, simple linear regression analysis and forward multiple linear regression were used to identify the independent variables, including leadership style, predicting the dependent variables of job satisfaction. Regression analysis identifies whether specific leadership styles (independent variables) significantly explain variation in employee job satisfaction (dependent variable). This aligns directly with the study's purpose of assessing impact rather than simple association.

Research Model

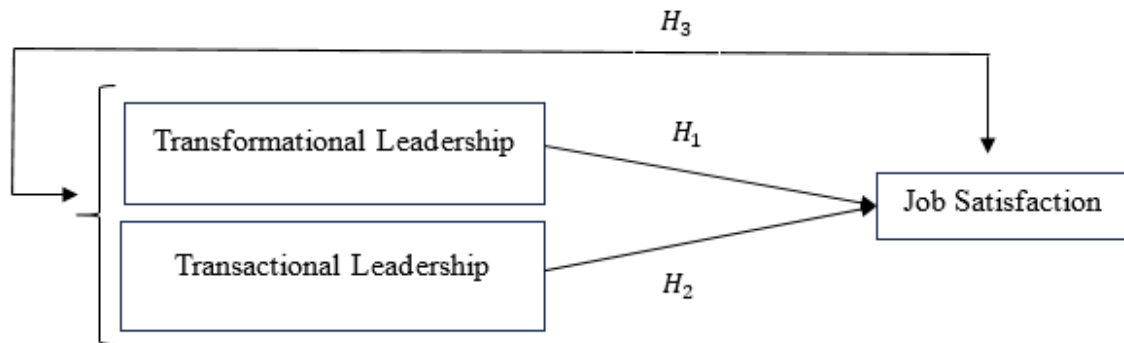


Figure 1. Study Model

Reliability Test

The degree to which a test consistently and steadily measures what it is supposed to measure is known as its reliability. Most put, a test is reliable if it is consistent within itself and across time. Internal consistency of the characteristics describing these factors was verified using the Cronbach Alpha coefficient (Abudlqadir et al., 2020; Blbas et al., 2024). The results allowed us to calculate Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha, which measures how well the grouped statements match each selected audience perception feature. Cronbach's alpha can have values anywhere from $-\infty$ to 1, but only positive values make sense (Blbas & Faraj, 2022). A coefficient value around one indicates more reliability, "see table 1".

Before beginning, the main investigation to confirm the validity of the questionnaires, the researchers will conduct a reliability study for 15 cases using Cronbach's alpha to assess the consistency of the data for all three types of data transformational leadership, transactional leadership, and job satisfaction (Faraj et al., 2025).

Table 1. Reliability statistics for all constructs

Items	Transformational Leadership style (Independent Variable)	Transactional Leadership style (Independent Variable)	All Independent Variables	Job Satisfaction (Dependent Variable)	Independent and Dependent Variables
Number of questions	7	7	14	8	22
Cronbach's Alpha	0.963	0.836	0.953	0.803	0.958

Table 1 shows the values of Cronbach's coefficient estimated for testing the internal consistency of the measurement. The result for Cronbach's alpha is (0.963) for transformational leadership, (0.806) for transactional leadership, (0.953) for all independent variables, (0.803) for job satisfaction, and (0.958) for both independent and dependent variables.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to investigate the leadership style of job satisfaction. The participants of this study were public and private sector employees in the Iraqi Kurdistan Region.

The main objective of this study was to determine whether there is a positive relationship between transformational leadership style and transactional leadership style, and job satisfaction, and whether leadership style influences job change intention. The study involved 89 private and public sector participants in the survey, which was conducted in December, where respondents were asked to provide their views on leadership style, job satisfaction, and intention to leave through a questionnaire. All collected data were analyzed through various statistical techniques to test hypotheses and answer the research questions. In this section, we present and discuss all the results of the study in detail. The survey questions are presented in tables, charts, and text for clarity (Faraj, 2024; Hussein & Faraj, 2024). Then, researchers discuss the results of the study to arrive at the necessary conclusions.

Statistical Tools

Descriptive Statistics Result

First, researchers used descriptive statistics, which can help in summarizing data in the form of simple quantitative measures such as percentages or means (Abudlqadir et al., 2020; Faraj & Jafr, 2020; Omer et al., 2023).

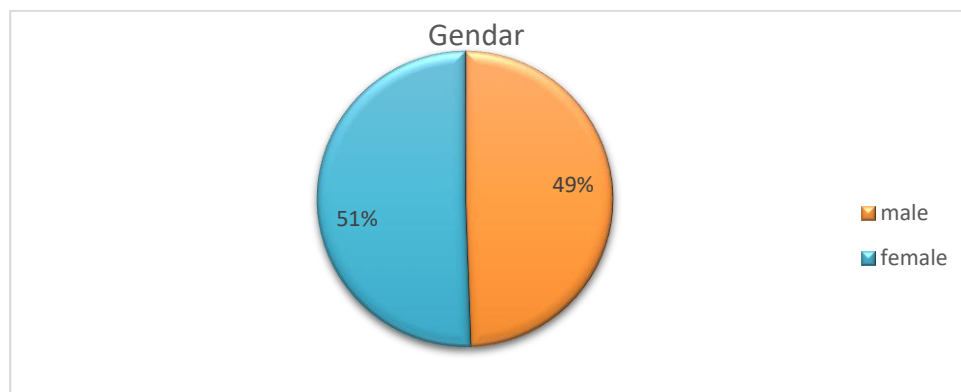


Figure 2. Explain the percentage of respondents regarding gender

In Figure 1, the study research includes 89 participants, of which 44 are male with 49.4% and 45 are female with 50.6%. This almost equal gender distribution highlights a balanced representation in the study sample. The slight predominance of male participants ensures that the findings are generalizable and not skewed towards one gender, thereby enhancing the generalizability and generalizability of the study findings. This near-equal gender distribution strengthens the reliability and generalizability of the research outcomes, ensuring that the findings are not disproportionately influenced by one gender. Such a balance is particularly important in leadership and HRD studies. The balanced representation supports the assumption within leadership theory that leadership effectiveness is not inherently tied to gender but rather to behaviors and styles. By including nearly equal numbers of men and women, the study reduces potential bias and aligns with contemporary leadership scholarship emphasizing that transformational and transactional leadership qualities can be demonstrated across genders.

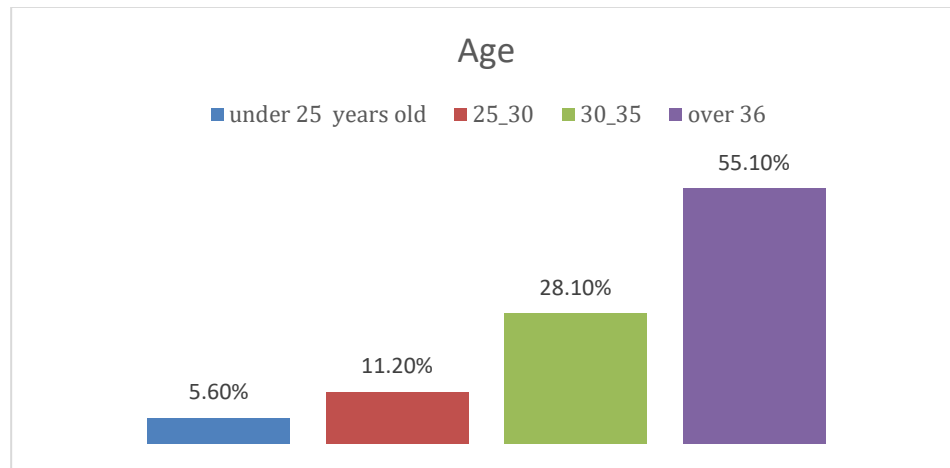


Figure 2. Explain the percentage of respondents regarding age

Figure 3 shows the age of our study participants. Out of the 89 participants, 5 participants were younger than 25 years, representing 5.6% of the participants. 10 of these were between 25 and 35 years of age, representing 11.2% of respondents. Twenty-five of them were between 30 and 35 years old, representing 28.1% of the study participants. 49 of these were over 35 years of age, representing 55.1% of the study participants. This distribution indicates that most study participants were young adults, especially those over 35 years of age. This distribution supports the notion that older employees often bring more stable and differentiated views on leadership effectiveness. Transformational leadership, for example, may resonate more strongly with employees who have accumulated professional experience and value visionary, developmental leadership over purely transactional practices. The predominance of participants over 35 may therefore enhance the reliability of findings that connect transformational leadership with higher levels of job satisfaction. This aligns with previous scholarship suggesting that age and work experience shape employees' expectations of leaders and their responses to leadership styles.

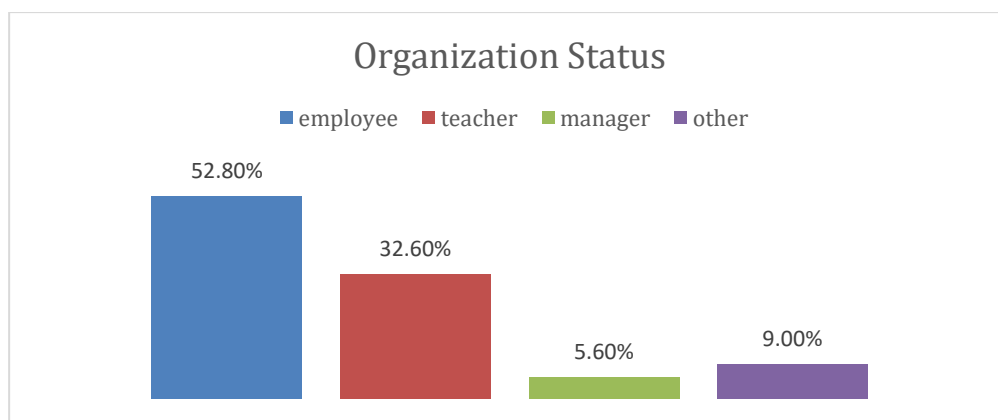


Figure 4. Explain the percentage of respondents regarding organization status

Out of the 89 participants in our study, as we can see in Figure 4, 47 of these participants hold staff positions at the organizational position level, and they are employees, corresponding to 52.8% of the study participants. And 29 of our respondents work as teachers in organizations, representing 32.6% of the study respondents. 5 of the participants were managers representing 5.6% of the study respondents. Eight of our respondents also hold other administrative positions in organizations, accounting for 9.0% of the respondents. We have found that people who hold staff

positions at the organizational level are more likely to have high skills going forward.

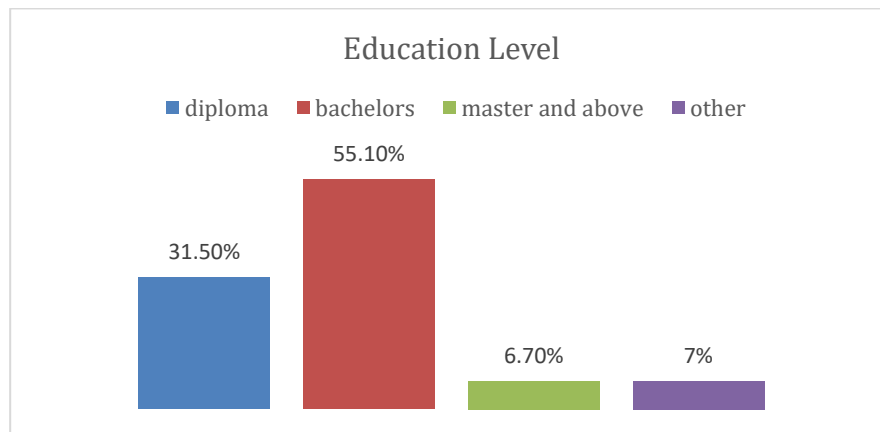


Figure 5. Explain the percentage of respondents regarding education level

Figure 5 shows what qualifications the participants in our study have. From this figure, it appears that 28 of our respondents have a diploma degree, which accounts for 31.5% of the respondents. 49 of our participants have a bachelor's degree or above, representing 55.1% of the respondents. Six of our study participants have other degrees, which is 6.7% of the study participants. We see that the proportion of people with bachelor's degrees is higher. This means education level influences how employees perceive and evaluate leadership behaviors. Research suggests that employees with higher education tend to have greater expectations of transformational leadership, valuing vision, intellectual stimulation, and participatory decision-making, and this distribution underscores the role of education as a key factor in human capital development and emphasizes lifelong learning, workforce development, and organizational adaptability.

Inferential Statistics Result

In this part of the research, researchers tried to demonstrate the Correlation analysis to show the relationship between variables and to analyze the hypothesis, they employed the simple linear regression and multiple linear regression analysis at a 95% confidence interval.

Table 2. Correlation matrix between independent variables and dependent variable

	Transformational leadership	Transactional leadership
Job satisfaction	0.573**	0.604**

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 2 showed a strong, positive significant relationship between the independent variables of transformational leadership (0.573), transactional leadership (0.604), and the dependent variable of job satisfaction.

Table 3. Simple Linear Regression Analysis between the independent variable (Transformational Leadership style) and the Dependent Variable (Job satisfaction)

	Coefficients			Model Summary		ANOVA	
	B	T	P-Value				
(Constant)	2.005	6.405	0.000	Correlation	R Square	F	P-Value
Transformational Leadership Style	0.515	6.519	0.000	0.573	0.328	42.502	0.000

From Table 3, simple linear regression was used to test if transformational leadership style significantly predicted job satisfaction or not, and from Pearson's correlation analysis, we can notice that there is a strong positive correlation between the independent variable (transformational leadership style) and the dependent variable (job satisfaction). The above table shows an ANOVA table for checking the goodness of fit for the predictor variable (transformational leadership style) on the response variable (job satisfaction), so the model is appropriate based on ($F = 42.502$, and the exact P-Value). Table 3 also contains the result of the constant, Slope, t-value, and coefficient of determination (R^2). The regression Coefficient (B) for transformational leadership style is 0.515, which means that increasing one unit for transformational leadership will increase job satisfaction by 0.515. Determination of Coefficient ($R^2 = 0.328$), suggesting that 32.8% of the variation of job satisfaction is predicted by transformational leadership style and the remaining variation is attributed to other factors that affect job satisfaction.

Table 4. Simple Linear Regression Analysis between the independent variable (Transactional Leadership style) and Dependent Variable (Job satisfaction)

	Coefficients			Model Summary		ANOVA	
	B	T	P-Value				
(Constant)	1.359	3.584	0.001	Correlation	R Square	F	P-Value
Transactional Leadership style	0.702	7.071	0.000	0.604	0.365	50.001	0.000

Table 4 shows that from the Pearson's correlation analysis, we can see that there is a strong positive correlation between the independent variable (Transactional Leadership style) and the dependent variable (job satisfaction). In addition, Table 4 shows ANOVA table for checking the goodness of fit for the predictor variable (Transactional Leadership style) on the response variable (job satisfaction), so the model is appropriate based on ($F = 50.001$, and exact P-Value). The above table also represents the result of the constant, Slope, t-value, and coefficient of determination (R^2). The regression Coefficient (B) for Transactional Leadership style is 0.702, which means that increasing one unit for Transactional Leadership style will increase the job satisfaction by 0.702. Determination of Coefficient ($R^2 = 0.365$), suggesting that 36.5% of the variation of job satisfaction is predicted by Transactional Leadership style and the remaining variation is attributed to other factors that affect job satisfaction.

Table 5. Multiple Linear Regression Analysis between the independent variables (Transformational Leadership style, Transactional Leadership style) and the Dependent Variable (Job satisfaction)

	Coefficients			Model Summary		ANOVA	
	Beta coefficient	t-value	P-value	Multiple R	R Square	F	p-value
(Constant)	1.340	3.588	0.001	0.626	0.391	27.650	0.000
Transformational Leadership style	0.233	1.931	0.047				
Transactional Leadership Style	0.467	2.988	0.004				

In the table5, multiple linear regression was used to test whether Transformational Leadership style, Transactional Leadership style significantly predicted Job satisfaction or not. Results shows that the coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.391$), suggesting that 39.1% of the variance in job satisfaction can be counted for by the three predictors variables (Transformational Leadership style, Transactional leadership style), collectively, $F = 27.650$, and exact p-value, so, the model is appropriate. The regression Coefficient (B) for Transformational leadership style is 0.233, which means, increasing one unit for Transformational leadership style will increase job satisfaction by 0.233 by the existing Transactional leadership style. Then, the Regression Coefficient (B) for Transactional leadership style is 0.467, which means, increasing one unit for Transactional leadership style will increase Job satisfaction by 0.467 by the existing transactional leadership style.

These findings supported [Bass and Riggio \(2006\)](#), meaning that transformational leadership is considered the more powerful predictor of positive employee outcomes, including job satisfaction, motivation, and organizational commitment, and transformational leaders inspire, intellectually stimulate, and individually consider employees, which is often theorized as more effective for long-term satisfaction than transactional approaches. The present results, however, suggest that transactional leadership had a stronger positive influence on job satisfaction, a finding that may appear to contradict dominant leadership models. Besides this, findings emphasize the practical reality that employees' job satisfaction is not solely driven by aspirational or developmental leadership but also by clear structures, performance feedback, and fair rewards, as [Ashgar and Oino \(2018\)](#) supported.

In addition, the study hypothesized that the transformational leadership style, transactional leadership style will have a significant impact on Job Satisfaction.

Table 6. The Summary Result of the Hypothesis Test

	Hypotheses	Beta Coefficient	t-value	Results
H ₁	Transformational Leadership Style on Job Satisfaction	0.233	1.931	Accepted
H ₂	Transactional Leadership Style on Job Satisfaction	0.467	2.988	Accepted

Table 6 shows a summary of the hypothesis test result in terms of the Beta Coefficient and t-value at a significance level of 0.05. As it is clear from the table above, the t-value of all our study hypotheses is smaller than 0.05 (significance level), which are (0.047 and 0.004) for H₁, H₂ respectively, we can accept all three hypotheses.

CONCLUSIONS

The results of the statistical analyses demonstrate that both transformational and transactional leadership styles significantly and positively influence employee job satisfaction. Specifically, transformational leadership was found to have a strong positive correlation with job satisfaction, confirming Hypothesis 1 (H_1). Similarly, transactional leadership also showed a strong positive correlation with job satisfaction, supporting Hypothesis 2 (H_2). Taken together, the evidence confirms Hypothesis 3 (H_3) by establishing that both transformational and transactional leadership style overall has a positive impact on employee job satisfaction.

These findings reinforce the importance of leadership behaviors as key drivers of job satisfaction. They highlight the necessity for organizations to cultivate both transformational and transactional leadership practices in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, recognizing that employees value both inspirational, developmental leadership as well as clear structures, rewards, and guidance. In doing so, the study contributes to leadership and HRD theory by validating that leadership style remains a critical factor in shaping workforce satisfaction and organizational effectiveness.

LIMITATION & FURTHER RESEARCH

The study examined only transformational and transactional leadership, leaving out other styles such as servant or authentic leadership that may also influence job satisfaction. Finally, cultural factors specific to the Kurdistan Region may limit the applicability of findings elsewhere.

Future research should involve larger and more diverse samples, adopt longitudinal or mixed-method designs, and consider additional leadership frameworks to extend HRD theory and enhance practical applicability across different contexts.

RECOMMENDATION

The manager should enable the system to create productive teams that compete with other agencies and encourage employees to collaborate in learning and innovation. Using the right leadership style to make employees satisfied with their jobs, which in turn will improve their performance. Managers need to recognize the right leadership style based on various situations and relationships and implement it within the appropriate framework. As a result, the study found that both transformational and transactional leadership styles positively affect employees' job satisfaction

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