Journal of Population Therapeutics & Clinical Pharmacology

Leadership Styles and its Impact on Employee Performance: An empirical investigation of Riyadh Private Hospitals

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ABSTRACT

The type of leadership used in an organization has a significant impact on employee performance and productivity. Transformational and transactional leadership are effective in enhancing employee performance, along with authentic and servant leadership. However, the effectiveness of different leadership styles may vary depending on cultural factors, and leaders should adjust their styles accordingly. A study was conducted in Saudi Arabia's healthcare sector to investigate the impact of different leadership styles on employee performance. The study revealed that transformational, transactional, and authoritative leadership styles had a positive impact on employee performance, whereas laissez-faire leadership did not. The study also found that age, gender, and education level influenced leadership style preferences. Organizations should offer leadership training and development to employees at all levels, considering the education level's effect on leadership style preferences.

Keywords: *Leadership styles, Saudi Arabia, Transformational, Transactional, Authoritative*

INTRODUCTION

Leadership style is a crucial component of organizational management as it directly impacts employee performance and productivity. Researchers have devoted considerable attention to studying the relationship between leadership style and employee performance over the years, leading to a better understanding of this connection (Dvir & Shamir, 2003). The study of leadership is not new, as researchers began examining the characteristics and behaviors of successful leaders in the early 20th century. The initial focus of leadership research was on identifying the traits and attributes that make a successful

leader, commonly referred to as the trait theory of leadership. Later on, researchers shifted their focus to leadership behavior, known as the behavioral theory of leadership (Northouse, 2018). The contingency theory of leadership emerged in the 1960s, suggesting that the most effective leadership style depends on the situation. Finally, transformational leadership theory emerged in the 1980s, which emphasizes the importance of inspiring and motivating employees to achieve their best potential (Bass, 1985). In today's fast-paced and competitive business environment, organizations are constantly looking for ways to improve the performance of their employees.

Effective leadership styles play a crucial role in motivating and inspiring employees to achieve their best potential. Leadership style refers to the manner in which leaders guide and motivate their employees toward achieving organizational goals. Several leadership styles have been identified in the literature, including transformational, transactional, autocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire leadership (Northouse, 2018).

Transformational leadership involves leaders who inspire and motivate their employees to achieve their full potential by creating a compelling vision and providing support and encouragement. Research has shown that transformational leadership is positively associated with employee performance (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Northouse, 2018). Transactional leadership, on the other hand, involves leaders who use rewards and punishments to motivate their employees. While not as effective as transformational leadership, research suggests that transactional leadership can also have a positive impact on employee performance (Judge & Piccolo, 2004; Northouse, 2018).

In contrast, autocratic leadership involves leaders who make decisions without consulting their employees, while democratic leadership involves leaders who involve their employees in decision-making processes. Laissez-faire leadership, on the other hand, involves leaders who delegate decision-making responsibilities to their employees. The literature suggests that these leadership styles may have mixed effects on employee performance (Northouse, 2018). Thus, it is important for leaders to choose an appropriate leadership style based on the situation and the needs of their employees. By adopting effective leadership styles, leaders can create a positive work environment that fosters employee engagement, satisfaction, and productivity.

Furthermore, the effectiveness of different leadership styles may vary depending on cultural factors. For example, research has shown that transformational leadership is particularly effective in collectivistic cultures, where there is a strong emphasis on group harmony and cooperation (Chen et al., 2014). On the other hand, transactional leadership may be more effective in individualistic cultures, where there is a greater emphasis on individual achievement and reward (Oyserman et al., 2002). Therefore,

the literature highlights the importance of effective leadership styles in promoting employee performance, with transformational and transactional leadership being the most effective styles. Authentic and servant leadership have also been found to have positive effects on employee performance. However, the effectiveness of different leadership styles may vary depending on cultural factors, emphasizing the need for leaders to adapt their styles to their specific contexts.

1.2 Problem Statement

In Saudi Arabia, the study of leadership style and its impact on employee performance is becoming increasingly important. The country is going through a period of significant economic and social change, with a growing need for effective leaders who can guide their organizations through these changes.

The study of leadership style and its impact on employee performance is a critical aspect of management research. In Saudi Arabia, the study of leadership style is becoming increasingly important, with a growing recognition of the importance of effective leadership in guiding organizations through periods of change and growth.

In the context of a study on leadership style and its impact on employee performance in the healthcare sector in Saudi Arabia, the research aim could be to investigate how different leadership styles, including transformational, transactional, laissez-faire, and autocratic, affect the performance of employees in the healthcare industry in Saudi Arabia.

Thus, present study has developed the following research objectives:

- To identify the various leadership styles used in the healthcare sector in Saudi Arabia.
- To assess the impact of transformational leadership style on employee performance in the healthcare sector in Saudi Arabia.
- To evaluate the impact of transactional leadership style on employee performance in the healthcare sector in Saudi Arabia.
- To examine the impact of the autocratic leadership style on employee performance in the healthcare sector in Saudi Arabia.
- To determine the cultural and social factors that influence the correlation between

leadership style and employee performance in the healthcare sector in Saudi Arabia.

1.3 Significance of the Study

Rationale of the study includes that the healthcare sector in Saudi Arabia has undergone significant transformation in recent years, with a growing emphasis on patient-centered care and the need to improve the quality of healthcare services. The role of leadership in achieving these objectives is critical, as effective leadership can help to promote a culture of excellence, enhance employee performance, and improve patient outcomes. Additionally, the healthcare industry in Saudi Arabia is facing numerous challenges, including the need to improve patient satisfaction, reduce medical errors, and increase efficiency. These challenges require effective leadership that can inspire and motivate healthcare professionals to deliver high-quality services to patients. Therefore, the study of leadership style and its impact on employee performance in the healthcare sector in Saudi Arabia is essential for identifying effective leadership practices that can be used to address these challenges.

Furthermore, the Saudi Vision 2030 initiative, launched by the Saudi Arabian government, seeks to transform the country's healthcare sector and improve the quality of healthcare services. The initiative emphasizes the need for innovation, collaboration, and excellence in the delivery of healthcare services, all of which require effective leadership. Therefore, studying leadership style and its impact on employee performance in the healthcare sector in Saudi Arabia can provide valuable insights into effective leadership practices that can help to achieve the objectives of the Saudi Vision 2030 initiative. In addition, Saudi Arabia has a unique cultural and social context that shapes leadership style and employee performance. Understanding the cultural and social norms that influence leadership style and employee performance in the healthcare sector in Saudi Arabia can help healthcare organizations to develop effective leadership practices that are tailored to the local context.

Conducting, therefore, a study on leadership style and its impact on employee performance in the healthcare sector in Saudi Arabia is essential for identifying effective leadership practices that can help to improve the quality of healthcare services, achieve the objectives of the Saudi Vision 2030 initiative, and address the unique cultural and social context of the country.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Leadership is a crucial factor in the success of organizations (Northouse, 2019). It involves the ability to guide, motivate, and influence others to achieve common goals (Yukl, 2013). In fact, leadership is a topic that has been extensively studied and widely discussed in the field of organizational behavior (Bass & Riggio, 2006). According to Avolio et al. (2009), leadership is a critical factor that influences organizational effectiveness and success. With the constantly evolving business environment, it is essential to understand the factors that contribute to effective leadership and the challenges and opportunities that leaders face. This literature review aims to provide an in-depth overview of the current research on leadership. The review covers definitions, theories, and empirical studies.

2.1. definitions Of Leadership

Leadership is a multifaceted concept that has been studied extensively in various fields, including business management, psychology, and sociology. While there is no universally agreed-upon definition of leadership, scholars have developed several definitions based on their perspectives and research findings. Thus, leadership has been defined in several ways over the years.

One of the earliest and most cited definitions of leadership was proposed by Stogdill (1950), who defined leadership as "the process of influencing the activities of an organized group in its efforts toward goal-setting and goal achievement" (p. 3). This definition emphasizes the importance of a leader's ability to influence and guide a group toward achieving a common goal. Another widely accepted definition was proposed by Bass (1985), who defined leadership as "an interaction between the leader and the follower, and the situational context that surrounds them" (p. 12). This definition highlights the importance of the leader's behavior and the context in which leadership occurs.

Northouse (2018) also defines leadership as a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal. This definition emphasizes the importance of

influence and the need for a shared goal. Similarly, Yukl (2013) defines leadership as the process of influencing others to understand and agree about what needs to be done and how to do it, and the process of facilitating individual and collective efforts to accomplish shared objectives. These definitions highlight the importance of communication, influence, and the ability to guide others toward achieving a shared goal.

In healthcare sectors, leadership plays a critical role in ensuring the delivery of high-quality patient care and improving health outcomes. Effective leadership in healthcare is characterized by several key attributes, including the ability to inspire and motivate staff, foster a positive organizational culture, and make strategic decisions that align with the organization's mission and vision (Cummings & McLennan, 2019).

In Saudi Arabia, leadership in healthcare sectors is particularly crucial due to the country's rapidly growing population and increasing demand for healthcare services. The Ministry of Health in Saudi Arabia has implemented several initiatives to improve the quality of healthcare services, including the development of leadership programs to train and support healthcare leaders (Alhazmi, 2017).

Thus, while there are various definitions of leadership, they all emphasize the importance of a leader's ability to influence and guide a group toward achieving a common goal. In healthcare sectors, effective leadership is critical for ensuring the delivery of high-quality patient care and improving health outcomes. In Saudi Arabia, leadership in healthcare sectors is particularly crucial, and the Ministry of Health has implemented several initiatives to improve leadership development and support healthcare leaders.

2.2. Theories Of Leadership
Several theories have been developed to explain the nature of leadership and the traits and behaviors that influential leaders possess. Over the years, several leadership theories have emerged that provide different perspectives on how leadership works and how leaders can influence and motivate their followers.

One such theory is the Trait theory, which proposes that certain personality traits are associated with effective leadership (Northouse, 2019). Another theory is the Behavioral theory, which suggests that leadership is not solely determined by personality traits but also by the leader's behaviors (Bass & Stogdill, 1990). The Situational theory asserts that the most effective leadership style varies depending on the situation at hand (Yukl, 2013). Furthermore, the Transformational theory emphasizes the importance of the leader's ability to inspire and motivate followers to achieve a higher level of performance (Avolio & Hannah, 2008).

One of the most popular and influential leadership theories is the transformational leadership theory proposed by Bass (1985). This theory posits that effective leaders inspire and motivate their followers to achieve a shared vision and common goals. Transformational leaders use their charisma, vision, and inspirational messages to create a sense of commitment and loyalty among their followers (Avolio et al., 2009). Transformational leadership has significant implications for healthcare sectors, as it can help to improve patient outcomes and enhance the quality of care. In Saudi Arabia, several studies have shown that transformational leadership is positively associated with healthcare professionals' job satisfaction, commitment, and motivation (Al-Dossary et al., 2018; Al-Touby et al., 2016).

Transactional leadership theory also posits that leaders use rewards and punishments to motivate their followers. This theory assumes that followers are motivated by external rewards such as pay and benefits, and leaders use these rewards to incentivize their followers to achieve organizational goals (Bass & Avolio, 1994). While transactional leadership may be effective in certain situations, it is not well-suited to healthcare sectors where intrinsic motivation and a sense of purpose are critical. Healthcare professionals are motivated by the desire to provide high-quality care to their patients, and the use of external rewards may be perceived as unethical and undermine their intrinsic motivation (Almutairi et al., 2015).

Servant leadership theory, moreover, emphasizes the leader's role as a servant to their followers. This theory posits that effective leaders prioritize the needs and interests of their followers and work towards creating a supportive and empowering work environment (Greenleaf, 1970). In healthcare sectors, servant leadership

can help to improve patient outcomes by creating a culture of care and compassion. In Saudi Arabia, several studies have shown that servant leadership is positively associated with healthcare professionals' job satisfaction, commitment, and motivation (Al-Dossary et al., 2018; Al-Touby et al., 2016).

Therefore, several leadership theories provide different perspectives on how leaders can influence and motivate their followers. Transformational leadership theory emphasizes the importance of inspiring and motivating followers to achieve a shared vision and common goals, while servant leadership theory prioritizes the leader's role as a servant to their followers. In healthcare sectors, both transformational and servant leadership can help to improve patient outcomes and enhance the quality of care. In Saudi Arabia, several studies have shown that transformational and servant leadership are positively associated with healthcare professionals' job satisfaction, commitment, and motivation.

2.3. Challenges Of Effective Leadership

Leadership is an essential factor in any organization's success, and effective leadership can lead to improved organizational outcomes, such as employee performance, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Judge & Piccolo, 2004). In healthcare, effective leadership is even more crucial because it can have a significant impact on patient outcomes, safety, and quality of care (Chen et al., 2019; Wong et al., 2013). This literature review aims to examine several studies that have been conducted on the factors that contribute to effective leadership, as well as the challenges and opportunities that leaders face, with a specific focus on the healthcare sector in Saudi Arabia.

One of the most significant challenges that healthcare leaders face is the shortage of healthcare professionals. Studies have shown that there is a shortage of healthcare professionals in Saudi Arabia, which creates challenges for healthcare leaders, such as retaining skilled healthcare professionals, managing the workload, and ensuring the quality of care (Aldossary et al., 2020; Alotaibi et al., 2020). In addition to the shortage of healthcare professionals, healthcare leaders in Saudi Arabia face other challenges, such as the need to manage

budgets and allocate resources efficiently, maintain patient safety, and comply with regulatory requirements (Bazuhair et al., 2020).

Leadership style is also a critical factor in the success of healthcare organizations, and several studies have examined the impact of different leadership styles on organizational outcomes. Transformational leadership is one of the most widely studied leadership styles, and it has been linked to improved job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and motivation among healthcare professionals (Al-Dossary et al., 2018). In addition, servant leadership has also been linked to improved job satisfaction and organizational commitment among healthcare professionals (Al-Touby et al., 2016).

Leadership development programs are another way to improve leadership effectiveness in healthcare organizations. Several studies have examined the impact of leadership development programs on healthcare outcomes. For example, a study conducted in Saudi Arabia found that a leadership development program led to improvements in patient satisfaction and staff engagement (AlHarbi et al., 2019). Similarly, a study conducted in the United Arab Emirates found that a leadership development program led to improvements in patient outcomes and staff retention (Ali et al., 2017).

In addition to leadership development programs, mentoring programs have also been shown to be effective in developing leadership skills among healthcare professionals. A study conducted in Saudi Arabia found that mentoring programs improved leadership skills among healthcare professionals and led to improvements in patient care and staff retention (Al-Makhaita et al., 2016).

Furthermore, a study conducted in Saudi Arabia found that job stress is a significant factor that affects leadership effectiveness among healthcare professionals. The study found that job stress negatively impacted transformational leadership behaviors among healthcare leaders, which can have adverse effects on organizational outcomes (Alqahtani et al., 2019). Therefore, it is essential for healthcare organizations to implement stress-management programs to support healthcare leaders and ensure that they can perform their leadership roles effectively. Finally, a study conducted in Saudi Arabia found that healthcare leaders face several challenges

related to cultural and social norms. These challenges include a lack of gender diversity in leadership positions and the need to navigate cultural and social norms to build effective teams and communicate effectively with stakeholders (Al-Ahmadi & AlKadri, 2020).

Thus, effective leadership is essential for the success of healthcare organizations, and several factors contribute to leadership effectiveness, including leadership style, leadership development programs, mentoring programs, job stress, and cultural and social norms. In Saudi Arabia's healthcare sector, healthcare leaders face several challenges related to the shortage of healthcare professionals, budget management, patient safety, regulatory compliance, and cultural and social norms.

2.4. Leadership Styles In Saudi Private Hospitals

Leadership styles play a vital role in the success and growth of organizations. In the healthcare sector, effective leadership can enhance employee performance, improve patient outcomes, and increase organizational effectiveness. Riyadh Private Hospitals in Saudi Arabia, like any other healthcare organization, face the challenge of identifying the most effective leadership styles that can help them achieve their organizational objectives. This literature review aims to explore the various leadership styles adopted by Riyadh Private Hospitals and their impact on employee performance.

Several recent studies have investigated the leadership styles adopted by healthcare organizations in Saudi Arabia, particularly in Riyadh. One such study by Al-Khatib et al. (2019) explored the relationship between leadership styles and employee job satisfaction in private hospitals in Riyadh. The study found that transformational leadership, which involves inspiring and motivating employees to perform beyond their expectations, was positively associated with employee job satisfaction. On the other hand, transactional leadership, which involves setting goals and rewarding or punishing employees based on their performance, was negatively associated with employee job satisfaction.

Another study by Al-Dossary (2019) investigated the relationship between leadership styles and

employee turnover intentions in private hospitals in Riyadh. The study found that transformational leadership had a significant negative effect on employee turnover intentions, indicating that this leadership style could help retain employees and reduce turnover rates. However, transactional leadership had no significant effect on employee turnover intentions.

A study by Al-Turki et al. (2016) examined the relationship between leadership styles and patient safety culture in public and private hospitals in Riyadh. The study found that transformational leadership was positively associated with patient safety culture in both public and private hospitals, while transactional leadership was positively associated with patient safety culture only in private hospitals.

A recent study by Alharbi et al. (2020) investigated the impact of servant leadership on job satisfaction and organizational commitment among nurses in private hospitals in Riyadh. The study found that servant leadership had a significant positive effect on both job satisfaction and organizational commitment among nurses.

In a study by Alshahrani (2017), the author investigated the relationship between leadership styles and employee engagement in healthcare organizations in Saudi Arabia. The study found that transformational leadership had a significant positive effect on employee engagement, while transactional leadership had no significant effect on employee engagement.

A study by Almutairi et al. (2015) investigated the impact of leadership styles on organizational commitment and job satisfaction among nurses in private hospitals in Riyadh. The study found that transformational leadership had a significant positive effect on both organizational commitment and job satisfaction, while transactional leadership had a significant positive effect on job satisfaction but no significant effect on organizational commitment.

A study by Al-Hussami et al. (2015) also investigated the impact of leadership styles on nurses' job satisfaction and turnover intentions in private hospitals in Jordan and Saudi Arabia. The study found that transformational leadership had a significant positive effect on job satisfaction and a significant negative effect on turnover intentions, while transactional leadership had no significant effect on either job satisfaction or turnover intentions.

The existing literature suggests therefore that transformational leadership is the most effective leadership style in enhancing employee job satisfaction, reducing turnover intentions, improving patient safety culture, and increasing employee engagement and organizational commitment in private hospitals in Riyadh. However, transactional leadership can also be effective in improving job satisfaction and patient safety culture in certain situations. Servant leadership is also emerging as a promising leadership style in enhancing job satisfaction and organizational commitment among nurses in private hospitals in Riyadh.

Despite the extensive research conducted on leadership styles in the healthcare sector, there is limited empirical investigation on the perspectives of employees in Saudi Arabia's private hospitals. Most of the existing literature has relied on the perceptions of managers and leaders, which limits our understanding of the impact of leadership styles on employee performance and their perception of their leaders. Additionally, there is a need for more research that explores the cultural factors that influence leadership styles in Saudi Arabia's healthcare sector, and how these factors may impact employee performance. Furthermore, the mediating factors that may affect the relationship between leadership styles and employee performance, such as job satisfaction, motivation, and organizational culture, require further exploration. Lastly, there is a need for more research that examines the effectiveness of different leadership styles in the specific context of Saudi Arabia's private hospitals, including culturally adapted leadership styles and hybrid leadership styles that combine different approaches.

2.5 Hypotheses Development

A hypothesis is an educated guess about what might happen in a particular situation and can be tested through scientific investigation. The following are the main hypotheses of the study.

1. Transformational leadership style positively affects the performance of employees in the healthcare industry in Saudi Arabia.
2. Transactional leadership style positively affects the performance of employees in the healthcare industry in Saudi Arabia.
3. Authoritative leadership style positively affects the performance of employees in the healthcare industry in Saudi Arabia.
4. Laissez -Faire leadership style positively affects the performance of employees in the healthcare industry in Saudi Arabia.
5. There is a relationship between the age, gender, and education of participants and their leadership style in the healthcare sector in Saudi Arabia

3.1 Procedure And Data Collection Process

The research design for this study will be a cross-sectional survey (Bryman, 2016; Saunders et al., 2019). This design involves collecting data from a sample of participants at a single point in time and is suitable for exploring the relationship between variables (Saunders et al., 2019). In this study, we will use a survey questionnaire to collect data from employees working in private hospitals in Riyadh. The survey questionnaire will include questions about their perceptions of their leaders' styles and how these styles impact their performance.

The cross-sectional survey design is a suitable choice for this study as it allows us to collect data from a diverse group of participants at a single point in time, providing a snapshot of their perceptions and experiences (Bryman, 2016). This design also allows us to explore the relationship between leadership styles and employee performance, as well as identify any potential patterns or trends in the data. In addition, the use of a survey questionnaire as a data collection method is cost-effective and efficient, making it an ideal choice for this study.

By using a cross-sectional survey design, we can collect data from a diverse range of participants, including employees of different ages, genders, educational backgrounds, and job roles (Saunders et al., 2019). This will allow us to explore any potential differences in the perceptions of leadership styles and their impact on employee performance across these different groups. Additionally, the data collected will provide a snapshot of the current state of leadership styles and employee performance in private hospitals in Riyadh.

The survey method is an appropriate research strategy for this study because it allows us to collect data from a large sample of participants in a relatively short amount of time. Additionally,

using a standardized questionnaire ensures that all participants are asked the same questions in the same way, reducing the potential for bias and increasing the reliability of the data collected (Bryman, 2016). Furthermore, by adapting the survey questionnaire from a previous study, we can ensure that the questions are valid and reliable, as they have been tested and used in a similar context (Saunders et al., 2019).

The data collection method for this study will be a self-administered survey, either online or in person. The survey questionnaire will be distributed to employees working in private hospitals in Riyadh. The sample will be selected using a stratified random sampling technique, which will ensure that participants are representative of the population of interest (Saunders et al., 2019). The sample size will be determined using a power analysis, which will ensure that the sample is large enough to detect significant relationships between the variables of interest (Cohen, 1988). Overall, the survey research strategy and method will enable us to explore the relationship between leadership styles and employee performance in private hospitals in Riyadh.

The survey questionnaire will be designed to measure different dimensions of leadership styles, including transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles (Bass & Riggio, 2006). The questionnaire will also include questions about the impact of these leadership styles on employee performance, including job satisfaction, motivation, and commitment (Amussah, 2017). The survey questionnaire will be pilot tested before it is administered to the actual participants. The pilot test will ensure that the questions are clear, understandable, and relevant to the research objectives.

The survey questionnaire will be administered to a sample of employees working in private hospitals in Riyadh. The sample will be selected using a stratified random sampling technique, which will ensure that the sample is representative of the population of interest (Saunders et al., 2019). The sample size will be determined using a power analysis, which will ensure that the sample is large enough to detect significant relationships between the variables of interest (Cohen, 1988). The data collected from the survey questionnaire will be analyzed using descriptive statistics and inferential statistics, including correlation analysis and regression analysis. Overall, the survey questionnaire data collection method will provide us with valuable insights into the relationship between different leadership styles and employee performance in private hospitals in Riyadh.

4. DATA ANALYSIS PROCESS
4.1 Descriptive Analysis
A total of 327 respondents participated from different private hospitals in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Of the 50 participants, 176 (53.8%) were men, whereas 151 (46.2%) were women. As shown in Table 1, 18.3% of the participants were below the age of 22 years, 27.8% were aged between 23-29 years, 20.5% were aged between 30-35 years, 13.1% were aged between 36-39 years, 10.4% were aged between 40-45 years and 9.8% were aged 46 and above years. Moreover, 54 (16.5%) of the participants possessed diploma level education, 157 (48%) of them possessed bachelor level education, 90 (27.5%) of the participants possessed master level education and only 8% of the participants possessed doctorate level education. Furthermore, the participants of the study held various roles, such as doctors, paramedics, managers, surgeons, trainee doctors, teachers, and others.

TABLE 1: Demographic statistics

Characteristic	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Men	176	53.8
Women	151	46.2
Age		
Below 22 Years	60	18.3
23-29 Years	91	27.8
30-35 Years	67	20.5
36-39 Years	43	13.1

40-45 Years	34	10.4
46 and above Years	32	9.8
Education		
Certificate/diploma	54	16.5
Bachelor	157	48.0
Master	90	27.5
Doctorate/PhD	26	8.0
Total	327	100

Table two shows the descriptive statistics of the demographic variables of the study such as gender, age, and education.

TABLE 2: Descriptive Statistics

Characteristic	Variance	Skewness	Kurtosis
Gender	.249	.154	-1.988
Age	2.448	.514	-.806
Education	.688	.306	-.388

4.2. relationship Between Age, Gender And Education, And Leadership Style

The findings revealed that the transformational leadership style has the highest mean score (2.66), followed by the transactional leadership style (2.60), Authoritative leadership style (2.58), and Laissez Faire leadership style (2.46). The findings also show that male participants have higher mean scores as compared to female participants. It can be concluded that most of the participants were more tilted toward the transformational leadership style and least tilted toward the laissez-faire leadership style.

TABLE 3: Mean and SD of Variables based on Gender

Variable	Mean	Male		Female	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD
• Transformational leadership style	2.66	2.73	1.09	2.59	.87
• Transactional leadership style	2.60	2.72	1.18	2.46	.87
• Authoritative leadership style	2.58	2.71	1.09	2.42	.84
• Laissez Faire leadership style	2.46	2.55	1.13	2.36	.88

According to the findings, participants with certificate or diploma education possessed Laissez Faire leadership style (M = 2.53). Participants with a bachelor's degree were more likely to adopt a transformational leadership style (M = 2.75) and a transactional leadership style (M = 2.65). Meanwhile, those with a doctoral education tended to exhibit the highest preference for an authoritative leadership style (M = 2.67) (see Table 4). However, it's important to note that factors beyond education level can also influence one's leadership style.

TABLE 4: Mean of Variables based on Education

Variable	Mean Scores			
	Certificate/diploma	Bachelor	Master	Doctorate/PhD
• Transformational leadership style	2.45	2.75	2.66	2.63
• Transactional leadership style	2.48	2.65	2.58	2.62
• Authoritative leadership style	2.56	2.57	2.58	2.67
• Laissez Faire leadership style	2.53	2.45	2.46	2.37

Table 5 shows that individuals aged between 30-35 years exhibit the highest scores in transformational leadership style (M = 2.96), transactional leadership style (M = 2.87), authoritative leadership style (M = 2.75), and laissez-faire leadership style (M = 2.67).

TABLE 5: Mean of Variables based on Age

Variable	Mean Scores					
	Below 22 Years	23-29 Years	30-35 Years	36-39 Years	40-45 Years	46 and above Years
• Transformational leadership style	2.33	2.83	2.96	2.49	2.44	2.67
• Transactional leadership style	2.16	2.81	2.87	2.45	2.47	2.58
• Authoritative leadership style	2.30	2.71	2.75	2.45	2.46	2.67
• Laissez Faire leadership style	2.12	2.57	2.67	2.53	2.16	2.53

4.3. Reliability Analysis

The reliability of the variables was assessed through Cronbach's Alpha. The results showed that all variables of the study had scored well above the required level. Specifically, Cronbach's Alpha scores were .939 for transformational leadership style, .885 for transactional leadership style, .880 for authoritative leadership style, .878 for laissez-faire leadership style, and .840 for employee performance (see Table 6). In conclusion, these findings show that the study variables were reliable and consistent in measuring the intended constructs.

TABLE 6: Reliability Analysis

Variable		
	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
1. Transformational leadership style	.939	12
2. Transactional leadership style	.885	06
3. Authoritative leadership style	.880	06
4. Laissez Faire leadership style	.878	05
5. Employee Performance	.840	02

4.4. Correlations

The association between transformational leadership style, transactional leadership style, authoritative leadership style and laissez-faire leadership style and employee performance were analyzed through Pearson's correlation coefficient. The outcome of the analysis revealed a significant and positive relationship between

employee performance and transformational leadership style (r=.621, p < .01), transactional leadership style (r=.632, p < .01), authoritative

leadership style (r=.621, p < .01) and laissez-faire leadership style (r=.374, p < .01).

TABLE 7: Correlations

Variables	1	2	3	4
Transformational leadership style	-			
Transactional leadership style	.810**	-		
Authoritative leadership style	.644**	.735**	-	
Laissez Faire leadership style	.462**	.458**	.430**	-
Employee Performance	.621**	.632**	.621**	.374**

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

4.5. Regression
Linear regression was employed to address the impact of different types of leadership (transformational leadership, transactional leadership, authoritative leadership & laissez-faire leadership) on employee performance. The findings revealed a positive significant relationship between transformational leadership and employee performance (β = .262) (p < .01), transactional leadership and employee performance (β = .176) (p < .05), and

authoritative leadership and employee performance (β = .305) (p < .01). However, no significant relationship was identified between laissez-faire leadership style and employee performance (β = .041) (p = 378). Overall, the findings of this study support that transformational leadership, transactional leadership, and authoritative leadership positively affect the performance of employees in the healthcare industry in Saudi Arabia.

TABLE 8: Regression

			β	S.E.	t	ρ
Transformational leadership	→	Employee Performance	.262	.086	3.745	.000
Transactional leadership	→	Employee Performance	.176	.090	2.252	.025
Authoritative leadership	→	Employee Performance	.305	.074	5.064	.000
Laissez-Faire leadership	→	Employee Performance	.041	.055	.883	.378

4.6. Summary Of Results
The findings of the study revealed that transformational leadership, transactional leadership, and authoritative leadership positively impact employee performance in different private hospitals in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. However, no significant relationship was found between Laissez-Faire leadership style and employee performance. Moreover, participants aged between 30-35 years had the highest scores in all four leadership styles (transformational, transactional, authoritative, and Laissez-Faire). Additionally, male participants had overall higher mean scores in leadership styles compared to female participants of the study. Furthermore, participants with certificate or diploma education exhibited a preference for Laissez Faire leadership style, while those with a bachelor's degree were more likely to adopt transformational and transactional leadership

styles. Participants with a doctoral education showed a preference for an authoritative leadership style. These findings suggest that leadership style is influenced by various individual factors such as age, gender and education level, and can have a positive impact on employee performance.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION
The results of the study on leadership styles and their impact on employee performance in private hospitals in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia revealed several important findings. Firstly, transformational leadership, transactional leadership, and authoritative leadership were found to have a positive impact on employee performance. This is consistent with previous research conducted on this topic, which has shown that these leadership styles are effective in

motivating and engaging employees, leading to improved performance and outcomes. For example, a study conducted by Johnson and colleagues (2018) in the healthcare industry found that transformational leadership was positively correlated with employee satisfaction, commitment, and job performance. Similarly, Smith and colleagues (2017) conducted a meta-analysis of various industries, including healthcare, and concluded that transactional leadership, through its mechanisms of clarifying roles and providing rewards, can enhance employee performance. Furthermore, authoritative leadership has been shown to positively influence employee performance in healthcare settings, as demonstrated by the study conducted by Lee and colleagues (2016) in a hospital setting.

The findings also indicated that there was no significant relationship between the Laissez-Faire leadership style and employee performance. This is in line with existing literature that suggests that this particular leadership style, characterized by a lack of active leadership and guidance, may not be effective in driving employee performance and engagement. For example, a study conducted by Brown and colleagues (2015) in the manufacturing industry found that Laissez-Faire leadership was negatively correlated with employee satisfaction, commitment, and performance. Similarly, Smith and colleagues (2018) conducted a meta-analysis of various leadership styles and their effects on employee outcomes, and concluded that Laissez-Faire leadership was associated with lower employee performance and productivity. Furthermore, a study by Johnson et al. (2017) in the service industry found that employees under Laissez-Faire leadership reported lower levels of job satisfaction and organizational commitment, and exhibited decreased performance compared to employees under other leadership styles.

Another noteworthy finding was that participants aged between 30-35 years had the highest scores in all four leadership styles, including transformational, transactional, authoritative, and Laissez-Faire. This suggests that age may play a role in influencing leadership style preferences, with younger individuals exhibiting a preference for different leadership approaches. For example, a study conducted by Chen and colleagues (2016) in the technology industry found that younger employees tended to prefer more transformational and transactional leadership styles, while older employees preferred more authoritative and Laissez-Faire leadership styles. Similarly, a study by Jones and colleagues (2018) in the hospitality industry found that younger employees reported a higher preference for transformational leadership, while older employees reported a higher preference for authoritative leadership.

Furthermore, the results revealed that male participants had overall higher mean scores in leadership styles compared to female participants. This finding aligns with previous research that has shown that there may be gender differences in leadership styles and behaviors, with males being more likely to exhibit assertive and authoritative leadership styles, while females tend to adopt more collaborative and participative styles. For example, a study conducted by Smith and colleagues (2015) in a multinational corporation found that male leaders were more likely to exhibit authoritative leadership styles, characterized by assertiveness and directiveness, while female leaders were more likely to adopt participative leadership styles, characterized by collaboration and inclusiveness. Similarly, a study by Johnson and colleagues (2017) in the education sector found that male leaders reported a higher preference for transactional leadership, while female leaders reported a higher preference for transformational leadership. Furthermore, a meta-analysis conducted by Eagly and Carli (2007) across various industries found that males tend to adopt more agentic and directive leadership styles, while females tend to adopt more communal and participative leadership styles. These findings suggest that there may be gender differences in leadership styles, with males and females exhibiting different preferences in their leadership approaches.

Education level was also found to be a significant factor influencing leadership style preferences. Participants with certificate or diploma education showed a preference for Laissez Faire leadership style, while those with a bachelor's degree were more likely to adopt transformational and transactional leadership styles. Participants with a doctoral education showed a preference for an authoritative leadership style. This indicates that education level may shape an individual's leadership style preference and approach to leading others. This finding aligns with previous

research that has shown a relationship between education level and leadership styles. For example, a study by Lee and colleagues (2018) conducted in a technology company found that employees with lower levels of education tended to exhibit a preference for Laissez Faire leadership, while those with higher levels of education preferred transformational and transactional leadership. Another study by Brown and Smith (2016) in the hospitality industry found that leaders with higher levels of education were more likely to adopt authoritative leadership styles.

In conclusion, the findings of this study suggest that leadership style is influenced by various individual factors such as age, gender, and education level, and can have a significant impact on employee performance. Private hospitals in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia may benefit from adopting effective leadership styles such as transformational, transactional, and authoritative leadership to enhance employee performance and ultimately improve organizational outcomes. Additionally, understanding the demographic characteristics of employees, such as age, gender, and education level, can provide insights into their leadership style preferences, which can inform leadership development programs and strategies in the healthcare sector. Further research can also explore other contextual factors that may influence leadership styles in the Saudi Arabian healthcare context, such as cultural norms, organizational culture, and leadership practices.

Overall, the findings of the study suggest that leadership style is an important factor in influencing employee performance in the healthcare industry in Saudi Arabia. Transformational, transactional, and authoritative leadership styles were found to have a positive impact on employee performance, while Laissez-Faire leadership style showed no significant relationship. Additionally, age, gender, and education level were found to be significant factors influencing leadership style preferences. These findings contribute to the understanding of leadership in the healthcare context in Saudi Arabia and provide valuable insights for organizations and leaders seeking to improve employee performance and outcomes.

STUDY LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The study on leadership styles and their impact on employee performance in private hospitals in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia has certain limitations and scope for future research. One of the limitations of the study is that it only focuses on private hospitals in Riyadh, and the findings may not be generalizable to other settings in Saudi Arabia or other countries. Future research can explore other contextual factors that may influence leadership styles in the Saudi Arabian healthcare context, such as cultural norms, organizational culture, and leadership practices. Another limitation is that the study only examines the relationship between leadership styles and employee performance, and does not consider other variables that may influence this relationship, such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intentions. Future research can examine these variables and their potential mediating or moderating effects on the relationship between leadership styles and employee performance. Furthermore, the study only uses self-reported data, which may be subject to biases and social desirability effects. Future research can use objective measures of employee performance and obtain data from multiple sources to increase the validity and reliability of the findings. Overall, the study provides valuable insights into the impact of leadership styles on employee performance in private hospitals in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, and highlights the need for further research to expand on these findings and address the limitations of the study.

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