

**THE IMPACT OF TRANSFORMATIONAL
LEADERSHIP ON EMPLOYEE ATTITUDES IN
PAKISTANI HEALTHCARE: THE
MODERATING EFFECT OF ROLE
AMBIGUITY**

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the moderation effect of role ambiguity on the relationship between transformational leadership and employee work attitude in the health sector of Pakistan. Transformational leadership, characterized by inspiring and motivating employees, has often been acknowledged for enhancing employee attitude comprised of factors like job satisfaction, commitment, and motivation. However, the existence of role ambiguity might potentially dampen these positive results. Various studies have examined leadership styles and employee attitudes in different sectors and regions, no comprehensive research has investigated these variables together, with the added moderating effect of role ambiguity, in the Pakistani healthcare context. This study aims to fill this gap and provide valuable insights into leadership dynamics and organizational performance in the healthcare sector. The study was approved by the Academic board of the School of Graduate Studies. Carrying a quantitative research design, data were gathered from health professionals throughout various hospitals in Pakistan ($N=1165$) through adapted structured questionnaires. The survey assessed transformational leadership conducts, levels of role ambiguity, and different dimensions of employee work attitude, such as job satisfaction, commitment, and motivation. Regression analysis & correlation tests were performed to assess the hypotheses as per research objectives. The findings suggested that transformational leadership positively influences employee work attitude, increasing job satisfaction, stronger commitment, and higher motivation. Nonetheless, the existence of role ambiguity was observed to diminish these positive impacts. Workers confronting elevated levels of role ambiguity reported decreased job satisfaction and dedication even when led by transformational leaders. The conclusions have significant results for management practices in the health sector. To stimulate a positive work attitude among employees, health organizations should not just advocate transformational leadership but also struggle to lessen role ambiguity through clear job depictions and enhanced communication channels. It provides pragmatic insights for health administrators aspiring to improve leadership efficiency and employee contentment in a dynamic environment.

Keywords: Transformational leadership, role ambiguity, employee attitude, moderation, employees

APPROVAL

This is to certify that this thesis conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in quality and scope, for the fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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(2 October 2024)

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy is my own work and that all contributions from any other persons or sources are properly and duly cited. I further declare that the material has not been submitted either in whole or in part, for a degree at this or any other university. In making this declaration, I understand and acknowledge any breaches in this declaration constitute academic misconduct, which may result in my expulsion from the programme and/or exclusion from the award of the degree.

Name: Gulfam Hussain

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gulfam Hussain', written in a cursive style.

Signature of Student:

Date: 2 October 2024

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LIST OF ABBREVIATION

USA	United States of America
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
P&SHD	Primary & Secondary Healthcare Department
IT	Information Technology
WHO	World Health Organization
SMO	Senior Medical Officer
MO	Medical Officer
SH&NS	School Health & Nutrition Supervisor
DHQ/ THQ	District/ Tehsil Head Quarter
NC	Normative Commitment
RHC	Rural Health Center
BHU	Basic Health Unit
MLQ	Multiple Leadership Questionnaire
ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
SPSS	Statistical Package for The Social Sciences
SEM	Structural Equation Modeling
AMOS	Name of Statistical Software
EMQ	Employee Motivation Questionnaire
TCM	Three Component Model
MBE	Management by Exception
ECS	Employee Commitment Scale
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
DHA	District Health Authority

CC	Continuance Commitment
AF	Affective Commitment
OC	Organizational Climate
GTL	Global Transformational Leadership
EMQ	Employee Motivation Questionnaire
TCM	Three Component Model
HRD	Human Resource Development
HPWS	High-Performance Work System
EWA	Employee Work Attitude

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The motives behind this section are to highlight the main parts of this chapter and also its significance to primary & secondary healthcare department in Pakistan. This chapter is comprised of nine elements including study background, research problem, research questions, research objectives, research hypothesis, significance of study, Theoretical & practical contributions, key terms definitions and chapter summary etc.

Study background is discussing the leadership styles and their importance for healthcare sector in western countries, Asia and specifically Pakistan, their relationship with employee motivation and commitment, while at the same time the nature and status of role ambiguity in relation with other variables. The gap of similar problems is shown for future research prospects.

The research problem is describing the nature of the problems involved to study the relationship of Transformational leadership style, employee motivation, commitment and role ambiguity in Pakistan.

Research question segment based on research problem is illustrating the questions main statements that will be answered on conducting this study.

Research objective section is summarizing the main objective of the study. There are four to five objectives included in study to achieve.

Research hypotheses are explaining the statements showing the assumptions made regarding relationships between variables.

Significance of study section is describing that how this study will subsidize and add value to the body of knowledge (theory) and practical implications related to the topic of the research.

Definitions of different terms included in this study are described in this the section of key terms definition.

The final part of the chapter will be summary of the details to recall the basic concepts.

1.0 Background of the Study

The background of the study covers leadership styles, employee's motivation, satisfaction, commitment, and role ambiguity at Healthcare Department in the Western countries, Asian countries and Pakistan. The studies on Transformational leadership style, employee's attitude, and role ambiguity at Healthcare Department in the **Western countries** suggested that Healthcare is one the major defies for the western countries. They may vary from country to country based on demographic, environmental and lifestyle alterations. Whereas healthcare is considered a large economic burden in terms of economic redevelopment and employment concerns. Subsequently the relationship in healthcare and socio-economic growth is much complicated to understand as a movement to achieve integration in healthcare sector of western countries. The approach of leadership in healthcare is rapidly changing in west and specially in Europe. Each country of west is facing challenges in healthcare industry like GDP growth in healthcare sector, different political, economic and health related issue. While treating numerous diseases without delay to all public is also a major agenda of the western countries. Leadership is not a diminishing idea in healthcare of West, questions on leadership will never stop. While every new day is

opening new horizons in the field of Leadership, even 400 plus definitions of leadership are available. So, every new rising day is bringing a new aspect of leadership and healthcare sector in this regard (Goodwin, 2006). The foundation of health care system is its human resource but at the same time it is also a worst barrier towards its development if not properly managed and lead by inappropriate leadership. In western and African countries leadership is supposed to be a cross-cutting pillar of healthcare system to achieve the sustainable development goals. Leadership styles are associated with certain factors like environment, working conditions and retention of professionals. Transformational leadership is mostly preferred over transactional and laissez-fair leadership styles since after 1990s. Healthcare system has many major restraints in its way to deal with like scarce resources, outdated and inadequate medical funds, limited jobs and low promotional opportunities, un-rationalized work load, low motivation and high frustration among health workers. Such challenges always require a powerful leadership to deal with them. Africa and Europe are implementing leadership programs with cooperation of World Health Organization. These programs are focusing on development of leadership and improving leadership styles among healthcare professionals which will lead their workers in team building, fostering better communication, and improving organizational dynamics, better working relations among professionals to handle the healthcare systems' challenges. Poor leadership usually results in poor performance and dissatisfaction of health workers in African and European context. Findings of this research explained the fact that a strong relationship exists between leadership styles, motivation, satisfaction, and performance of health staff. Research also explained that leadership model of Burns 1978 is more expanded by Bass and Avolio later 1998 in context of healthcare system (Musunguzi et al., 2018).

Leaders in healthcare system of Canada are strongly involved in governance of healthcare while having key role and responsibility in implementing their action framework. The main feature of this framework is to homogenize the relationship of local Canadians and settler Canadians. In short the activities of healthcare system is depending upon the leadership which is dealing with difficult challenges like racial, genocidal and cultural values of Canada (McGibbon, 2019).

Research in 16 studies including (Armellino et al., 2010; Armstrong & Laschinger, 2006; Casida & Pinto-Zipp, 2008; Castle & Decker, 2011; Cummings et al., 2010; Ginsburg et al., 2010; Havig et al., 2011; Keroack et al., 2007; Kvist et al., 2007; McCutcheon et al., 2009; Purdy et al., 2010; Raup, 2008; Singer et al., 2009; Squires et al., 2010; Vogus & Sutcliffe, 2007), 7 were conducted in USA, 6 in Canada, 2 in Finland, and 1 in Norway. These studies were conducted in different contexts with different settings and methodologies. Studies carried out in hospitals, emergency units, oncology centers including different combinations of managers and employees. Leadership styles are interestingly discussed with different setups and terminologies in these studies. The studies explained the facts that different leadership styles worked in different settings. Healthcare service quality is associated with consensus manager leadership style, Climate safety and medication errors related matters associated with Resonant leadership style. Task oriented leadership style was related with assessment of staff and relatives, while the patient safety matter was dealt with formal leadership styles. Patients were seen more satisfied with transactional leadership styles however (Raup, 2008) found no relationship in patient satisfaction and leadership styles. Democratic have faith in group work and decisions by majority rule, Autocratic focus on strict obedience and Laissez faire believes on less involvement in work and leave responsibility on followers (Basit et al., 2017a).

In Swedish healthcare settings the suitable leadership style is change development style. This is all about openness, sharing & communication of ideas and decisions with followers. (Bogler, 2001) explained this fact that 47% of his respondents were having this leadership style. On the other hand, the Scandinavians follow a style i.e., relationship oriented. However, the leaders adjust or modify their behaviors in larger interest of the organizational goals (Hansson & Andersen, 2007).

(Sirota et al., 2011) in his research in USA explained the facts about employee's motivation that what they want. They explained that leaders or managers need to understand the three important things to motivate their employees. Equity—employees need respect and want to be treated fairly, achievement—employees want to be proud on their accomplishments and achievements, camaraderie—Employees want to have good working relations with peers. They stated that if anyone of these factors is missing then employees will be less enthusiastic and poorly motivated.

(Luoma, 2006) in his study at US explained that motivation is not a button by pushing which employees will be motivated, instead leaders or managers need to create a situation according to their requirement to trigger up the internal motivation of them. He explained three main components of motivation: Valance—the perceived work of employee, Self-efficacy—perceived chances of success of employees, and Expectancy—expectation of employees for rewards in return. He suggested to implement the same concept in developing countries to boost their employee's motivation and performance.

(Valdez & Nichols, 2013) defined motivation in their study as: anything that put influence on someone's behavior in order to pursue a certain output. Motivation is expedition for personal or organizational goals. There is not a single universal theory

on motivation which exactly fits everyone. Usually, people get motivation if they are expecting a financial reward in return following an acknowledgement.

(Valdez & Nichols, 2013) describes examples of Australian, US and Canadian healthcare sectors. Where they described how staff is motivated or tried to kept motivated even in the times of crisis. Usually, staff motivated while they are ensured about their personal protection. The staff feels motivated and attend their duty also on offering a financial incentive. Authors also emphasized that the employees who have critical role in crisis more willingly attend their jobs even during the crisis. In some states of USA, they healthcare staff is legally bound to attend the duty in crisis like pandemics otherwise they will face sanctions by law. But such legislative measures must be reconsidered in order to keep employees motivated after the crisis. The incentives which may be offered include provision of personal protective equipment, vaccine, child & family care, additional professional trainings and legal protection etc. They also expressed their views on expectancy theory which illustrated that motivation is combination of expectancy, instrumentality and valance. All these variables must met to generate motivation in someone (Valdez & Nichols, 2013).

(Günzel-Jensen et al., 2018) in their study in Scandinavian countries illustrated that the transformational leadership is associated with employee commitment. This commitment is affected by the working environment of the health authorities because the leaders don't communicate the effect of change with their employees. Which means commitment is linked with the communication role of leaders. In Scandinavia the employees urge to participate in leadership decisions if they are communicated well and aligned with organizational goals. Ultimately their ownership and dedication to work increases and performance becomes better.

(Gowen et al., 2006) in his research at USA has described that employee commitment along with control initiatives has a positive effect on healthcare quality programs including hospitals. Study explored that both variables have synergistic effect on performance. Strategies regarding training, autonomy, job structure, performance evaluation and communication etc. are strongly affected by the commitment. They have quoted number of references of earlier studies which confirms the fact related to employee commitment with health care performance. Findings revealed that committed employees are charged to achieve better results. Furthermore, the initiatives for employee commitment are successfully implemented and showing good results. They suggested that employee commitment plans should not be abandoned. Future research is also suggested to study the employee commitment along with organizational culture and quality management practices.

(Clinebell et al., 2013) explained in their research conducted in Lithuania, Europe, that commitment can be defined in terms of psychological state which is depicted with employee relation with organization for long term stay of job there. This study is of empirical nature and have revealed a relationship of leadership styles with commitment. Transformational and transactional leadership styles have strong association with commitment. However, in details: the passive leadership style is negatively correlated with affective commitment. While transformational style is positively associated and have strong effect on normative and affective commitment. Previous studies are congruent with the same findings. Transformational and transactional styles are positively associated with affective commitment. Study also explained the fact that continuance commitment has more strong relationship with transactional style as compared to transformational. Future research is suggested in different sectors of different countries like Asia.

Role ambiguity can also be defined as it is the process of stress created due to non-clarity of job-related roles and uncertain outcomes. The level of stress comes from the level of uncertainty and role salience. Research (Boles et al., 2003; Breugh & Colihan, 1994; Doherty & Hoyer, 2011; Morris et al., 1979) revealed that role ambiguity arises due to lack of communication & coordination and exceeding or dropping personal job descriptions. Role ambiguity is directly linked with the quality of leadership (Carter & Harper, 2016). Research shows that with proper communication role ambiguity can be reduced and vice versa. Role ambiguity is on its peak in less structured organization. Such ambiguity give rise to stress among employees (Askenazy, 2001; Bauer, 2004; Brenner et al., 2004). Proper communication and feedback coupled with employee orientation may reduce the role ambiguity in employees (King & Sethi, 2015).

Ambiguity also causes to pessimistic emotions, cognitions, thoughts, and feelings like exhaustion and anxiety (Ruben, 1986). Resultantly role ambiguity can be influenced by social or task cohesion and job satisfaction (Begoñna Urien et al., 2017).

The studies on Transformational leadership style, employee's attitude, and role ambiguity at Healthcare Department in the **Asian countries** suggested that Leadership is prevailing everywhere in all setups of society and cultures despite of their social, economic or social formation. Leadership is not only a human attribute but it is also seemed in animals of all kinds. Research has deduced a result that leadership qualities enable the leaders to get privileges due to this quality (Trottier et al., 2008).

(Popli & Rizvi, 2016) described in their study conducted in India that there are many factors involve in organizational performance including motivation, employee commitment, leadership styles, innovation, culture and environment etc. A deep analysis of the research studies indicated that leadership has a promoting role in