

Research Article

Prevalence of Transactional and Transformational Leadership Styles and its Association with Job Satisfaction in Nursing Staff of Tertiary Care Hospitals in Lahore

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Abstract

Background: Effective leadership plays a critical role in ensuring high-quality patient care and staff satisfaction. Transformational leadership is characterized by inspiring and motivating staff to exceed expectations through a shared vision, fostering innovation and professional growth. Transactional leadership focuses on structured tasks, rewards, and discipline, emphasizing a more direct exchange between leaders and subordinates.

Objective: To assess the prevalence of leadership style in the nursing staffs of tertiary care hospitals of Lahore and the association of nursing staff's job satisfaction with the types of leadership styles.

Methods: A comparative cross-sectional study using a modified form of the MLQ-5x questionnaire including a job satisfaction scale, distributed to the total 212 nursing staffs of Mayo, Jinnah and Lady Aitchison hospital. We analyze data by using frequencies and percentages and apply chi-square for assessing the association of leadership style with job satisfaction among nursing staff.

Results: The responses from 212 respondents, revealed that the transactional style of leadership was the most prevalent (75.94%). Among the nurses, only 52.4% reported an adequate job satisfaction out of which 20.28% are in the transformational leadership category, 30.6% in the transactional category and 1.2% in a mixed category. 84.3% of the nurses in the transformational category are job satisfied while 40.4% of the nurses in the transactional category are job satisfied.

Conclusions: The results reveal an alarmingly low levels of job satisfaction in the nursing setup. Of those with a transformative style of leadership imposed by their supervisors reported higher job satisfaction while vice versa was true for transactional style which was also the most prevalent style. Implementation of appropriate style of leadership by the authorities may result in better outcomes.

Keywords | leadership styles, transformative style, transactional style, tertiary care hospitals, nursing staff

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Introduction

The evolving global demographics present formidable challenges to healthcare organizations, particularly those catering to aging populations with complex conditions and a growing preference for home care. This trend intensifies demands on nursing homes, which confront additional hur-

dles in the form of work-related issues such as poor organization, time constraints, high workloads, and turnover, all of which pose threats to the quality of care provided. Recognizing the importance of effective leadership in addressing healthcare challenges, the literature underscores its positive influence on staff retention, job satisfaction, and overall well-being. Similarly, the nursing profession encounters leadership-related challenges that directly impact workforce outcomes.¹

The Full Range of Leadership Model (FRLM) outlines various leadership styles, including transformational leadership, which motivates followers beyond expectations through



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idealized influence, individualized consideration, inspirational motivation, and intellectual stimulation. Transactional leadership emphasizes exchange relationships between leaders and subordinates, incorporating contingent rewards and active management by exception. Passive-avoidant leadership involves passive management-by-exception and laissez-faire but out of scope of our study.²

Transformational leadership, within relation-oriented leadership styles, is linked to positive workforce outcomes indicated by a negative correlation between burnout and transformational leadership, along with positive correlations between transformational leadership and patient outcomes, including higher satisfaction, quality of care, and organizational innovation capacity.² Enhancing job satisfaction among nurses is essential, as it can positively impact patients' views on the quality of care and help maintain a sufficient nursing workforce. Understanding the indirect factors and predictors of job satisfaction offers deeper insights into this multifaceted issue, supporting the creation of effective strategies to combat the nursing shortage and elevate patient care quality.¹³ Leadership styles focusing on the achievement of tasks alone do not suffice. Efforts must be put by organizations to develop relational leadership to optimize nursing care.¹²

Given the specific cultural and organizational characteristics of Lahore's tertiary hospitals, this research aims to uncover the predictive effectiveness of the FRL model, particularly from the nursing staff perspective. Examining the relationships between leadership styles and job satisfaction, as well as other employee outcomes, becomes crucial for understanding leadership efficacy in this specific setting.

Methods

A comparative cross sectional study design was applied, using questionnaire that was filled by nursing staff of selected hospitals. Study was conducted in 3 Tertiary care hospitals of Lahore, Pakistan namely Mayo Hospital, Gangaram Hospital and Lady Aitchison Hospital. Study was done within 3 months after approval of synopsis from Institutional review board.

By using 95% confidence level, 5% margin of error and expected proportion of population to be 16.7% we get the sample size of 212 nurses.⁶ Using a consecutive non-probability sampling technique, we obtained data from the nursing staff working in the above mentioned tertiary care hospital of Lahore.

Since we wanted to observe the effect of leadership on the job satisfaction of the nursing staff, only those nurses were included in the study who had at least 6 months of working experience under the same supervisor. Nurses who were on

sick leave or maternity leave or having less than 6 months of working experience under a single leader were excluded from the study.

The questionnaire used was a self-modified form of the MLQ-5x questionnaire with Cronbach Alpha ($\alpha=0.71-0.93$).⁷ along with a self-modified form of the Job Satisfaction Survey ($\alpha=0.60-0.91$).⁸ A google form was created which included a consent form and the questionnaire. The link to the google form was conveniently sent to official social media groups of nursing departments of the hospitals. Those willing to participate were asked to read and electronically sign the informed consent form.

The questionnaire consisted of 25 questions in 3 parts namely, transformational, transactional and satisfaction. The first 10 questions assessed the transformative style. The next 10 questions assessed the transactional style. The last 5 questions assessed the satisfaction. The satisfaction questions were converted into a scale where 3 or more positive responses indicated adequate job satisfaction and less than 3 positive responses indicated low job satisfaction.

The collected data underwent a comprehensive review to identify and rectify any missing or inconsistent responses, ensuring the dataset is clean and reliable. Responses, being categorical, were converted to numerical values to facilitate analysis.

Statistical analysis was conducted on the sums of scores of transformational and transactional styles of leaderships respectively using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 29. We analyze the Quantitative data by applying frequencies and percentages. P-value less than 0.05 was considered statistically significant.

Results

Gender Distribution Breakdown showed higher female Representation (79.2%) is consistent with global trends where nursing is often a female-dominated profession. Age Distribution Breakdown showed majority (48.6%) of the respondents belonged to the age group of 20 to 25 years and were youth. 5.7% of the respondents belonged to the age group of 31 to 35 years. Majority of the respondents were relatively new in their careers having working experience of 1 to 5 years. 16% had working experience of 5 to 10 years and 17.9% had 10 to 15 years working experience.

The analysis of the 212 responses regarding leadership styles reveals that the transactional leadership style is more prevalent among nursing staff across different tertiary hospitals. This suggests that, within these healthcare settings, leaders are more frequently employing a transactional approach, which focuses on routine, performance-based rewards and

corrections.

Our findings also report higher levels of job satisfaction

Table 1: Frequency of leadership style

Variable	Frequency	percent
Transformational Leadership	51	24.05
Transactional leadership	161	75.94
total	212	100%

among the transformational leadership style category. Among the nurses, 52.4% (111) reported higher levels of job satisfaction, a majority were in the transformational leadership category. Out of 52.4%, 20.28% (43) are in transformational leadership category, while 30.6% (65) are in transactional leadership category and 1.2 % (3) are in mixed category. 84.3% (43 out of 51) of total transformational category candidates are satisfied. 40.4 % (65 out of 161) of total transactional category candidates are satisfied.

Table 2: Difference between transformative style and transactional style

Variables for transformative Style:	Chi square	P-value
Leader coaching	152.999	0.000
Collaboration and team work	249.809	0.000
Resolving conflicts	175.216	0.000
Career advancement investment	191.295	0.000
Exemplify values	164.148	0.000
Storytelling	170.630	0.000
Challenge to question	205.804	0.000
Personalized guidance	153.939	0.000
Understanding strengths	134.797	0.000
Vision achievement	151.746	0.000
Variable for transactional style:		
	Chi square	P-value
Rewards and recognition	71.379	0.000
Meeting targets and expectations	39.559	0.000
Interventions when deviation occur	45.161	0.000
Corrective action	44.127	0.000
Defer responsibility	115.046	0.000
Minimal guidance	10.32	0.171
Communication to clarify roles	75.912	0.000
Maintain established routine	94.438	0.000
Consistency	117.846	0.000
Report deviation	144.537	0.000

Discussion

In this study prevalence of the two types of leadership styles namely transformational and transactional with prevalence of each type with job satisfaction in nurses is known in tertiary

care hospitals of Lahore, Pakistan. Such study was conducted for the first time in this set-up. The data shows higher prevalence of job satisfaction when transformational leadership style is implemented among nurses.

One cross-sectional analysis indicated that passive-avoidant leadership styles are predominant as compared to transformational leadership styles in nursing homes which highlighted an urgent need to invest in leadership development.³ A study in Kuwait suggests that transformational leadership is perceived to be more prevalent in private hospitals, correlating with enhanced employee morale and job satisfaction,⁴ whereas a study in Jordan demonstrates that the nursing staff working in public hospitals had higher job satisfaction when compared to those working in private setups showing a positive correlation between job and satisfaction and transformational and transactional leadership styles while a negative correlation with passive-avoidant style.² One study in Ethiopia shows readiness for organizational change by the administrative staff whenever transactional and/or transformational leadership styles are implemented,⁵ in contrast another other study in Ethiopia, although demonstrated a positive employee outcome with transformational style of leadership, found no association between employee performance and transactional leadership style.⁶ A comprehensive systematic review demonstrated 88% correlation between leadership style and nurses' job satisfaction with the transformative style having the highest positive correlation. Interestingly transactional style demonstrated both positive and negative correlations.⁹ An intriguing finding in Lebanese hospital setting was that male nurses perceived their managers to be more transformative than female nurses.¹⁰ A large cross-sectional study in Iranian government hospitals revealed transactional style of leadership as the most prevalent style, similar to our study. It also showed a negative relationship of job stress and anticipated staff turnover with both transformative and transactional styles, suggesting that leaders can adopt a combination of both styles to optimize nursing care and job satisfaction.¹¹ Nurses, depending on their age, career stage, and the tasks they perform, benefit from distinct leadership approaches tailored to their specific needs.¹⁴ In another systematic review, out of the six studies, five indicated that transformational leadership positively influences nurses' organizational commitment. One study, however, found a negative association between transformational leadership and organizational commitment among acute care nurses. This negative result may be less reliable, as it appears that the ineffective application of transformational leadership by nurse managers or specific cultural factors in the acute care setting could have impacted the findings.¹⁵

The strengths of our study lie in being one of the first study crafted specifically to determine job satisfaction in nurses.

With 212 responses, the study achieves a decent response rate, increasing the reliability of the results. The study targets a specific population (nurses), enabling analysis of the relationship between job satisfaction and leadership style within this group.

There was some limitation in our study, a larger sample size would increase the study's generalizability and statistical power. The study only examines nurses, limiting its applicability to other healthcare professionals or industries. Since only nurses from Tertiary Care Hospitals of Lahore were included, study's findings may not be generalizable to different cultural contexts, healthcare settings, or leadership structures. The study relies on self-reported data, which may be subject to response and non-response biases. Although the study shows an impact of leadership style, there may be many other factors which determine the job satisfaction such as socioeconomic status, domestic stability, policies, work-environment, compensation, culture etc., all of which are out of scope of this study.

Satisfied nurses are more likely to be committed to their work, which directly impacts the quality of patient care. There is a clear need for leadership development programs within hospitals. Transformational leadership style emphasizes on emotional intelligence, support, and professional development, therefore policymakers in healthcare should consider the study's findings when formulating guidelines and policies related to hospital management and leadership. Policies that encourage leadership training focused on transformational styles could lead to improvements in job satisfaction and patient care. The study's findings suggest a need for further research into the long-term impacts of transformational leadership on both nurse satisfaction and patient outcomes across different regions, professions and types of hospitals. Additionally, exploring the barriers to implementing transformational leadership in greater detail could provide valuable insights for healthcare administrators looking to adopt this style.

Conclusion

The findings indicate that among the nurses in our survey, there is a low degree of job satisfaction. According to analysis, nurses who had managers or supervisors who led in a transformative way expressed more job satisfaction. This type of leadership places an emphasis on motivation, inspiration, and personal growth. On the other hand, the majority of nurses were under the direction of a transactional leader, who had a rigid, task-oriented approach that was centered on rewards and sanctions. Despite being the most common, this style was linked to worse work satisfaction.

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Authors Contribution:

AS, AF, NB: Involved in conceptualization of study

AS, AF, AS, AH, AN: Involved in data collection

AS, AF, AS, AH, AN, NB: Involved in manuscript writing

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