

Transformational Leadership and Job Satisfaction among Nurses at Al Dhafra Hospitals: Investigating the Moderating Role of Organizational Commitment

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Abstract

Effective leadership plays a vital role in enhancing nurse job satisfaction, particularly in healthcare settings where it significantly influences patient outcomes and workforce stability. This study examines the relationship between transformational leadership and job satisfaction among nurses at Al Dhafra Hospitals in the UAE, with particular attention to the potential moderating role of organizational commitment. The study employed a quantitative correlational design using a cross-sectional survey completed by 348 nurses from Al Dhafra Hospitals in Abu Dhabi, UAE. The questionnaire collected data on nurses' perceptions of transformational leadership, their level of job satisfaction, and their degree of organizational commitment. Pearson correlation and regression analyses were conducted to examine the relationships among these variables and to determine whether organizational commitment exerted a moderating effect. The results revealed a statistically significant positive relationship between transformational leadership and job satisfaction ($r = 0.321$, $p < 0.0001$). Regression analysis indicated that transformational leadership explained approximately 10.3% of the variance in job satisfaction ($F = 39.83$, $p < 0.0001$). Furthermore, organizational commitment significantly moderated this relationship. Specifically, when levels of organizational commitment were lower, the positive effect of transformational leadership on job satisfaction was weaker (β

= -0.143, $p = 0.001$). These findings underscore the critical importance of transformational leadership in enhancing nurse job satisfaction, particularly when supported by strong organizational commitment. To improve staff satisfaction and, ultimately, patient care outcomes, healthcare leaders should prioritize the development of transformational leadership competencies and implement strategies to strengthen organizational commitment across the workforce.

Keywords

Job Satisfaction, Nursing, Organizational Commitment, Transformational Leadership

1. Introduction

Health care organizations are social systems that involve groups of practitioners or individuals working together to develop and deliver effective, high-quality health care services (Harhash, Ahmed, & Elshereif, 2020).

Over the past two decades, transformational leadership has gained increasing prominence in leadership philosophy. Accordingly, contemporary leadership theory and practice have attracted the attention of both scholars and practitioners, who have shown strong interest in examining its significance for individuals and organizations alike. Nursing, as a demanding profession, plays a pivotal role in all health care institutions. Consequently, hospitals strive to provide supportive environments that promote staff well-being by ensuring safe and comfortable workplaces and by minimizing stress levels (Khan et al., 2020).

In the United Arab Emirates, a major challenge affecting the healthcare system is the shortage of nurses, which arises from multiple factors. In addition to the limited number of Emirati-trained nurses, low job satisfaction is a significant contributor to nurse turnover and intentions to leave, further exacerbating the nursing workforce crisis. This issue is compounded by the fact that expatriate nurses tend to have shorter tenures compared to their Emirati counterparts. Therefore, implementing effective strategies to attract nurses and improve retention is essential for strengthening the nursing workforce in the UAE.

The UAE healthcare system faces unique challenges, including high nurse turnover, heavy reliance on expatriate labor, and cultural diversity among healthcare staff. Compared to Western countries, nurses in the UAE often work within a more transient and multicultural workforce. These contextual factors influence how leadership styles are perceived and how job satisfaction and organizational commitment are formed. Accordingly, our findings are interpreted within this regional context to highlight their unique implications. The modern healthcare environment is characterized by rapid and dynamic developments that present numerous challenges. To avoid stagnation, organizations must respond to these changes with commitment, flexibility, and a positive mindset. Accordingly, lead-

ership with strong influence and a clear, forward-looking vision is essential. Leadership can be exercised to create positive outcomes in any context—whether at home, in the workplace, or within social settings. It is not an innate or mysterious trait; rather, individuals can become more effective leaders by developing essential leadership skills. In today's globally competitive environment, an effective leadership style is therefore indispensable (Avolio et al., 2009).

Transformational leadership involves inspiring and motivating individuals to achieve exceptional levels of performance by creating a compelling vision, setting high expectations, and encouraging followers to prioritize organizational or societal goals over personal interests. The core aim of transformational leadership is to facilitate meaningful change within individuals and organizations by promoting growth, innovation, and personal development (Arthur-Sam, 2025).

This leadership approach contributes to the development of organizations that are adaptable and capable of sustaining long-term success. Transformational leadership fosters highly engaged and motivated teams by encouraging followers to exceed their basic job responsibilities and by providing opportunities for personal and professional development. Furthermore, the promotion of creative thinking leads to the generation of new ideas and innovations (Al-Thawabiya et al., 2023).

A transformational leader inspires individuals to move beyond their perceived limitations, enabling them to achieve higher levels of success within the organization while simultaneously fostering creativity and innovation in their areas of practice. Many scholars argue that this leadership style is more effective than traditional, task-oriented management approaches (Korejan & Shahbazi, 2016). In addition, transformational leadership is particularly well suited to dynamic, flexible, and progressive learning environments (Eaton et al., 2024). An effective leadership style should be capable of generating enthusiasm and inspiring individuals to fully utilize their skills and competencies, while also enhancing job satisfaction. As organizations depend on collaboration between managers and staff to achieve their goals and objectives, examining employees' job satisfaction becomes a critical area of study.

The main objective of this study is to examine the influence of transformational leadership on job satisfaction among nurses employed at Al Dhafra Hospitals in the UAE. Additionally, it aims to assess whether organizational commitment serves as a moderating factor in this relationship.

While previous studies have examined the links between transformational leadership, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment, this research fills a specific gap by concentrating on the distinct context of the United Arab Emirates. It particularly emphasizes the challenges associated with a largely expatriate nursing workforce and explores how transformational leadership and organizational commitment function in this setting. This perspective offers deeper insights into these dynamics within a culturally diverse and fast-changing healthcare landscape.

Although there are few studies on transformational leadership, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment, these factors significantly impact individual

health, psychological well-being, and work productivity among nurses. Such studies are particularly important in healthcare organizations where knowledge about these aspects is limited. This research aimed to address a gap in existing literature by exploring the connection between transformational leadership and job satisfaction among nurses at Al Dhafra Hospitals. The study's core objective was to evaluate how these factors influence the work environment and support the broader effectiveness of the organization.

This research provides foundational insights into the impact of transformational leadership on job satisfaction, placing special emphasis on the moderating influence of organizational commitment. It also paves the way for future research aimed at enhancing outcomes and minimizing adverse events. Moreover, the findings underscore the need to develop or revise policies and guidelines that promote effective transformational leadership, improve job satisfaction, and strengthen organizational commitment among nurses at Al Dhafra Hospitals.

2. Literature Review

Nurses often spend the most time at the patient's bedside, placing them at the heart of patient care. However, they frequently face high levels of stress, which can create a negative work atmosphere, diminish morale, and cause them to lose passion for their profession. When nurses feel dissatisfied, they are at greater risk of burnout—a condition commonly linked to stress in healthcare settings. Burnout is characterized by emotional exhaustion, loss of motivation, disengagement from responsibilities, and a lack of enthusiasm for professional growth.

The function of leadership is vital in shaping the trajectory of an organization, and the efficacy of its leadership processes can have a profound impact on the company's outcome, whether it succeeds or fails (Ang'ana & Kilika, 2022). The job of the leader and their leadership is a strategic matter, as the leader holds the main responsibility for enhancing employee and organizational performance.

3. Theoretical Background

3.1. Social Learning Theory

This study employed social learning theory to conceptualize leadership. The development of social learning theory is credited to specific contributors (O'Connor et al., 2022). Employees are influenced by their leaders through observational learning, where they gain knowledge and skills by watching and mimicking their leaders' actions and the results of those actions (Giroux & Moreau, 2022). Moreover, it has been asserted that leaders have the ability to impact the psychological empowerment of their colleagues through social learning mechanisms. Moreover, there has been a discussion on social learning that emphasizes the significant role of psychological states in examining the impact of leadership's emotional exhaustion on social learning. Emotionally fatigued employees have limited psychological resources to engage in social learning and fulfill their job responsibilities. According to the concept of social learning, the psychological states of leaders play a

vital role in social learning as they determine the external events that are encountered, how they are interpreted, and whether they have lasting effects. Psychological pressure can arise from the demanding features of work, depleting employees' cognitive, emotional, and physical capacities. Given that psychological research indicates that stress hinders the capacity to internalize, analyze, and utilize information, it has significant implications for social learning theory. Social Learning Theory posits that employees learn attitudes and behaviors by observing leaders as role models; however, this process depends on employees' psychological attachment to the organization. Organizational commitment moderates this relationship by shaping followers' attention to and identification with leaders. When commitment is low, the social learning process is weakened, reducing the positive effect of leadership on employee outcomes such as job satisfaction.

3.2. Transformational Leadership

The achievement of a goal through the command of personal assistants is called leadership. It is an art of motivating the members of a firm to inspire to act toward achieving a common goal. To reach organizational objective, a leader seeks the voluntary participation of subordinates (Salehzadeh & Ziaei, 2024). Leadership is a critical process in which individuals guide and influence a group toward achieving a common goal. Effective leaders shape and impact the values, attitudes, and behaviors of their followers through a dynamic, two-way relationship (van Diggele et al., 2020).

Transformational leadership is a modern leadership model that highlights the leader's role in driving meaningful change and growth among their followers. Although the concept was initially associated with political leadership, it has become increasingly relevant in organizational research and practice (Goethals & Allison, 2016). This leadership style is defined by four main dimensions. The first, idealized influence, refers to the leader's ability to earn trust and admiration from their followers. The second, inspirational motivation, involves clearly communicating a compelling vision that energizes and motivates team members to achieve shared goals. The third, intellectual stimulation, encourages creativity and critical thinking. The fourth and final dimension, individualized consideration, involves leaders supporting their followers through personal mentorship and attention to individual needs (Lai et al., 2020).

The framework of leadership that relies on encouraging a team to achieve overall success is defined as transformational leadership. These leaders help their teams grow by understanding each person's needs, empowering them, and making sure everyone—followers, leaders, and the organization—is working toward the same goals (Ismail et al., 2009). To uplift innovation and creativity in the workplace is a major component of the overall strategy of a transformational leader.

A distinctive study explores how different leadership styles influence team creativity, while also examining the roles of information sharing and communication within the team (Wang et al., 2009). However, A leadership style refers to the manner in which an individual applies and demonstrates their leadership abilities.

The distinct personalities and individual experiences of each leader shape their particular approach. Thorough study has uncovered the links between leadership style, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and the standards of professionals' chosen careers (Bono, 2000).

3.3. Job Satisfaction

The low productivity in workplace is one of the causes of low job satisfaction among nurses. While the exact cost of nurse dissatisfaction has not been specifically quantified, the significant financial impact of staff turnover is well documented. This predicament affects both the cost and quality of patient care. Unmotivated employees that cause a ripple effect of inefficiency in the organization leads to poor patient outcomes. Negative quality of care could heighten resources utilization of the company, and the price of the patient procedure. Dissatisfaction in work does not only give lesser efficient care but also poor quality of service. Health care workers who are dissatisfied with their job have loss also of enthusiasm from their patients and demotivated to do their nursing chores (Shinde & Durgawale, 2014).

The evaluative positive emotional state of an employee that expresses overall contentment from a good working environment and management of an institution is define as job satisfaction. It encompasses cognitive, emotional, and behavioral elements and has been proven to be linked to various organizational results such as empowerment, increased job engagement, enhanced performance, reduced turnover intentions, decreased absenteeism, productive work conduct, and higher commitment (Judge et al., 2008).

Job satisfaction can be defined as the enjoyable emotional state that arises when one evaluates their employment as aligning with or enabling the fulfillment of their job values (Nanjundeswaraswamy, 2023). Work-related factors have a stronger influence on job performance than individual traits. Moreover, employees who reported higher job satisfaction were more likely to perform better, which in turn fostered a more positive and fulfilling work environment. This can also be utilized to assess employee behavior and understand how job satisfaction influences various job behaviors, thereby informing organizational decisions and initiatives (Gazi et al., 2024).

3.4. Organizational Commitment

Organizational commitment is a well-researched topic in the fields of organizational psychology and organizational behavior. It refers to the psychological connection between a person and their employer, which reduces the likelihood of the employee choosing to leave the firm voluntarily (Grego-Planer, 2019).

Organizational commitment refers to the psychological connection an employee feels toward the organization they work for. It is critical in determining if an employee's devotion to their employer will lead to his continued employment with the company. Organizational commitment plays a vital role in any business,

as it helps management assess an employee's likelihood of remaining with the company and their dedication to supporting its goals and objectives (Meyer et al., 1993).

Organizational commitment is an attitude related to the workplace that indicates how strongly an employee aligns with the organization's goals and their intention to continue being a part of it. It encompasses three dimensions: normative, affective, and continuance (Grego-Planer, 2019). Organizational commitment should be prioritized in healthcare organizations, especially when it comes to tackling personnel shortages in the UAE. However, medical management can concentrate their efforts on antecedents that generate improved organizational commitment and, as an outcome, increase keeping of employees and high-quality performance (Utami et al., 2021).

4. Hypothesis Development

4.1. Transformational Leadership and Job Satisfaction

Previous research has demonstrated that leadership style plays a crucial role in shaping nurses' job satisfaction, with transformational leadership consistently associated with higher levels of satisfaction (Prasetyo, 2021). A study conducted in Malaysia in 2011 further supported this relationship by identifying strong associations between all four dimensions of transformational leadership and the work environment, highlighting its effectiveness in enhancing job satisfaction (Voon et al., 2011). Another study reported that the positive effect of transformational leadership on job satisfaction was amplified when combined with contingent reward practices (Puni et al., 2018).

Numerous studies in the literature have examined job satisfaction among nurses, addressing various contributing factors. Among these, a clear relationship has been identified between nurses' compensation and the leadership styles of their immediate supervisors (Gebreheat et al., 2023). The leadership behaviors demonstrated by nursing leaders significantly influence nurses' job satisfaction. Given that nursing practice is predominantly team-based, the presence of effective leadership is a fundamental component of the profession (Huber, 2017). High levels of job satisfaction among nurses often reflect the presence of strong and effective leadership, which in turn positively affects patient satisfaction and enhances organizational service outcomes (Schreuder et al., 2011).

A study conducted in North Cyprus found that transformational leadership had a significant and positive effect on employee job satisfaction, as measured through a structured survey instrument (Dappa et al., 2019). Similarly, research carried out in the United Arab Emirates reported that transformational leadership positively influenced job satisfaction among public sector employees (Alshehhi et al., 2019).

Based on these findings, the present study proposes the following initial hypothesis:

H1: There is a positive correlation between transformational leadership and job satisfaction among nurses.

4.2. Moderating Role of Organizational Commitment

Organizational commitment reflects the extent to which employees are willing to remain with an organization, indicating their sense of loyalty and attachment (Eliyana & Ma'arif, 2019). Previous research has highlighted the critical role of transformational leadership in enhancing organizational commitment (Sahu et al., 2018). As noted by (Nazir & Islam, 2017), the relationship between leaders and followers extends beyond purely economic exchanges, addressing deeper personal needs and fostering sustained commitment to the organization. Additionally, prior studies have identified transformational leadership as a strong and consistent predictor of organizational commitment (Ismail et al., 2009).

A study conducted in Porto, Portugal, examined whether organizational commitment mediated the relationship between transformational leadership and organizational trust. The findings indicated that while transformational leadership had a positive effect on organizational trust, organizational commitment played only a limited mediating role in this relationship (Martins Marques De Lima Rua & Costa Araújo, 2016). In contrast, another study demonstrated that organizational commitment exerted a significant moderating effect on the relationship between leadership and job performance, underscoring its crucial role in shaping how leadership influences employee outcomes (Lim et al., 2017).

Based on these empirical findings, the present study proposes the following second hypothesis:

H2: The influence of transformational leadership on job satisfaction is moderated by organizational commitment such that the positive impact of transformational leadership on job satisfaction is reduced when organizational commitment is low.

The rationale for Hypothesis 2 is strengthened by integrating insights from psychological contract theory and prior empirical studies suggesting that low organizational commitment can result in emotional disengagement. This disengagement may diminish employees' receptiveness to leadership behaviors, thereby helping to explain why the positive influence of transformational leadership on job satisfaction is attenuated when organizational commitment is low.

4.3. Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework presented in **Figure 1** is grounded in well-established relationships identified in the existing literature. It illustrates the influence of transformational leadership on job satisfaction and examines the moderating role of organizational commitment in this relationship.

5. Methods and Materials

This study employed a quantitative correlational design, with data collected through a cross-sectional survey administered to nurses at Al Dhafra Hospitals. An online questionnaire was used to examine the effect of transformational leadership on job satisfaction and to assess the moderating role of organizational commitment

in this relationship.

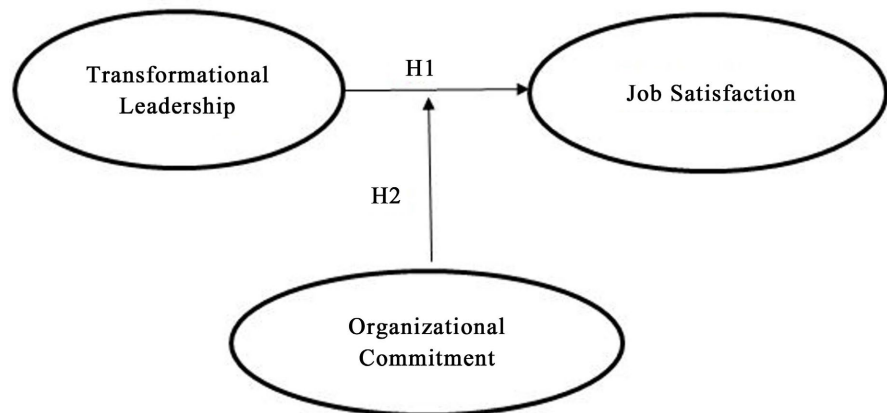


Figure 1. Conceptual framework.

5.1. Data Collection and Procedure

The study sample consisted of nurses employed at Al Dhafra Hospitals in the United Arab Emirates. An online survey was administered to the nursing staff, resulting in a total of 348 completed questionnaires that were included in the final analysis. Data collection was conducted between March and April 2024 using an online survey platform. The questionnaire comprised several sections addressing participants' demographic characteristics, perceptions of transformational leadership, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment. Descriptive statistics, including means, frequencies, percentages, and standard deviations, were used to summarize the demographic data. All collected responses were securely stored on the principal investigator's password-protected laptop. Following data cleaning, the final dataset was analyzed using SPSS version 27.

5.2. Confidentiality and Ethical Issues

The Al Dhafra Hospitals Research Ethics Committee (ADH-REC) has approved this research with number approval (ADH-REC-364).

5.3. Demographic Data Form

The demographic section of the questionnaire consisted of five items: gender, age, level of education, marital status, and years of professional experience.

5.4. Transformational Leadership, Job Satisfaction, and Organizational Commitment Scales

This study employed standardized instruments drawn from well-established and previously validated tools. Transformational leadership was measured using a 20-item subscale from the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) (Avolio et al., 1999). Job satisfaction was evaluated with the 10-item Generic Job Satisfaction Scale (GJSS) (Macdonald & MacIntyre, 1997), while organizational commitment

was assessed using the 18-item Organizational Commitment Scales (OCS) (Meyer et al., 1993). Participants responded using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), to indicate their level of agreement with each statement.

6. Results

6.1. Descriptive Statistics

The demographic analysis revealed that the majority of participants were female, comprising 70.7% (246 individuals), while males made up 29.3% (102 individuals). Most respondents were between 30 and 39 years old, accounting for 43.1% (150 individuals), followed by those aged 40 to 49, who represented 34.5% (120 individuals). A significant portion of participants were married, totaling 75.9% (264 individuals). Regarding education, the majority held a bachelor's degree, representing 65.5% (228 individuals). In terms of professional experience, the largest segment had 16 or more years of service, making up 41.4% (144 individuals). **Table 1** provides a summary of the demographic characteristics of all 348 participants.

Table 1. Demographic characteristics.

Variables	Demographic Factors	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	102	29.3
	Female	246	70.7
Age	20 - 29 years	24	6.9
	30 - 39 years	150	43.1
	40 - 49 years	120	34.5
	50 years and above	54	15.5
Marital status	Single	84	24.1
	Married	264	75.9
	Widowed	0	0
	Divorced	0	0
Qualification (Educational Level)	Diploma	12	3.4
	Bachelor	228	65.5
	Masters	108	31.0
	Doctorate	0	0
Experience	1 - 5 years	24	6.9
	6 - 10 years	78	22.4
	11 - 15 years	102	29.3
	16 years and above	144	41.4
	Total	348	100

6.2. Measures

The validity of the questionnaire was assessed during the scale validation procedure using Pearson product-moment correlations in SPSS. Each item score was correlated with the total score, and significant item-total correlations indicated validity. The data were obtained using SPSS, with a 5% correlation value and a sample size of 348 nurses.

The results indicate that the values obtained for the significance level (sig. 2-tailed) of 0.000 were lower than the threshold of 0.05. Therefore, it can be stated that the 20 items related to transformational leadership, 10 items related to job satisfaction, and 18 items related to organizational commitment were valid. All items showed a correlation value greater than the product-moment r table value of 0.105, confirming their validity.

The internal consistency of the questionnaire was tested to determine its reliability, with Cronbach's alpha (α) used as the standard measure. The results indicated high internal consistency, with transformational leadership at 91.5% for 20 items, job satisfaction at 72.8% for 10 items, and organizational commitment at 88.9% for 18 items. The results of the reliability test are summarized in **Table 2**.

Table 2. Reliability test.

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Items
Transformational Leadership	91.5%	20
Job Satisfaction	72.8%	10
Organizational Commitment	88.9%	18

7. Hypothesis Analysis

7.1. Relationship between Transformational Leadership and Job Satisfaction

H1: There is a positive correlation between transformational leadership and job satisfaction among nurses.

The results indicated a statistically significant Pearson correlation of 0.321 between transformational leadership and job satisfaction among nurses ($p = 0.000$). Further regression analysis confirmed this positive relationship, showing that transformational leadership explained roughly 10.3% of the variation in job satisfaction. The regression model was statistically significant, with an F-value of 39.83 and a p -value below 0.0001. In practical terms, every one-unit increase in transformational leadership corresponded to a 0.113-unit rise in job satisfaction.

These outcomes validate the hypothesis that transformational leadership positively influences job satisfaction. As the results were significant at the $p < 0.01$ level, the hypothesis is supported. The results underscore the critical role of transformational leadership in promoting job satisfaction, emphasizing the need to cultivate such leadership practices within healthcare environments to enhance nurse engagement and satisfaction. The detailed correlation and regression results are presented in **Table 3** and **Table 4**.

Table 3. Correlation of variables.

Correlations			
		Transformational Leadership	Job Satisfaction
Transformational Leadership	Pearson Correlation	1	0.321**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000
	N	348	348
Job Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	0.321**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	
	N	348	348

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

Table 4. Regression results.

Coefficients ^a									
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	R Square	Adjusted R Square	F	t	Sig.	
	B	Std. Error	Beta						
1	(Constant)	25.599	1.359				18.833	0.000	
	Transformational Leadership	0.113	0.018	0.321	0.103	0.101	39.83	6.311	0.000

^a Dependent Variable: Job Satisfaction.

7.2. The Moderating Role of Organizational Commitment on the Relationship between Transformational Leadership and Job Satisfaction

H2: The influence of transformational leadership on job satisfaction is moderated by organizational commitment such that the positive impact of transformational leadership on job satisfaction is reduced when organizational commitment is low.

The analysis assessing the moderating role of organizational commitment in the relationship between transformational leadership and job satisfaction among nurses confirmed a significant moderating effect. The findings demonstrated that transformational leadership had a strong positive influence on job satisfaction, with standardized coefficients of 0.270 and 0.278 in both models, and *p*-values below 0.0001. Organizational commitment also exhibited a strong positive association with job satisfaction, reflected in coefficients of 0.555 and 0.577. However, the interaction term between transformational leadership and organizational commitment was significantly negative ($\beta = -0.143$, $p = 0.001$), suggesting that as organizational commitment decreases, the positive impact of transformational leadership on job satisfaction also diminishes. Therefore, the hypothesis is supported. This result indicates that the effectiveness of transformational leadership in enhancing job satisfaction depends on the level of organizational commitment—lower commitment levels can undermine its positive influence.

Therefore, it is essential for healthcare administrators to both encourage trans-

formational leadership practices and take deliberate steps to reinforce organizational commitment. Strengthening both areas will help amplify the positive effects of leadership efforts and improve job satisfaction among nurses. The detailed findings from the moderation analysis are provided in **Table 5**.

Table 5. Results of the moderation analysis.

Model		Coefficients ^a				
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	10.588	1.577		6.714	0.000
	Transformational Leadership	0.095	0.015	0.270	6.501	0.000
	Organizational Commitment	0.275	0.021	0.555	13.347	0.000
2	(Constant)	9.796	1.569		6.242	0.000
	Transformational Leadership	0.097	0.014	0.278	6.778	0.000
	Organizational Commitment	0.286	0.021	0.577	13.928	0.000
	INTERACT	-0.606	0.175	-0.143	-3.460	0.001

^a. Dependent Variable: Job Satisfaction.

The plot illustrates a moderation effect of organizational commitment on the relationship between transformational leadership and job satisfaction. As shown in **Figure 2**, under conditions of low organizational commitment, transformational leadership is negatively associated with job satisfaction, such that higher levels of leadership correspond to lower satisfaction. This finding suggests that when employees lack psychological attachment to the organization, transformational leadership behaviors may be perceived as demanding or misaligned with employees' expectations, thereby reducing job satisfaction. These results highlight the context-dependent nature of transformational leadership and underscore the importance of aligning leadership approaches with employees' levels of organizational commitment.

Figure 2 presents the plot demonstrating the moderating role of organizational commitment in the relationship between transformational leadership and job satisfaction.

8. Discussion and Conclusions

This study investigated the relationship between transformational leadership and job satisfaction among nurses at Al Dhafra Hospitals, with organizational commitment examined as a moderating factor. The results confirmed that transformational leadership is strongly and positively associated with nurses' job satisfaction, reinforcing evidence from earlier studies (Alshehhi et al., 2019; Dappa et al., 2019; Prasetyo, 2021; Voon et al., 2011). In healthcare settings, where work demands are high and staff retention is a persistent challenge, leadership that moti-

vates, supports, and inspires nurses plays a pivotal role in sustaining morale and engagement.

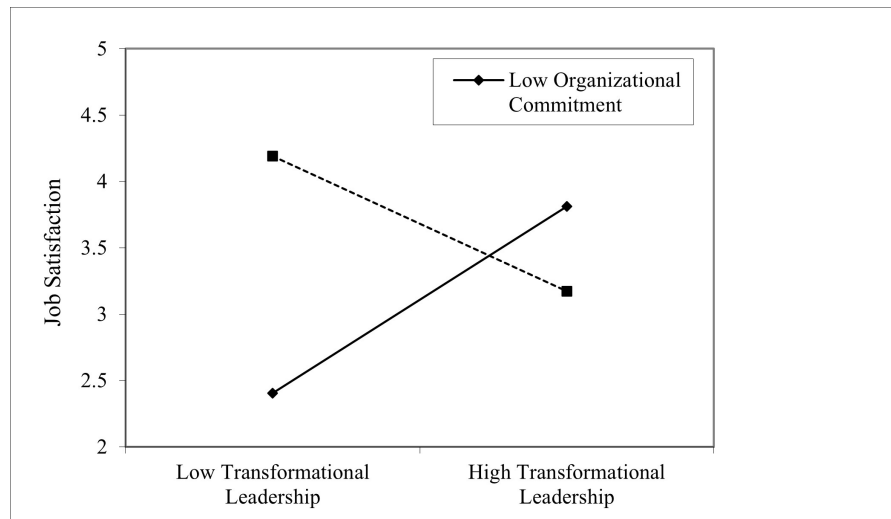


Figure 2. Moderating role of organizational commitment.

Beyond this direct relationship, the findings revealed that organizational commitment significantly shapes how transformational leadership influences job satisfaction. Specifically, nurses with higher levels of organizational commitment experienced a stronger positive effect of transformational leadership on job satisfaction, whereas this effect weakened among nurses with lower commitment levels. Although organizational commitment has been less frequently examined as a moderating variable in this context, these results are consistent with prior research highlighting its interactive role in leadership–outcome relationships (Lim et al., 2017; Martins Marques De Lima Rua & Costa Araújo, 2016). This suggests that leadership effectiveness in healthcare is not solely dependent on leadership behaviors, but also on employees’ psychological attachment to the organization.

The results further indicate that transformational leadership is most effective when combined with a strong sense of organizational commitment. Leadership behaviors that emphasize support, empowerment, and a shared vision appear to foster both higher satisfaction and deeper commitment among nursing staff. These findings highlight the importance of strengthening leadership capacity within clinical environments to maintain high levels of job satisfaction and reduce workforce instability. Accordingly, leadership development should be viewed as a core component of nursing education, supervisory preparation, and managerial practice.

In addition to its influence on job satisfaction, transformational leadership contributes to improved nursing performance. Higher levels of satisfaction are associated with increased productivity, engagement, and quality of care, underscoring the need for leadership approaches that encourage innovation and continuous improvement within healthcare organizations. Nevertheless, further research is

needed to better understand how leadership-driven change processes operate across different healthcare contexts.

From a practical perspective, this study emphasizes the need for healthcare organizations to invest in leadership development strategies that cultivate transformational leadership competencies while simultaneously strengthening organizational commitment. Such initiatives have the potential to improve job satisfaction, reduce turnover, and enhance service delivery, ultimately supporting organizational effectiveness and sustainability. Importantly, the study extends existing knowledge by offering practical insights for improving nurse retention and performance in high-turnover environments. Initiatives such as embedding transformational leadership principles into continuing professional development and linking leadership evaluation to staff and patient outcomes may yield substantial organizational benefits.

Healthcare leaders and administrators should prioritize leadership training programs that focus on emotional intelligence, empowerment, and culturally responsive management practices. Interventions such as recognition systems, peer mentoring, and inclusive supervisory approaches may further reinforce organizational commitment. These strategies contribute to the development of positive work environments and align with prior evidence demonstrating their effectiveness in enhancing commitment and job satisfaction (Sangperm, 2017; Thanomton et al., 2018).

9. Recommendations

Understanding employees' perceptions and experiences of their work environment is fundamental to enhancing job satisfaction and organizational commitment, particularly in healthcare settings where staff well-being is closely linked to patient outcomes. Organizational commitment is shaped by multiple interrelated factors, including equitable and considerate compensation that signals concern for employee welfare, leadership that demonstrates empathy and alignment with organizational objectives, and job security that fosters trust and stability. In addition, effective stress management and meaningful involvement in decision-making processes contribute to a sense of ownership and psychological attachment to the organization.

The findings of this study provide valuable practical insights for healthcare leaders and policymakers seeking to improve workplace conditions and staff retention. The results indicate that transformational leadership plays a critical role in enhancing nurses' engagement and job satisfaction. When effectively practiced, this leadership approach contributes to a supportive organizational culture in which nurses feel valued, empowered, and motivated. Such environments not only improve staff well-being but also positively influence patient care quality and overall organizational performance. The study highlights the complementary roles of transformational leadership and organizational commitment in fostering a healthy, high-performing healthcare workforce.

Based on these findings, healthcare administrators in the UAE can implement targeted strategies to promote transformational leadership and strengthen organizational commitment among nursing staff. Investing in leadership development programs that cultivate core transformational competencies—such as inspirational motivation, individualized consideration, and intellectual stimulation—can enhance leadership effectiveness at multiple levels. Establishing structured mentorship programs, where experienced nurses support and guide junior colleagues, may further reinforce leadership capacity while fostering professional cohesion and shared learning.

Moreover, maintaining open and transparent communication through regular feedback mechanisms and leadership walkarounds can strengthen trust and mutual understanding between management and staff. Recognizing and rewarding nurses who demonstrate leadership behaviors and organizational commitment can reinforce positive norms and boost morale. Actively involving nurses in shaping organizational goals, mission, and values may also enhance emotional attachment and alignment with institutional priorities.

Creating a supportive work environment remains essential for sustaining commitment and satisfaction. This includes managing workloads appropriately, providing opportunities for continuous professional development, and ensuring psychological safety so that nurses feel respected, secure, and confident in expressing their views. Moreover, integrating leadership effectiveness and organizational commitment indicators into performance evaluation systems can support ongoing monitoring and continuous improvement. Collectively, these measures can contribute to the development of a more engaged, resilient, and committed nursing workforce capable of delivering high-quality care and supporting long-term organizational success.

10. Theoretical and Practical Implications

The findings of this study offer both theoretical and practical implications for advancing leadership models and improving organizational practices within healthcare settings. The results underscore the importance of transformational leadership in enhancing job satisfaction and extend existing moderation theory by demonstrating how organizational commitment influences the effectiveness of leadership styles. This contribution not only reinforces the theoretical value of integrating organizational commitment into leadership models but also encourages cross-disciplinary research that draws on perspectives from psychology, management, and healthcare.

From a practical standpoint, the findings suggest that healthcare organizations should implement targeted leadership development programs aimed at promoting transformational behaviors among leaders. In addition, strategies designed to strengthen organizational commitment—such as improving working conditions, enhancing recognition systems, and supporting employee well-being—can help maximize the positive effects of transformational leadership. These initiatives are

critical for fostering a supportive work environment that enhances job satisfaction and, in turn, improves the quality of patient care. By translating these theoretical insights into practical actions, healthcare institutions can cultivate a more motivated and satisfied nursing workforce, ultimately leading to better organizational performance and healthcare outcomes.

11. Limitations and Future Research

A key limitation of this study is its limited generalizability, as it was conducted within a single hospital network—Al Dhafra Hospitals. This specific setting may not apply to healthcare contexts or dynamics of different cultural contexts, which may affect the application of findings more broadly. Furthermore, studies focus primarily on nurses, failing to adequately characterize the roles and interactions within multidisciplinary health care teams that may view leadership and commitment differently. Additionally, limitations regarding common method bias, lack of causal inference, and absence of richer demographic or qualitative data were acknowledged.

Future research could further investigate the mechanisms through which transformational leadership influences job satisfaction within the UAE healthcare context. In particular, examining additional psychological and organizational processes—such as psychological safety, emotional intelligence, or perceived organizational support—may provide deeper insight into how leadership behaviors translate into employee attitudes. Moreover, exploring alternative theoretical frameworks beyond social learning theory, including Conservation of Resources Theory, could enhance understanding of how leadership resources interact with employees' motivation and well-being in healthcare settings.

Future research should expand on this study by including a wider range of healthcare settings and involving more diverse stakeholder groups. Exploring the influence of transformational leadership and organizational commitment across various healthcare systems and geographic regions would offer a more nuanced and comprehensive understanding of these relationships. Moreover, employing longitudinal designs or mixed-method approaches could provide deeper, long-term insights into how these factors interact and evolve over time.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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