

Transformational Leadership and the Performance of Employees in Jordanian Public Universities

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Abstract

Transformational leadership is a key method in modern leadership. It directly impacts job performance in public universities. This study explores how transformational leadership affects job performance among employees at Jordanian public universities. The research used a descriptive approach. Data came from 350 employees at various government universities in Jordan through reliable questionnaires. The results showed a strong, positive relationship between transformational leadership and job performance. Based on these findings, the study recommends adopting transformational leadership methods. These methods should focus on motivating employees to improve institutional performance. The study also encourages further research on psychological and organizational factors affecting the environment in Jordanian universities.

Keywords: Transformational Leadership, Job Performance, Jordanian Public Universities

Introduction

Leadership in modern firms now focuses on inspiring and encouraging individuals to attain common goals (Northouse, 2022). Among modern techniques, transformational leadership stands out as a style that supports personal growth, innovation, and devotion to organizational vision.

Transformational leadership is a widely studied approach in modern organizational and educational management. It is characterized by its ability to motivate individuals to achieve goals that go beyond their personal interests, fostering a sense of loyalty, commitment, and belonging to the institution (Bass & Riggio, 2006). This leadership style has gained considerable attention in management and organizational research because of its impact on enhancing employee performance, fostering innovation, and improving institutional effectiveness (Khan et al., 2022).

In the context of higher education, particularly public universities, transformational leadership plays a critical role in shaping the work environment, energizing both academic and administrative staff, and enhancing overall institutional performance (Jiatong et al., 2022).. Despite its recognized importance, few studies have examined how transformational leadership specifically affects job performance in Jordanian public universities (Othman & Khrais, 2022).

Given the growing challenges these institutions face, including the need to improve educational quality, adapt to social and economic changes, and maintain staff motivation, understanding the role of transformational leadership is essential (Alserhan & Shbail, 2020; Qawasmeh et al., 2024).

The topic of transformational leadership's impact on job performance at public Jordanian universities is important. It can improve academic and administrative work, boosting the efficiency of educational institutions. These universities face challenges in enhancing the skills of academic and administrative staff to keep up with economic and social changes. However, research on this topic in Jordan is limited. This creates a clear gap in knowledge that needs to be filled. Most existing studies focus on Western or Asian contexts and overlook the unique cultural and educational traits of the Arab environment. Thus, this study is essential for providing reliable local data (Jiatong et al., 2022; Othman & Khrais, 2022).

Therefore, this study aims to explore the influence of transformational leadership on the job performance of employees in Jordanian public universities, providing both theoretical insights and practical recommendations for enhancing institutional effectiveness.

Literature Review

Transformational leadership is a key modern approach that drives positive change in organizations. Burns (1978) defined it as leadership that boosts motivation and morals for both leaders and followers. Bass later expanded this idea to four main aspects: ideal influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration (Bass & Avolio, 1994). Recent studies suggest that this leadership style improves the work environment, promotes worker satisfaction, and deepens commitment to the organization (Oyewobi, 2024). A study by Khan et al. (2022) demonstrated that transformational leadership enhances institutional innovation and improves worker well-being, particularly in higher education. This sector needs flexible organizations and inspiring leaders to adapt to global changes.

Job performance is critical in management and HR. It demonstrates how effectively an employee performs their obligations and responsibilities. Researchers concentrate on two key characteristics of job performance: professional competence and organizational civic behavior (Panjaitan et al., 2023). According to Latifah et al. (2024), various factors influence job performance, with leadership style, job happiness, and institutional support being major determinants.

Problem of the Study

Studies in public sector institutions, like universities, show job performance is suffering. This is due to a lack of investment in leadership and employee support (Ifeanyi & Mbah, 2025). In Jordan, research (Shyyab, 2023) found a gap in transformational leadership, which enhances

job performance. This gap impacts the overall performance of government institutions. Jordanian universities face rising pressure to improve educational standards and boost global competitiveness (Alserhan & Shbail, 2020). Leadership styles greatly affect worker engagement and productivity in challenging workplaces. Previous studies link transformational leadership to job performance, but often overlook the factors that influence this connection (Setiawan et al., 2021).

The study focuses on how transformational leadership affects job performance. It also looks at how job satisfaction and job empowerment serve as mediators in this relationship, specifically in Jordanian public universities.

Study' Objectives

1. To measure the level of transformational leadership, job performance in Jordanian public universities.
2. To investigate how transformational leadership affects job satisfaction in Jordanian public universities.
3. To examine the relationship between transformational leadership and job performance in Jordanian public universities.

Questions of the Study

- What is the level of transformational leadership and job performance among staff in Jordanian public universities?
- What is the impact of transformational leadership on job performance among staff in Jordanian public universities?
- Does transformational leadership have a statistically significant impact on job performance?

Hypothesis of the Study

H₀₂: The transformational leadership has no significant positive impact on job performance of academic staff in Jordan.

Limits of the Study

This study has several limits to consider when interpreting and generalizing the results:

- Spatial limitations: This study focused on public universities in Jordan. This may limit how we can apply the results to private universities or to those in other countries.
- Time limits: The study carried out the investigation during the second semester of the academic year 2024/2025., which means that the results reflect the organizational and administrative reality during this time period only.
- Human limitations: The study involved academic and administrative members from public universities in Jordan. It did not include the views of students or employees from operating or supporting groups.
- Systematic limits: The study used a questionnaire for data collection. This focus on a quantitative approach limits a deeper understanding of complex personal or institutional contexts, which qualitative studies often explore.

Objective Limits

The study looked at how transformational leadership affects job performance. It did not consider other factors like job satisfaction, job empowerment, or institutional culture. These could help explain this relationship.

Importance of the Study

Transformational leadership is viewed as critical to corporate success. It inspires and drives people to exceed their expectations (Udin, 2020). There is little evidence available about its influence on higher education, particularly at Jordan's public universities. This study tries to close that gap. It investigates how transformational leadership influences academic staff performance (Alghusin & Al-Ajlouni, 2020). This study focuses on Jordanian public universities. It offers regional insights to help local leaders. It also supports international research on educational leadership (Northouse, 2022). It will boost understanding of organizational behavior and leadership. This comes from unique insights shared by Jordanian universities and similar schools in the Middle East (Arar, 2020).

This study is important for the Jordanian education system. The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted education worldwide. Leadership now plays a key role in ensuring staff at Jordanian higher education feels satisfied and performs well. Reports show that academic staffs often underperform due to dissatisfaction (Szromek & Wolniak, 2020).

This study seeks to make multiple contributions in the scientific and practical field. In theory, the literature related to transformational leadership and career performance in the environment of Arab universities will provide a comparative base between Western and Asian studies and the local context. From the practical side, the research results will provide clear recommendations for decision makers in Jordanian universities on developing transformational leadership skills, in order to enhance the career performance of academics and administrators; it contributes to improving the quality of educational services and raising the level of institutional commitment (Alghusin & Al-Ajlouni, 2020; Udin, 2020; Arar, 2020).

Several categories of the results of this study will benefit. Researchers will get an updated cognitive base on the relationship between transformational leadership and job performance in Arab universities. Decision makers in universities will enable them to use recommendations to improve the work environment and promote institutional performance. Academics and administrators will benefit from a better understanding of leadership methods that stimulate commitment and job excellence, while this can indirectly affect students by improving Quality of education and services provided to them.

Methodology

The study design is descriptive research using quantitative data. Descriptive research describes phenomena just as they are. It is used to locate and collect information on a specific issue's aspect, such as a community, group, or individual. In other words, this form of research investigates social conditions, structures, and occurrences. How did the observer describe his discovery? Descriptive research answers the following questions: what, who, where, how and when (Silverman & Patterson, 2021). This research employs a quantitative data collection technique. Quantitative data is numerical. It is created, calculated, and examined mathematically (Taherdoost, 2021).

Study' Sample

The study sample includes faculty members from three public universities in Irbid Governorate: (A), (B), and (C). These universities have a total of 2,590 academic staff. Irbid was chosen for this study because it has the most public universities and faculty. This helps in generalizing the results. According to Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) sampling table, the required sample size is 334. To avoid problems with unreturned or incomplete questionnaires, we increased the target sample size to 400 (Chua, 2012). Table (1) below shows the sample information.

Table 1

Research Sample /northern area's university Academic Staff 2024/2025

Northern area's university Academic Staff			
University	Population	Percentage	Sample
A	1300	50	200
B	1030	40	160
C	260	10	40
Total	2590	1000	400

Instruments of the Study

The study will use one structured questionnaire. It has two main sections. One section measures transformational leadership, and the other measures job performance. Transformational leadership will be evaluated using a 20-item scale based on Sunaengsih et al. (2021) and Bass & Avolio (1995), covering all core dimensions of the construct. Job performance will be measured using 15 items from three sources. These sources include the Brief Self-report Scales of Job Performance (Ramos-Villagrasa et al., 2019). All items in both sections will be assessed using a 5-point Likert scale. The scale goes from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." Each item score contributes to the overall score for each construct.

*Transformational Leadership Questionnaire***Idealized Influence**

1. My supervisor performs tasks in line with the university's vision and mission.
2. My supervisor shapes the study program's vision and mission. This helps staff see things from new angles.
3. My supervisor consistently models respectful and ethical behavior.
4. My supervisor acts as a role model in the academic environment.

Inspirational Motivation

5. My supervisor encourages strong commitment to the study program's goals.
6. My supervisor clearly communicates the goals expected of the academic staff.
7. My supervisor inspires staff to work diligently and professionally.
8. My supervisor motivates staff to adopt innovative approaches in teaching.
9. My supervisor fosters optimism about the future among staff members.

Intellectual Stimulation

10. My supervisor encourages staff to explore new ideas in their work.
11. My supervisor invites staff to share opinions on higher education policies.
12. My supervisor is skilled in solving complex problems.

13. My supervisor values and implements feedback provided by staff.

Individualized Consideration

14. My supervisor provides staff the freedom to carry out tasks independently.
15. My supervisor offers opportunities for professional development and training.
16. My supervisor provides support and guidance when individual staff members need help.
17. My supervisor listens carefully to staff concerns and addresses them.
18. My supervisor dedicates time to help staff discuss and complete tasks effectively.
19. My supervisor understands what lecturers and staff need for effective teaching.
20. My supervisor acknowledges and appreciates individual accomplishments.

Job Performance Questionnaire

Task Performance

1. I received sufficient initial training to perform my job effectively.
2. My organization provides the tools and resources necessary for my role.
3. I stay updated with the knowledge and skills required for my position.
4. I have a clear understanding of my job responsibilities.
5. I can carry out my work tasks efficiently.

I understand the responsibilities and expectations of my role.

2. Contextual Performance

7. My organization supports my professional development and skill growth.
8. My career path aligns with my interests and strengths, with organizational support.
9. My supervisor treats me fairly and respectfully.
10. Communication within the organization is timely and sufficient.
11. I am regularly informed of the organization's progress toward its goals.
12. I am notified in advance about changes that might affect my work.
13. I openly discuss work-related challenges with colleagues.
14. The organization has clear job policies and rules for all employees.
15. The organization applies consistent and fair procedures when addressing rule violations.

Instrument' Validity and Reliability

Validity is how well a tool measures what it's supposed to (Punch, 1998). In this study, three types of validity were examined. First, we checked content validity. We showed the original questionnaire to seven academic experts from three Jordanian universities. The experts checked the items for clarity and relevance. They also looked at how well the items matched the research goals. They set an acceptance threshold of 80% agreement among the experts. Next, we checked if the questionnaire scores could predict outcomes or performance results. Third, construct validity determined if the items truly reflected the theoretical constructs under study. Reliability shows how consistent an instrument is in measuring what it's meant to measure (Mohajan, 2017). Two methods assessed reliability. First, Cronbach's alpha measured internal consistency. A value of ≥ 0.70 is acceptable (Sürücü & Maslakci, 2020). We also tested the reliability of results with 30 academic staff. This was done over two weeks, and we calculated Pearson correlation coefficients.

Table 2

Reliability coefficients of the study instrument (Transformational leadership)

Dimensions	Person Correlation	Reliability (Cronbach's Alpha)
Idealized Influence	0.81	0.85
Inspirational Motivation	0.82	0.87
Intellectual Stimulation	0.80	0.86
Individualized Consideration	0.83	0.88
Overall Leadership	0.83	0.88

Table 3

The reliability coefficients for the study instrument (Job Performance)

Dimension	Pearson Correlation	Reliability (Cronbach's Alpha)
Task Performance	0.79	0.84
Contextual Performance	0.81	0.86
Overall Job Performance	0.80	0.85

Table 4

The reliability coefficients for the study instrument

Scale / Dimension	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Transformational Leadership (overall)	20	0.88
Job Performance (overall)	15	0.85
Combined Total Scale	35	0.87

Data Collection Procedures

To obtain the necessary information for this research, an electronic questionnaire was created and sent out to a specific group of 350 academic staff members employed at public universities in Jordan. The questionnaire was structured into two primary parts: the Transformational Leadership Scale including 20 questions and the Job Performance Scale with 15 questions, making a combined total of 35 questions.

The choice of an online format was made to broaden the geographic scope, ensure that it was convenient for participants, and enhance the rate of responses. Utilizing Google Forms, the questionnaire was distributed through official university email addresses and academic networks. Participants received a brief overview that outlined the study's objectives, clarified that participation was voluntary, and guaranteed their privacy and confidentiality. They were requested to fill out the questionnaire within a designated period of two weeks.

Reminders were sent out to promote participation, and all responses were automatically gathered and kept in a secure digital format for subsequent statistical evaluation using SPSS. The results regarding the final response rate and the demographic characteristics of participants will be detailed in the following section.

Data Analysis Procedures

The information was initially evaluated for thoroughness and precision, omitting any responses that were deemed invalid. Descriptive statistics were computed to assess the degree of transformational leadership alongside job performance. Normality assessments

influenced the selection of statistical techniques utilized. Cronbach's Alpha and test-retest procedures were used to assess the reliability of the measures, ensuring the scales' consistency and dependability. The relationship between transformative leadership and job performance was investigated using Pearson's correlation. Multiple linear regression analyses were conducted to determine how transformational leadership affects job performance. All analyses were carried out with a significance threshold set at 0.05. Findings were presented through tables and concise summaries that addressed the research inquiries.

RO1: What is the level of transformational leadership and job performance among staff in Jordanian public universities?

To address this inquiry, the means and standard deviations from the questionnaire were gathered. For the adjustment of the questionnaire responses, a 5-point Likert scale was utilized, where each statement received one of five levels (strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, and highly agree), which were scored as (5, 4, 3, 2, 1). Data were reviewed using the following categories: Low (1.00 - 2.33); Medium (2.34 - 3.66); and High (3.67 - 5.00) (Asfuroğlu et al., 2022; Nayan et al., 2022).

Table 5

Descriptive Statistics for the transformational leadership' Questionnaire

Domain	Number of Items	Mean Range	Overall Mean	Std. Dev Range	Overall Std. Dev	Level
Transformational Leadership	20	4.01 – 4.25	4.14	0.672 – 0.780	0.730	High
Job Performance	15	4.10 – 4.24	4.13	0.706 – 0.812	0.794	High

Items across four subdomains (Individualized Consideration, Inspirational Motivation, Intellectual Stimulation, and Idealized Influence) demonstrate significant consensus among educational personnel. The mean item scores ranged from 4.01 to 4.25 on a 5-point Likert scale, yielding an average of 4.14 with standard deviations ranging from 0.672 to 0.780. This demonstrates a generally good attitude toward transformational leadership strategies.

In the same way, the area of Job Performance, which includes 15 items tied to Task Performance and Contextual Performance, showed elevated scores as well. The average scores fluctuated from 4.10 to 4.24, resulting in an overall mean of 4.13, with standard deviations between 0.706 and 0.812. These findings indicate that staff members perceive their job performance at a high level. The average scores for both areas surpass the midpoint of the scale, indicating a significant level of transformational leadership and job performance according to the feedback from the participants.

RO2: What is the impact of transformational leadership on job performance among staff in Jordanian public universities?

To answer this question, a simple linear regression analysis was conducted to investigate the impact of Transformational leadership on workplace performance. The results are shown in Table 5.

Table 5

Regression Results for Transformational Leadership and Job Performance

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	R	R ²	F	Sig.
Transformational Leadership	Job Performance	0.802	0.644	533.326	0.000

The study reveals a significant positive connection between transformational leadership and how well people perform their jobs ($R = 0.802$). Transformational leadership accounts for 64.4% of the differences in job performance ($R^2 = 0.644$), showing that it is a strong explanatory model. The analysis is statistically significant ($F = 533.326$, $p < 0.001$), which means the relationship is unlikely to be random. These findings indicate that improving transformational leadership methods can greatly enhance job performance.

Testing of Null Hypothesis H02

The null hypothesis (H_{02}) proposes that transformational leadership has no significant positive influence on academic staff performance in Jordan. Nonetheless, the simple linear regression results in Table 5 show a substantial positive link between transformational leadership and job performance, with a R value of 0.802. The coefficient of determination, $R^2 = 0.644$, shows that transformational leadership accounts for 64.4% of the differences in job performance. The model is statistically significant, as shown by $F = 533.326$ and $p < 0.05$ ($\text{sig.} = 0.000$). Consequently, the null hypothesis is rejected, proving that transformational leadership does positively influence job performance significantly.

RO3: • Does transformational leadership have a statistically significant impact on job performance?

To respond to this question, information was gathered and basic linear regression analysis was applied to investigate how transformational leadership impact job performance. The data showed the following:

Table 6

Regression Results for Leadership and Job Performance

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	R	R ²	F	Sig.
Transformational Leadership	Job Performance	0.802	0.644	533.326	0.000

The study reveals a notably strong link ($R = 0.802$) between transformational leadership and how well people perform at their jobs. The determination coefficient ($R^2 = 0.644$) shows that transformational leadership accounts for 64.4% of the differences in job performance. The regression model is statistically significant ($F = 533.326$, $p = < 0.001$), which assures that a meaningful relationship exists between these two factors. Thus, it can be concluded that there is a considerable favorable relationship between transformative leadership and job performance among academic employees.

Summary of Findings

- i. The study assessed transformational leadership and job efficacy among academic staff in Jordan's state-funded universities.

- ii. The descriptive statistical analysis showcased elevated average scores concerning both transformational leadership (4.14) and work efficacy (4.13) based on evaluations using a five-point Likert measurement scale.
- iii. Applying simple linear regression, the results indicated a substantial and favorable interconnectedness ($R = 0.802$) existing between transformational leadership and work efficacy.
- iv. Transformational leadership explained 64.4% of the fluctuation observed in work efficacy ($R^2 = 0.644$), demonstrating that the derived model held considerable statistical importance ($p = < 0.001$).
- v. The findings definitively establish transformational leadership as having an important effect on improving how well academic staff members perform their jobs.

Conclusions and Recommendations

- i. The job performance of academic staff is greatly enhanced through transformational leadership practices.
- ii. Jordanian public universities should prioritize developing transformational leadership qualities among administrative staff.
- iii. Significant leadership skills that should be developed include inspiring employees, offering personalized assistance, and stimulating creative thinking.
- iv. To enhance transformational leadership skills, it is advisable to conduct consistent and scheduled training initiatives.
- v. Universities must cultivate a work atmosphere that promotes transparent communication and active engagement from staff members.

Future Research

- i. Subsequent research ought to examine the consequences of leadership that inspires change on other aspects like how happy people are at work, keeping employees around, and how good the education is.
- ii. Expanding the research to include numerous parts of education and different levels of management would improve comprehension.
- iii. Using research methods that mix different ways of studying things, bringing together numbers and detailed observations, is a good idea to better understand how leadership works.
- iv. More looking into things is necessary to figure out the surrounding situations that might affect how leadership and success relate to each other in schools.

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