Assessment of self-perceived Leadership skills and job satisfaction among the health care provider in a tertiary care hospital, Tamil Nadu, India

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ABSTRACT

Background: The success of an organisation depends upon the employee satisfaction, which in turn is related to the leadership styles. Good medical leadership plays a vital role in building a high-quality healthcare. The objectives of the study are to estimate the self-perceived leadership skills and its impact on the job satisfaction among the health care workers working in a tertiary care hospital, Tamil Nadu. **Material and Methods:** This study, conducted in a Chennai-based private tertiary care hospital, focused on 109 healthcare workers across specialties. It used a cross-sectional design, employing stratified random sampling and validated questionnaires. Data covered demographic profiles, leadership styles- transformational, transactional and laissez faire, and job satisfaction. **Results:** Majority of the study participants were females and doctors. 20.2% study participants had high transformational scores and 79.8% had moderate scores. 52.3% and 47.7% had high and moderate transactional scores respectively. 42.2% and 57.8% had high and moderate laissez-faire score with r value of 0.64, 0.43 for transformational, transactional. **Conclusion:** Leaders with demonstrated transformational skills had a beneficial impact and those who exhibited a laissez-faire attitude had a detrimental impact on job satisfaction among the health professionals.

Keywords

Leadership, Job Satisfaction, Healthcare, Health Personnel

INTRODUCTION

The responsibilities of medical leadership are diverse and include making decisions, hiring,

allocating resources, providing medical advice, implementing changes, and enhancing healthcare environments.(1, 2) This is closely related to suitable and sufficient collaboration well sharing decision-making as as authority.(3) An enjoyable or upbeat emotional state that arises from an evaluation of one's work or work experiences is known as job satisfaction.(4) Research has demonstrated a substantial positive correlation between work satisfaction and leadership styles.(5) Employee happiness is a key factor in an organization's performance and is influenced by the leadership styles inside that company. Work happiness is influenced by internal including culture, interpersonal factors connections, and leadership philosophies.

Transformational leaders are those that inspire admiration and respect in their followers. Examples of such behaviours include idealised influence behaviour [IIb], intellectual stimulation [IS], inspiring motivation [IM], and individualised consideration [IC]. The traits of contingent compensation [Cr] and management by exception active [MEa] are hallmarks of transactional leadership. On the other hand, the traits of laissez-faire leadership include management by exception-passive [MEp] and avoidance of engagement (laissez faire [Lf]).(6)

Since the early 1990s, executives in the healthcare industry have favoured transformational leadership over transactional leadership since the former only encourages and penalises compliance, while the latter only rewards and punishes.(7) Retaining health professionals is still hampered by low motivation and poor teamwork, especially in environments with few resources. Healthcare professionals operating in resource-constrained environments sometimes experience considerable levels of irritation and demotivation due to inadequate and outdated medical resources, restricted possibilities for professional growth, lack of prospects for progress, and extreme workload overload. A high incidence of turnover among healthcare personnel and frequent absence are indicators of this lack of passion.(8) Effective leadership is needed to address these issues, and it may be developed through training or on the job.(9) Two examples of such initiatives are the Caring Together Leadership Programme at the Baylor College of Medicine Children's FoundationUganda and the Leadership for Health World Health Organisation Programme. These courses aim to assist medical professionals in adapting their leadership approaches so they may mentor front-line healthcare providers in building teams, improving organisational and cultivating efficient dynamics, communication. Studies show that the leadership style of the person in control (incharge) of a healthcare facility can affect how well their subordinate healthcare workers perform. For instance, charismatic leadership creates resilient teams that can overcome the majority of these obstacles and promotes positive working relationships among healthcare professionals.(10) On the other side, too controlling managers may stifle individual initiative and creative thinking, while incompetent facility managers may ignore concerns raised by staff members or choose to ignore them.(11) Bad leadership practices make health workers increasingly dissatisfied, demotivated, and ultimately disconnected from their teams.

Over the past ten years, the healthcare system has seen significant changes in many aspects of the everyday routines of healthcare workers, which has complicated healthcare management. Many healthcare professionals, particularly mid-level providers, may not be happy with their current state of management. Health professionals' unique orientation may be the main reason for their discontent, since it does not align with the requirements of the healthcare systems that exist today.(12) They might quickly grow irritated and unsatisfied with their professions when faced with regular obstacles including funding restrictions and demands for increased accountability for the safety, efficiency, and quality of healthcare. Job satisfaction is impacted by medical leadership abilities that are helpful, goal-oriented, supportive, and participatory.(13) Thus, there may be a link that is interactive between leadership traits and work happiness.

Despite the recognized importance of effective medical leadership in enhancing healthcare quality and provider satisfaction, there remains a gap in understanding how specific leadership styles, such as transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire, impact healthcare professionals' job satisfaction and overall performance. The existing literature primarily focuses on broad correlations between leadership styles and job satisfaction, often overlooking the specific behaviors and traits associated with each leadership style and their impact on healthcare professionals' experiences.

Objective: To estimate the self-perceived leadership skills and its effect on the job satisfaction among the health care workers working in a tertiary care hospital

MATERIAL & METHODS

The study was cross-sectional institutionalbased study conducted in a private tertiary care teaching hospital, in Chennai, India conducted for a period of 6 months. The study population consisted of 109 healthcare professionals, including mid-level health practitioners from various specialties, who were employed in both the research location and the rural and urban health facilities associated with the study setting. The inclusion criteria encompassed all healthcare personnel, including doctors, nurse practitioners, technical assistants, multipurpose workers, and physician assistants.

Sample Size: The sample size required for the study is calculated using the Cochran's formula by taking the p as 62%(14), and 10 % relative error and 95% confidence interval. 15% of the sample is added to account for the non-response rate and the sample size was arrived at 109. The required sample was obtained through a stratified random sampling method. The health worker population was divided into homogenous strata according to the speciality they were working in, and the population proportion to size sampling was used to allocate numbers in each stratum of study population.

Study Tool: The study tool comprised of three sections 1. Profile - Socio-demographic profile of the study participants – Age, sex, designation, experience, previous experience in Government setting, Previous employment details, Exposure to managerial skills workshop

be collected. 2. Leadership will skill questionnaire- measured the leadership styles, Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire was used.(15) This questionnaire measured the dimensions of the leadership styles such as transformational, transactional and Lassiez faire leadership. The self-perceptions of the leadership styles were measure using a 4-point Likert scale. The overall score of 0 - 4, 5 - 8, 9- 12 are considered as low, moderate and high scores. It is a pre-validated scale with Cronbach's alpha of 0.93 suggesting good reliability. 3. Job Satisfaction- measured the satisfaction, Minnesota Satisfaction job Questionnaire was used.(16) The short form of the questionnaire has 20 items with 5-point Likert scale. It is a pre-validated scale with Cronbach's alpha of 0.86 suggesting good reliability. The questionnaire was in English language and it was self-administered. After obtaining written informed consent, Selfadministered questionnaire was given to the participants and data was collected.

In our study on self-perceived leadership skills and job satisfaction among healthcare providers, we implemented several strategies to mitigate social desirability bias. Firstly, we assured participants of anonymity and confidentiality, emphasizing that their responses would be kept confidential and used solely for research purposes. This approach aimed to alleviate concerns about privacy and encourage more genuine and honest feedback. Additionally, we used neutral language in our survey questions to avoid leading or overly positive framing that could influence responses. These measures collectively aimed to reduce the influence of social desirability bias and enhance the validity of our study's findings.

Name and any other identification of the study participants were not collected. The data was collected after getting written informed consent. Confidentiality of study participants was maintained in all the phases of the study.

Ethical Approval: Institutional Ethical Committee clearance was obtained (IHEC-II/0091/21).

Data Collection: The data were inputted and analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS - IBM) software, specifically version 22. Descriptive statistics, such as frequency and percentage, were calculated for all variables. The mean and standard deviation were calculated for the continuous variables. The Pearson correlation coefficient was employed to assess the associations between leadership styles and work satisfaction. The independent t-test was used to examine the mean difference in leadership scores in relation to baseline attributes. A p value less than 0.05 was deemed statistically significant.

RESULTS

Majority of the study participants belonged to the age group of 46 to 55 years of age, followed by less than 35 years. (Table 1)

Table 1 Demographic profile of the studyparticipants. (N=109)

Variables	N (%)
Age group	
<35	29 (26.6)
36-45	21(19.3)
46-55	38(34.9)
>56	21 (19.3)
Gender	
Male	48(44)
Female	61(56)
Designation	
Doctors	48(44)
Nurses	30(27.5)
Technical Assistants	15(13.8)
Multipurpose workers	8(7.3)
Others	8(7.3)
Work Experience (years)	
01-May	25(22.9)
06-Oct	25(22.9)
Nov-15	37(33.9)
>16	22(20.2)
Previous experience in Public s	service
Yes	31(28.4)
No	78(71.6)

The mean (SD) values of leadership scores are shown in Table 2. On analysing the overall transformational scores, 20.2% had high scores and 79.8% had moderate scores. 52.3% and 47.7% had high and moderate transactional scores respectively. 42.2% and 57.8% had high and moderate laissez-faire score respectively. The minimum transactional, transformational and lassie faire score was 4.2,4.5 and 4 respectively and the maximum transactional, transformational and lassie faire score was 9.4, 11.5 and 12 respectively.

Table 2 The overall transformational,transactional and Lassiez – faire scores of thestudy participants. (n=109)

Scales	Mean	SD
Transformational overall	7.15	1.09
score		
Idealized influence	8.58	2.23
Inspirational motivation	8.42	2.17
Intellectual stimulation	8.37	1.98
Individual consideration	8.64	2.31
Transactional overall score	8.45	1.69
Contingent rewards	8.3	2.29
Management by exception	8.61	2.08
Laissez-faire score	8.27	1.57

Mean values of parameters of job satisfaction scale are in Table 3

Table 3 Job Satisfaction scale of the study participants. (n=109)

	Maar	CD
Parameters	Mean	SD
Ability Utilization	3.61	1.054
Achievement	3.78	1.125
Activity	3.53	1.119
Advancement	3.37	1.245
Authority	3.61	1.162
Company Policies	3.47	1.143
Compensation	3.45	1.206
Co-workers	3.56	1.174
Creativity	3.60	1.195
Independence	3.50	1.135
Moral Values	3.66	1.116
Recognition	3.53	1.102
Responsibility	3.44	1.142
Security	3.52	1.143
Social status	3.61	1.216
Social service	3.56	1.294
Supervision-Human relations	3.59	1.188
Supervision- Technical	3.48	1.077
Variety	3.52	1.143
Working conditions	3.61	1.216
Overall	3.55	0.74

The leadership scores have significant positive correlation with job satisfaction scores with r value of 0.64, 0.43 for transformational, transactional. Whereas laissez-faire score had negative correlation with job satisfaction. (Table 4)

Table 4 Correlation between Leadershipscores and Job satisfaction scale. (N=109)

Scales		Job satisfaction	
		r	P value
Transformational	overall	0.64	<0.001
score			
Idealized influence		0.43	<0.001
Inspirational motivation		0.44	<0.001
Intellectual stimulation		0.25	0.008
Individual consideration		0.47	<0.001
Transactional overall score		0.43	<0.001
Contingent rewards		0.30	0.001
Management by exception		0.36	<0.001
Laissez-faire score		-0.56	<0.001

Laissez faire and Job satisfaction

On further analysis, transformational score was higher among those with age more than 46 years, whereas transactional score was higher among those aged 36 to 45 years of age and Laissez faire score was higher among those less than 35 years of aged age. Transformational score and laissez faire were higher among males. Transactional score was higher among females. The transactional and laissez faire leadership scores was higher among those with the past history of government services. The leadership score was higher among those with the history of exposure to leadership skill workshop. (Table 5)

Table 5. Association of Leadership scores with the demographic profile of the study participants

Variables	Transform- ational score	Mean difference (95%	P value	Transactional score Mean (SD)	Mean difference	P value
	Mean (SD)	CI)	value	score Mean (SD)	(95% CI)	value
Age group						
<45	7.132	0.0443 (0.37-	0.463	8.55	0.1771 (0.46 -	0.46
>46	7.176	0.46)		8.373	0.82)	
Gender						
Male	7.183	0.0489 (0.37-	0.97	8.354	0.1786(0.47 -	0.509
Female	7.134	0.47)		8.533	0.82)	
Designation						
Doctors	7.558	0.7190(0.31-	0.003	8.969	0.9196(0.29 -	0.514
Other	6.839	1.11)		8.049	1.54)	
personnel						
Work Experie	ence (years)					
01-Oct	7.132	0.0443(0.37-	0.463	8.55	0.1771 (0.46 -	0.46
>11	7.176	0.46)		8.373	0.82)	
Previous exp	erience in Public se	rvice				
Yes	7.135	0.0286(0.43-	0.816	8.839	0.5374(0.17 -	0.176
		0.49)			1.24)	
No	7.164			8.301		
Attended wo	orkshops on leaders	hip skills				
Yes	7.032	0.1609(0.33-	0.35	8.28	0.2260 (0.54-	0.216
No	7.193	0.65)		8.506	0.99)	

Independent t test, p value <0.05 is significant.

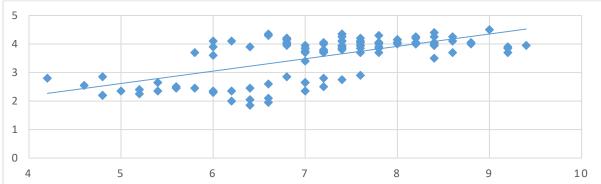


Figure 1: Correlation trendline for transformational score and Job satisfaction

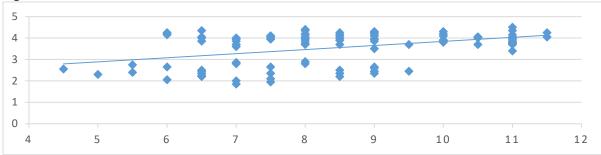
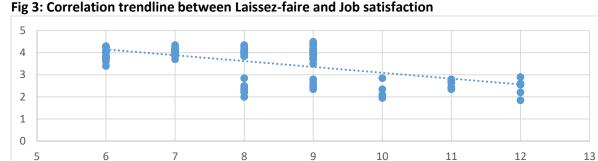


Fig 2: Correlation trendline for transactional score and Job satisfaction



DISCUSSION

The three main leadership philosophies that are the subject of this study are transactional, transformational, and laissez-faire. This is because different leadership philosophies have been associated with improved work conditions and higher rates of great professional retention.(17)

The present study has shown that Majority of the study participants belonged to the age group of 46 to 55 years of age, followed by less than 35 years. Majority of the study participants were females. Majority of the study participants were doctors. Only 28.4% of the study participants had past history of Government service and only 22.9% had attended workshops related to managerial skills. Isibor E et al,(18) performed a mixed method study to assess the attitudes, skills and experience of early career doctors with respect to leadership in health care setting. The study showed that 52.7% of the participants stated that taking on leadership roles is a common phenomenon. 91.1% perceived that leadership skills are vital for doctors, 44.1% had no formal training on leadership skills. 23.6% had experienced leadership challenges during their career. On analysing the overall transformational scores, 20.2% had high scores and 79.8% had moderate scores. 52.3% and 47.7% had high and moderate transactional scores respectively. 42.2% and 57.8% had high and moderate laissez-faire score respectively. The leadership scores have significant positive correlation with job satisfaction scores with r value of 0.64, 0.43 for transformational, transactional. Whereas, laissez-faire score had negative correlation with job satisfaction Transformational score and laissez faire were higher among males. Transactional score was higher among females. The transactional and laissez faire leadership scores was higher among those with the past history of government services.

The findings of a research conducted at a Turkish hospital among 804 staff members of two public hospitals revealed a strong correlation between overall transformational leadership and work happiness.(19) Similar findings were found in another study conducted in Uganda, which included 564 health professionals and examined the link between leadership styles and job motivation and satisfaction.(20) The study's findings indicated that transformational leadership was the favoured type. Job happiness and teamwork were strongly connected with both transformational and transactional leadership (r=0.38 and 0.21, respectively), but job satisfaction and teamwork were positively correlated with transactional leadership (r=0.21) and teamwork (r=0.18). The study

found that ensuring work satisfaction was positively impacted by transformational techniques. Similarly, Deshpande S et al.'s(21) study from examined the relationship between leadership styles and job satisfaction in 67 healthcare professionals. The findings indicated that job satisfaction was positively correlated with both transformational and transactional leadership, with correlations of 0.49 and 0.21, respectively. With correlations of -0.120 and -0.160, respectively, transactional leadership (management by exception) and laissez-faire leadership were likewise shown to be negatively associated with work satisfaction.

Participants in the 31–40 age bracket had a much stronger understanding of both transformational and transactional leadership, according to a Taiwanese study.(22) In contrast, age did not significantly affect leadership in our study, however lower age groups did exhibit a higher laissez-faire score. Similar to the findings of the study conducted by Brahim et al., there were no significant gender differences in the types of leadership.(23)

Elderly workers and those with more work experience get desensitised to the transformational leadership style, according to a study done in the United Arab Emirates, even if the current study did not find any significant correlation with the participant's work experience. (24)

CONCLUSION

Leaders with demonstrated transformational skills had a beneficial impact on boosting motivation, ensuring job satisfaction, among health professionals, according to the study. Leaders who exhibited a laissez-faire attitude had a detrimental impact on health professionals' job satisfaction. As a result, improving transformational skills will not only boost provider job satisfaction and staff retention, but will also ensure health-care delivery efficiency.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended to implement continuous leadership training programs tailored to enhance decision-making and team management skills. Regular monitoring of job satisfaction through periodic surveys can help identify and address issues affecting staff morale. Establishing mental health support services will reduce burnout and stress, contributing to a healthier workforce. Enhancing organizational policies to promote work-life balance, recognition, and career development opportunities will foster a culture of satisfaction and retention. Additionally, creating channels for employee feedback ensures concerns are promptly addressed.

LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

Given the complexities of socially driven categories, using a single item to quantify them may be problematic. Professional backgrounds, family demands, work conditions and environment, patient load, obligatory overtime, shifts, and unit type, income, and age may all be moderating factors. A causal association cannot be established due to the cross-sectional study design. The study's generalizability may be limited due to its focus on a specific private tertiary care hospital in Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India

RELEVANCE OF THE STUDY

This study on self-perceived leadership skills and job satisfaction among healthcare providers in a tertiary care hospital in Tamil Nadu adds valuable context-specific insights into the dynamics of leadership and job satisfaction. By identifying current levels and factors influencing these areas, the study provides a benchmark for improvement and guides the development of targeted interventions. Additionally, it contributes to the broader understanding of how leadership and job satisfaction impact healthcare quality, workforce retention, and public health outcomes, filling gaps in the existing literature and informing future research and policy development.

AUTHORS CONTRIBUTION

All authors have contributed equally.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There are no conflicts of interest.

DECLARATION OF GENERATIVE AI AND AI ASSISTED TECHNOLOGIES IN THE WRITING PROCESS

The authors haven't used any generative AI/AI assisted technologies in the writing process.

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