

The Practice of Transformational Leadership by College Deans at Hafr Al-Batin University Saudi Arabia: A Faculty Perspective

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ABSTRACT This study investigates the extent to which college deans at Hafr Al-Batin University practise transformational leadership, as perceived by faculty members. The research employed a cross-sectional survey methodology to gather data. A questionnaire comprising 34 items was administered to 300 faculty members at the University of Hafr Al-Batin to achieve the study objectives. The findings indicate that the deans' practice of transformational leadership domains at the university is of an average degree. Moreover, no significant statistical differences were observed in the responses based on variables such as gender, academic rank, and years of experience among the study sample members. In light of these results, the study concludes with a set of recommendations for enhancing leadership practices within the university context.

INTRODUCTION

The world is experiencing numerous developments and changes that impact all aspects of life. Consequently, various pressures and challenges have been placed on various institutions, especially higher education institutions. These institutions require leadership philosophies that can withstand these challenges to effectively carry out their responsibilities in scientific research, teaching, and volunteer activities. One of the most critical phases of education is higher education. The leadership style employed within higher education institutions must be capable of promoting initiative, innovation, participation in problem-solving, the formation of work teams, and transcending personal interests to achieve the public interest. This approach is essential for bringing about development and improvement (Shteivi 2019).

Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership is characterised by a leader fostering collaborative work through self-denial and the rejection of personal interests. This approach involves engaging and motivating individuals through ideal influence and intellectual stimulation, drawing on the leader's practical and personal skills (Garza 2021). Al-Ghuwairi and Omouri (2020) reference Burns' definition, describing it as the mutual influence between individuals and their

leader, aiming to motivate subordinates to achieve long-term organisational goals by focusing on ideals and higher values. Quainoo et al. (2020) emphasise transformational leadership as a style focused on solving real problems through creativity and innovation, motivating subordinates to work collaboratively and encouraging their participation in finding solutions. Khalidi and Ali (2022) define it as a process wherein leaders and followers strive to elevate each other to the highest levels of motivation and ethical practice at work, forming work teams to achieve goals. Transformational leadership inspires and motivates subordinates, encouraging them to prioritise the organisation's interests over personal ones, ultimately empowering them to assume leadership responsibilities.

Significance of Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership holds significance as leaders practising specific behaviours and characteristics inspire and motivate their teams around a common vision or goal. This includes ideal influence, inspirational stimulation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration for each team member (Balwant et al. 2019). In higher education institutions, transformational leadership positively impacts performance, fostering creativity, adopting modern management systems, and instilling moral and ethical commitment within the team (Jabeen et al. 2020). Zainal and Matore (2021) empha-

size its importance in the educational sector, noting that stimulating workers enhances creativity, unlocks potential, and fosters a common vision for current and future plans. Transformational leadership enables leaders to shape an organisational culture that stimulates work and creativity, promoting job satisfaction by inspiring and delegating powers, thereby enhancing educational, administrative, and technical excellence.

Domains of Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership encompasses several domains, including the following.

Ideal influence reflects high standards of ethical behaviour and a sense of purpose, demonstrated through the leader's behaviour and the attractive personality that serves as a role model (Khreibah and Abu Al-Hassan 2022).

Inspirational motivation involves motivating subordinates to work, cooperate, and innovate by fostering a spirit of challenge and spreading optimism among them (Ibrahim 2019).

Intellectual stimulation involves behaviour that makes followers creative by increasing awareness of challenges and providing opportunities to develop solutions (Pounder 2022).

Individual considerations reflect the leader's interest in individuals at a personal level, involving mentorship, attention to individual needs, and the creation of opportunities for education and development (Hasan et al. 2022).

These domains collectively contribute to the added value of transformational leadership in universities, enhancing leadership roles, developing performance, and achieving excellence.

Literature on Transformational Leadership

The exploration of transformational leadership across various higher education institutions, both in Arabic and foreign contexts, has provided valuable insights into its application and impact (Al-Rashidi 2017; Omouri 2020). Initiating with Al-Rashidi's (2017) examination of Saudi and private universities in Riyadh, the study revealed high degrees of practice across different dimensions of transformational leadership. This observation aligns with Omouri's (2020) investigation in Palestinian universities, where a substantial degree of

transformational leadership practice was noted among deans and heads of departments.

In Iraq, Al-Ta'an and Al-Obeidi's (2021) study delved into the application of transformational leadership and its impact on organisational justice in Middle Euphrates universities. The findings indicated an average level of practice, with variations across dimensions. In Jordan, Al-Baqaba (2022) further explored the impact of transformational leadership on human resources performance in private universities, reporting an overall average level of application.

Samsudin et al. (2017) conducted research in Malaysian public universities, revealing a moderate degree of practice of transformational leadership among administrative leaders. In Indonesia, Nurtajahjani et al.'s (2019) qualitative study focused on the practice of transformational leadership in universities and its impact on job satisfaction, highlighting a moderate degree of practice across different leadership domains.

In the United States, Alpan et al. (2020) explored perceptions of college deans and administrators regarding the practice of transformational leadership. The study, conducted at Columbia University, indicated a moderate degree of practice for various leadership domains. Boamah's (2022) study in Canada investigated the impact of transformational leadership on job satisfaction and burnout among faculty members in nursing colleges during the COVID-19 pandemic. The results revealed a moderate degree of practising transformational leadership and its positive effect on job satisfaction. These studies collectively contribute to the understanding of transformational leadership in diverse cultural and educational settings, offering valuable insights into the varying degrees of practice and its impact on organisational outcomes. Transitioning from the broader literature to the specific focus on the University of Hafr Al-Batin, transformational leadership emerges as a contemporary leadership style crucial to the work of universities. It aims to stimulate teamwork, improve performance, and raise productivity, emphasising the accomplishment of organisational goals (Sparks 2021). Howell et al. (2022) emphasise the importance of transformational leadership components and the leader's personal capabilities in increasing motivation and engagement. The style inspires followers to reevaluate their work, develop capabilities, coordinate efforts, prioritise the

public interest over personal interests, and act in the best interests of the group. Al-Qubaisi and Attia (2018) assert that transformational leadership is essential for transforming institutions, particularly in educational settings. This leadership style is considered effective for bringing about radical changes by persuading individuals to look beyond their personal interests for the organisation's general good. The approach involves expanding interests, deepening awareness, and fostering acceptance of the organisation's vision and goals through influence, motivation, excitement, and individual consideration. In the specific context of the University of Hafr Al-Batin, the researcher believed that the transformational leadership style is effective in establishing employee commitment, instilling enthusiasm, and motivating collaborative efforts (Sparks 2021). The study aims to assess the extent to which the domains of transformational leadership are practised by employees at the University of Hafr Al-Batin. This focus is rooted in the belief that transformational leadership can effectively cultivate commitment, enthusiasm, and motivation among employees, allowing them to form work teams to address challenges and achieve organisational goals. Furthermore there seems a discrepancy between prevalent leadership styles and effective leadership styles, particularly within the University of Hafr Al-Batin. This observation, coupled with diverse viewpoints and existing studies (Al-Rashidi 2017; Al-Baqaba 2022) and the researcher's field experience, underscored the need to explore the extent to which deans of faculties at the University of Hafr Al-Batin practice transformational leadership. The study specifically gauges this practice from the perspective of the teaching staff, contributing to the existing literature and providing a basis for further exploration and comparison within the university's unique context.

Objectives

The study aims to address the following questions:

1. What is the extent of practising the domains of transformational leadership at the University of Hafr Al-Batin in Saudi Arabia according to faculty members' perspectives on the deans of the faculties?
2. Are there statistically significant differences in the study sample's perceptions

of the extent to which college deans practise the domains of transformational leadership at the University of Hafr Al-Batin in Saudi Arabia from the viewpoint of faculty members, based on gender, rank, and experience?

METHODOLOGY

The study employed a descriptive analytical approach to assess the extent of practising transformational leadership among the deans of faculties at the University of Hafr Al-Batin in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. This approach was chosen due to its suitability for the nature and objectives of the study.

Instrument

A questionnaire was developed for the study following a series of steps. The initial phase involved delineating questionnaire areas, followed by drafting statements based on expert opinions and theoretical literature. Some statements were adapted from previous studies (Al-Rashidi 2017; Omouri 2020; Al-Ta'an and Al-Obeidi 2021). The preliminary questionnaire comprised 34 statements distributed across areas such as ideal influence, inspirational stimulation, intellectual stimulation, and individual considerations. The questionnaire underwent expert review by a panel of 15 specialists with experience in Saudi universities. Feedback focused on clarity, linguistic formulation, alignment with study objectives, and field relevance. The final questionnaire, after expert review, comprised 32 statements across the same domains. The participants' responses to the questionnaire were scored using a five-point Likert scale, with numerical values assigned to each response. The overall score for each participant was calculated by summing up the numerical values for all questionnaire items. These scores were then categorised into three levels of low, moderate and high.

Participants and Procedures

The research included all (675) faculty members at the university during the academic year 2022-2023, as per university statistics. A convenient stratified method was used to select the study sample, which comprised 300 faculty members. The sample size was determined proportionally based on their representation in the study population, as

outlined in Table 1. The study proceeded with the administration of the finalised questionnaire to the selected participants. Participants were briefed about the study's objectives and provided informed consent before completing the questionnaire. To ensure the study tool's reliability, the researchers employed the test-retest method. The questionnaire was initially administered to a separate group of 30 faculty members excluded from the original sample. After a two-week interval, the questionnaire was re-administered, and the Pearson correlation coefficient was computed based on their responses. The reliability coefficient was also determined through the internal consistency method, utilising the Cronbach alpha equation. Table 4 displays the internal consistency coefficient, as per the Cronbach alpha equation, and the test-retest reliability for both the domains and the overall degree. These values align with the study's objectives and are deemed suitable for this research.

Table 1: Demographic distribution of the participants

Category	Frequency	Percentage
<i>Gender</i>		
Male	189	63
Female	111	37
<i>Academic Rank</i>		
Lecturer	110	36.6
Teaching assistant	92	30.6
Assistant professor	54	18
Associate professor	34	11.5
Professor	10	3.3
<i>Experience</i>		
Less than 5 years	172	57.3
5 – 10 years	82	27.3
More than 10 years	46	15.3
Total	300	100

Data Analysis

Upon data collection, statistical analysis was conducted to unveil patterns and insights. The study employed various statistical analyses to assess and validate the data on transformational leadership practices among the deans of faculties at the University of Hafr Al-Batin. Descriptive analysis was utilised to calculate arithmetic means and standard deviations, providing an overall profile of leadership practices. Content validity analysis involved expert arbitrators to refine the questionnaire. Construct validity was established through correlation coefficients, ensuring the questionnaire

measured intended constructs. Reliability analysis, including test-retest and internal consistency methods, verified the stability and consistency of the questionnaire over time. Scoring and categorisation were based on a Likert scale, facilitating quantitative interpretation. Three-way ANOVA analyses were conducted to explore potential differences in leadership practices based on gender, academic rank, and experience, providing insights into demographic influences on transformational leadership within the university setting. These analyses collectively enhanced the robustness and reliability of the study's findings.

RESULTS

The data were statistically processed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). To establish construct validity of the constructed scale, correlation coefficients were computed for each statement with the total score, each statement with its corresponding domain, and between domains and the total score. This analysis was conducted in a pilot sample of 30 faculty members excluded from the main study. Table 2 shows the correlation coefficients between questionnaire statements, the relevant domain, and the overall scale. The correlation coefficients range from 0.43 to 0.95, with all correlations being statistically significant at the $p \leq 0.05$ level. The correlations between the questionnaire statements and the relevant domain are generally higher than the correlations between the questionnaire statements and the overall scale. This suggests that the questionnaire statements are more strongly related to the specific domain they are measuring than they are to the overall construct of transformational leadership. Table 3 shows all correlations are statistically significant at the $p \leq 0.01$ level. The correlations between the domains are all positive and moderate to strong in magnitude. This suggests that the domains are all related to each other, but they are also distinct constructs. To ensure the reliability of the study tool, it was verified using the test-retest method. This involved administering the questionnaire to a group of participants who were excluded from the original study sample consisting of 30 faculty members, and then re-administering it after two weeks. The Pearson correlation coefficient was then calculated between their responses. The reliability coefficient was also calcu-

lated using the internal consistency method. Table 4 presents the Cronbach's Alpha internal consistency coefficient and test-retest reliability coefficients for the domains and the total score of the transformational leadership questionnaire. The Cronbach's Alpha coefficients range from 0.81 to 0.87, indicating good internal consistency. The test-retest reliability coefficients range from 0.77 to 0.84, indicating good test-retest reliability.

Table 2: Correlation coefficient between questionnaire statements, relevant domain and the overall scale

Statement number	Correlation with relevant domain	Correlation with tool
1	.77**	.78**
2	.90**	.91**
3	.90**	.93**
4	.77**	.68**
5	.80**	.73**
6	.92**	.90**
7	.88**	.84**
8	.43*	.39*
9	.56**	.72**
10	.65**	.68**
11	.85**	.52**
12	.86**	.66**
13	.83**	.64**
14	.89**	.56**
15	.56**	.66**
16	.85**	.61**
17	.84**	.85**
18	.77**	.77**
19	.80**	.77**
20	.65**	.72**
21	.78**	.72**
22	.87**	.85**
23	.84**	.83**
24	.83**	.81**
25	.65**	.64**
26	.92**	.90**
27	.94**	.90**
28	.75**	.75**
29	.90**	.83**
30	.95**	.90**
31	.89**	.80**
32	.88**	.89**

*p < .05; **p < .01.

To answer the first research question, the arithmetic means and standard deviations were calculated for the degree of deans' practice of transformational leadership domains. Table 5 displays the arithmetic means (M) for each of the four domains within the range of 2.73 to 3.35, indicative of a moderate degree. The domain of inspirational stimulation achieved the highest arithmetic mean,

Table 3: Correlation between domains

Domain	1	2	3	4
1. Ideal Impact	1			
2. Inspirational Motivation	.554**	1		
3. Intellectual Stimulation	.945**	.597**	1	
4. Individual Considerations	.955**	.519**	.934**	1

**p < .01.

Table 4: Cronbach's Alpha internal consistency coefficient and test-retest reliability coefficients for the domains and the total score

Domain	Test-Retest reliability	α
Ideal impact	0.83	0.79
Inspirational motivation	0.85	0.81
Intellectual stimulation	0.82	0.8
Individual considerations	0.81	0.77
Total Scale	0.87	0.84

standing at M = 3.35 with a moderate rating. Conversely, the domain of intellectual stimulation held the lowest rank, registering an arithmetic mean of M = 2.73, also denoting a moderate rating. The Ideal Impact was recorded at M = 2.86, and Individual Considerations at M = 3.03. The comprehensive arithmetic mean for the deans of faculties' practice of transformational leadership domains at the University of Hafr Al-Batin, as perceived by faculty members, was M = 2.99, reflecting a moderate rating. Calculations of arithmetic means and standard deviations were conducted separately for each domain within the study sample (see Tables 6, 7, 8 and 9).

Table 10 presents the M and SD representing the deans' practice of transformational leadership domains at the University of Hafr Al-Batin, categorised by gender, academic rank, and experience. An observable variation in arithmetic means and standard deviations is evident across gender, academic rank, and experience categories. It indicates that female faculty members generally perceive their leaders as more effective in all four domains of transformational leadership compared to male faculty members. Across academic ranks, professors tend to perceive their leaders as more effective in the domains of inspirational motivation and intellectual stimulation, while lecturers tend to perceive their leaders as more effective in the domains of ideal impact and individual considerations. Faculty members with more experience (5-10 years and

Table 5: Transformational leadership practice by deans at the University of Hafr Al-Batin: arithmetic means and standard deviations, descending order

Rank	No.	Domain	M	SD	Level
1	2	Inspirational motivation	3.35	.691	Moderate
2	4	Individual considerations	3.03	1.100	Moderate
3	1	Ideal impact	2.86	.990	Moderate
4	3	Intellectual stimulation	2.73	.981	Moderate
		Total score	2.99	.837	Moderate

Table 6: The arithmetic means related to the ideal impact arranged in descending order

Rank	No.	Statements	M	SD	Level
1	6	The deans of the faculties take the initiative to put the model example in front of the subordinates	2.93	1.307	Moderate
2	7	College deans put the public interest before their own	2.92	1.219	Moderate
3	3	The behavior of the deans of the faculties is appreciated and commended.	2.87	1.498	Moderate
4	5	The behaviors of the deans of the faculties are related to the university's mission and message	2.86	1.224	Moderate
5	4	The words of the deans of the faculties match their actions	2.84	1.169	Moderate
6	2	The behaviors of the deans of the colleges set an example for the subordinates.	2.82	1.311	Moderate
6	8	College deans increase the ability of subordinates to take responsibility	2.82	1.261	Moderate
8	1	College deans can persuade and influence subordinates.	2.78	1.212	Moderate
		Ideal impact	2.86	.990	Moderate

Table 7: The arithmetic means related to the inspirational stimulation arranged in descending order

Rank	No.	Statements	M	SD	Level
1	15	Deans of faculties motivate subordinates to innovate.	3.46	.951	Moderate
1	16	College deans encourage the application of modern management methods	3.46	1.137	Moderate
3	14	The deans of the faculties encourage the use of modern technologies.	3.43	1.040	Moderate
4	12	Deans of colleges provide various incentives to subordinates.	3.39	.946	Moderate
5	13	Deans encourage mutual trust in the framework.	3.35	.978	Moderate
6	9	Deans of faculties push subordinates for development and change.	3.27	1.268	Moderate
6	11	Deans of colleges increase the persistence and perseverance of subordinates.	3.27	1.083	Moderate
8	10	College deans develop teamwork in their colleges.	3.18	1.114	Moderate
		Inspirational Motivation	3.35	.691	Moderate

more than 10 years) generally perceive their leaders as more effective in the domains of inspirational motivation and intellectual stimulation compared to faculty members with less than 5 years of experience. To ascertain statistical significance, three-way ANOVA analyses were conducted for both individual domains (see Table 11) and the overall leadership tool (see Table 12). Table 11 presents the results of a three-way ANOVA examining the impact of gender, academic rank, and experience on transformational leadership domains. The domains include Ideal Impact, Inspira-

tional Motivation, Intellectual Stimulation, and Individual Considerations. The results indicate that there is no significant effect of gender on any of the transformational leadership domains. However, there is a significant effect of academic rank on Inspirational Motivation ($F(2, 294) = 2.71, p = .068$) and Intellectual Stimulation ($F(2, 294) = 0.357, p = .700$). There is also a significant effect of experience on Ideal Impact ($F(2, 294) = 1.418, p = .244$), Inspirational Motivation ($F(2, 294) = 1.502, p = .224$), and Intellectual Stimulation ($F(2, 294) = 2.480, p = .085$).

Table 8: The arithmetic means related to the intellectual stimulation arranged in descending order

Rank	No.	Statements	M	SD	Level
1	24	College deans provide the information necessary to make decisions	2.78	1.449	Moderate
2	18	College deans support creative ways of working	2.76	1.206	Moderate
2	19	College deans encourage subordinates to think critically	2.76	1.455	Moderate
2	21	College deans approve of a measure of calculated risk in the business	2.76	1.337	Moderate
5	23	College deans train leaders at all levels	2.75	1.160	Moderate
6	22	College deans hold various professional development workshops	2.73	1.315	Moderate
7	17	The deans of the subordinate faculties can express their ideas freely	2.72	1.182	Moderate
8	20	College deans support developmental field research	2.59	1.074	Moderate
		Intellectual stimulation	2.73	.981	Moderate

Table 9: The arithmetic means related to the individual considerations arranged in descending order

Rank	No.	Statements	M	SD	Level
1	25	Deans of colleges embrace the different needs of subordinates	3.12	1.346	Moderate
2	26	College deans delegate powers to their assistants	3.09	1.312	Moderate
3	27	The deans of the faculties adopt the creators in the various fields	3.07	1.339	Moderate
3	28	The deans of the faculties take into account the individual differences between the workers	3.07	1.374	Moderate
5	30	College deans increase employees' sense of self-efficacy	3.03	1.271	Moderate
6	29	College deans value and appreciate teamwork	3.00	1.312	Moderate
7	31	The deans of the faculties listen to the problems and demands of the workers	2.97	1.285	Moderate
8	32	College deans feel everyone that it counts	2.89	1.403	Moderate
		Individual Consideration	3.03	1.100	Moderate

Table 10: Three-Way ANOVA analysis of the effect of gender, academic rank, and experience on the domains of transformational leadership

Categorizing variable	Categories		Ideal impact	Inspirational motivation	Intellectual stimulation	Individual considerations	Total
<i>Gender</i>	Male	M	2.57	3.23	2.54	2.70	2.76
		SD	1.080	.956	1.084	1.219	.958
	Female	M	3.30	3.48	3.23	3.47	3.37
		SD	1.254	.709	.966	1.423	1.049
<i>Academic Rank</i>	Lecturer	M	2.63	2.68	2.73	2.76	2.69
		SD	1.023	1.23	1.018	1.017	1.020
	Teaching assistant	M	2.56	2.72	2.83	2.76	2.65
		SD	1.129	1.012	1.001	1.013	1.019
	Assistant professor	M	2.55	2.89	2.48	2.84	2.69
		SD	1.191	1.053	1.220	1.349	1.147
Associate professor	M	2.83	3.38	2.88	2.93	3.00	
	SD	1.048	.771	.901	1.194	.904	
<i>Experience</i>	<5	M	2.98	3.51	2.91	3.06	3.11
		SD	1.251	.777	1.092	1.423	1.020
	5 - 10	M	2.68	3.26	2.62	2.86	2.86
		SD	1.206	.857	1.048	1.328	1.011
	10>	M	3.15	3.56	3.15	3.39	3.31
		SD	1.254	.980	1.220	1.437	1.133
		M	2.88	2.88	2.81	2.25	2.70
		SD	.530	.000	.619	.000	.022

Table 11: Three-Way ANOVA: Impact of gender, academic rank, and experience on transformational leadership domains

Source of variation	Domains	Sum of squares	df	Mean squares	F	Sig.
Gender	Ideal impact	0.729	1	0.729	0.745	0.389
	Inspirational motivation	1.634	1	1.634	3.504	0.062
	Intellectual stimulation	0.003	1	0.003	0.003	0.953
	Individual considerations	0.483	1	0.483	0.398	0.528
Academic Rank	Ideal impact	0.025	2	0.013	0.013	0.987
	Inspirational motivation	2.528	2	1.264	2.71	0.068
	Intellectual stimulation	0.681	2	0.341	0.357	0.7
	Individual considerations	0.307	2	0.153	0.126	0.881
Experience	Ideal impact	2.774	2	1.387	1.418	0.244
	Inspirational motivation	1.401	2	0.701	1.502	0.224
	Intellectual stimulation	4.731	2	2.366	2.48	0.085
	Individual considerations	4.34	2	2.17	1.789	0.169
Error	Ideal impact	287.53	294	0.978		
	Inspirational motivation	137.15	294	0.466		
	Intellectual stimulation	280.409	294	0.954		
	Individual considerations	356.554	294	1.213		
Total	Ideal impact	292.776	299			
	Inspirational motivation	142.649	299			
	Intellectual stimulation	287.484	299			
	Individual considerations	362.066	299			

Note: df = degrees of freedom; sig = significance level and F = F statistics.

Table 12 presents the results of a three-way ANOVA examining the impact of gender, academic rank, and experience on transformational leadership domains. The domains include Ideal Impact, Inspirational Motivation, Intellectual Stimulation, and Individual Considerations. The results indicate that there is no significant effect of gender on any of the transformational leadership domains. However, there is a significant effect of academic rank on Inspirational Motivation ($F(2, 294) = 2.71, p = .068$) and Intellectual Stimulation ($F(2, 294) = 0.357, p = .700$). There is also a significant effect of experience on Ideal Impact ($F(2, 294) = 1.418, p = .244$), Inspirational Motivation ($F(2, 294) = 1.502, p = .224$), and Intellectual Stimulation ($F(2, 294) = 2.480, p = .085$).

DISCUSSION

The study intended to identify the degree of practice among deans of the faculties in the domains of transformational leadership at the University of Hafr Al-Batin from the perspective of faculty members. The primary research inquiry sought to uncover the practical manifestation of transformational leadership dimensions by deans at the University of Hafr Al-Batin, as perceived by faculty members. The outcomes revealed a moderate overall assessment, emphasising that, on the whole, the deans exhibit a balanced application of transformational leadership principles. Notably, the inspirational motivation dimension stood out, reflecting a commendable emphasis on motivating and inspiring faculty members, garnering a medi-

Table 12: Gender, academic rank, and experience: Impact on deans' transformational leadership at University of Hafr Al-Batin

Source of variation	Sum of squares	Df	Mean squares	F	Sig
Gender	.007	1	.007	.010	.922
Academic rank	.227	2	.114	.163	.849
Experience	3.033	2	1.517	2.178	.115
Error	204.727	294	.696		
Total	209.310	299			

Note: df = degrees of freedom; sig = significance level and F = F statistics.

um rating. Conversely, the intellectual stimulation domain garnered a more reserved evaluation, suggesting a moderate degree of emphasis on encouraging innovative thinking and intellectual development. The overall alignment of the deans' leadership behaviour with the principles of transformational leadership indicates a general commitment to fostering a positive and motivating environment within the academic setting. The results suggest that faculty members perceive their deans as proficient motivators and stimulators of their work engagement. The deans' demonstrated ability to foster teamwork and creative problem-solving aligns with the principles of transformational leadership. Faculty members believe in the deans' aptitude for influencing and inspiring, motivating the entire workforce to accomplish university goals. This shared perception emphasises the deans' effectiveness in areas of motivation, intellectual stimulation, relationship-building, and recognition of hard work, an essential blend working toward the university's overarching objectives.

Interestingly, these outcomes parallel those of Al-Ta'an and Al-Obeidi (2021), who found an average application of transformational leadership in Iraqi universities, with inspirational motivation leading the dimensions. Additionally, Al-Baqabah's (2022) study noted an average level of transformational leadership application in Jordanian private universities. The findings further align with Alpan et al.'s (2020) research, illustrating a moderate degree of transformational leadership practice in a university setting. However, the current study deviates from Omouri's (2020) findings, which reported a high extent of transformational leadership practice among deans. This variance might be attributed to differences in sample characteristics and contextual factors.

Turning to the second research question, examining potential statistically significant differences in deans' practice of transformational leadership based on gender, academic rank, and experience, the results indicated no such distinctions within the study sample. This lack of significant differences was ascribed to the uniformity and similarity of the academic system at the University of Hafr Al-Batin. The prevailing leadership and management practices foster an environment where differences of opinion among faculty members are minimal. Furthermore, a shared understanding among faculty members regarding transformation-

al leadership and its various dimensions contributes to the absence of significant differences. These results resonate with Omouri's (2020) study, which similarly found no significant differences in the extent of transformational leadership practice based on gender, job title, years of experience, and university. Moreover, the findings align with Samsudin et al.'s (2017) research, indicating no significant differences in responses based on experience and department. The congruence continues with Al-Ta'an and Al-Obeidi's (2021) study, affirming the absence of statistically significant differences in the application of transformational leadership across gender, educational qualification, and years of experience.

Additionally, in examining the impact of gender on transformational leadership, the results from Table 10 reveal a noteworthy trend. Female participants consistently exhibit higher scores across various leadership domains, with particularly significant differences observed in Inspirational Motivation and Individual Considerations. This suggests that, in this study, there may be inherent gender differences in leadership approaches within the context of higher education institutions. The findings underscore the importance of recognising and understanding these gender dynamics to inform more tailored leadership development strategies that cater to the strengths and preferences of both male and female leaders. Furthermore, the study revealed that as individuals move up the academic hierarchy from Lecturer to Professor, there is a consistent uptick in scores across all leadership domains. Despite conforming to conventional expectations, notable nuances surface, such as Assistant Professors excelling in Inspirational Motivation. These results suggest an evolving nature of transformational leadership with academic advancement, underscoring the necessity for tailored leadership development initiatives that address the distinct challenges and strengths inherent at each rank. Lastly, when considering the influence of years of experience on transformational leadership, a clear pattern emerges. Participants with 5 to 10 years of experience consistently score higher across all leadership domains. This suggests that a moderate level of experience is pivotal in developing and demonstrating transformational leadership qualities. On the contrary, those with less than 5 years or more than 10 years of experience exhibit more variable scores. These re-

sults underscore the importance of the mid-career phase for leadership development, pointing towards potential strategies to harness and leverage this critical period for enhancing transformational leadership skills.

CONCLUSION

The study aimed to investigate the practice of transformational leadership by college deans at Hafr Al-Batin University, Saudi Arabia, through the perceptions of faculty members. The study used a quantitative research method, and data were collected from 300 faculty members through a self-report questionnaire. The data were analysed using descriptive statistics and multiple regression analysis. The study found that the practice of transformational leadership among college deans at Hafr Al-Batin University is of a moderate degree, according to the perceptions of faculty members. The faculty members perceived their leaders as more effective in the domains of inspirational motivation and individual considerations, as opposed to the domains of ideal impact and intellectual stimulation. The study also found that female faculty members generally perceived their leaders as more effective in all four domains of transformational leadership compared to male faculty members. Across academic ranks, professors tended to perceive their leaders as more effective in the domains of inspirational motivation and intellectual stimulation, while lecturers tended to perceive their leaders as more effective in the domains of ideal impact and individual considerations. Faculty members with more experience generally perceived their leaders as more effective in all domains of transformational leadership. However, the study noted some discrepancies in the results based on different groups of faculty members, which warrant further investigation. Overall, the study recommends that universities provide training and development programs for deans and other academic leaders to enhance their leadership practices and promote a culture of transformational leadership within higher education institutions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study indicates that transformational leadership proves effective in higher education institutions, with deans demonstrating such practices

being perceived as more effective by faculty. This leadership style also correlates with increased faculty job satisfaction, organisational commitment, and positive work-related outcomes. For university administrators, fostering a positive work environment involves developing and implementing transformational leadership practices. These practices not only enhance faculty well-being but also contribute to institutional performance through the promotion of innovation, creativity, and collaboration. Future research should delve into the specific impact of transformational leadership on outcomes such as institutional performance, faculty satisfaction, and student engagement.

The study recommends several actions to promote transformational leadership at the University of Hafr Al-Batin and enhance organisational performance. Suggestions include encouraging deans to prioritise transformational leadership through awareness campaigns and training programs. Promoting intellectual stimulation among faculty and staff by supporting innovative and critical thinking practices is crucial. Integrating transformational leadership principles into the criteria for selecting future university leaders is proposed. Drawing insights from successful global universities and conducting a comparative study on leadership styles at Hafr Al-Batin can offer valuable perspectives. Implementation of these recommendations aims to establish a transformative leadership culture, empowering the university community and contributing to overall success. Future studies should further explore the factors influencing the adoption of transformational leadership practices among university leaders.

LIMITATIONS

This study is subject to several limitations. The focus on deans of faculties at the University of Hafr Al-Batin limits the applicability of the findings to other leadership contexts. Data relies on self-reported information, which may be susceptible to biases. The study's context within the University of Hafr Al-Batin in Saudi Arabia limits generalisability to other universities or countries. The study's duration limits the capture of long-term trends or changes in leadership practices. The use of a self-report questionnaire may not fully capture the complexities of leadership and organisational behaviour. Generalisability is limited due to

the sample's representativeness of the broader faculty population and may not apply to other universities or higher education institutions.

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