

THE IMPACT OF TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP ON JOB SATISFACTION AND INNOVATIVE WORK BEHAVIOUR: A LITERATURE REVIEW

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Abstract

This analysis examines the relationship between transformational leadership and two important organizational outcomes: job satisfaction among employees and innovative work behavior. Although prior research has consistently demonstrated the beneficial effects of transformational leadership in motivating employees, enhancing job satisfaction, and fostering creativity, the literature remains fragmented and often descriptive rather than integrative. To address this gap, a systematic search and narrative synthesis of 105 studies across major databases was conducted. Though results differ depending on national context, industry, and organizational culture, the analysis shows that transformational leadership is often correlated to more innovative behaviors and increased job satisfaction. Notably, several studies highlight mediating mechanisms (e.g., psychological empowerment) and moderating conditions (e.g., autonomy, learning climate) that influence these relationships. This review contributes by critically consolidating the evidence, identifying inconsistencies, and highlighting research gaps. The findings underscore the importance of conducting cross-cultural and longitudinal research and provide leaders with practical guidance for promoting organizational innovation and enhancing employee well-being.

Keywords: Transformational leadership, Job satisfaction, Innovative work behaviour, psychological empowerment, Systematic review

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INTRODUCTION

Human capital is universally regarded as the most critical and irreplaceable resource within any organization, serving a pivotal role in achieving strategic objectives and maintaining long-term sustainability (Emami et al., 2013). Among the numerous variables that affect worker performance and organizational results, leadership has become a crucial determinant. In particular, in response to the growing complexity, accelerated change, and intensifying global competition in modern work environments, organizations require leaders who can effectively manage operations, inspire teams, and initiate meaningful transformation. Effective leadership extends beyond the exercise of authority and encompasses the capacity to motivate, influence, and align employees toward shared goals (Manaf & Latif, 2014; Alotaibi et al., 2015). Within this context, transformational leadership has attracted significant scholarly attention due to its demonstrated capacity to

enhance employee outcomes. Bass (1994) distinguished four essential elements that define transformational leadership: idealized influence, personalized attention, intellectual stimulation, and inspirational drive. Together, these actions allow leaders to meet followers' higher-order wants, values, and aspirations, which in turn improves followers' motivation and performance (Hartog et al., 2012). Transformational leadership fosters organizational commitment, personal development, and intrinsic motivation in contrast to transactional leadership, which places more emphasis on compliance and exchanges. The idea that transformational leadership improves job satisfaction, a crucial metric of employee well-being and organizational effectiveness, is being backed by an emerging body of empirical evidence (Loshali & Krishnan, 2013). Employees under transformational leaders often report greater role clarity, emotional support, and a stronger sense of purpose, contributing to enhanced job satisfaction. Simultaneously, transformational leadership has been linked to increased innovative work behaviour, which encompasses generating, promoting, and implementing novel ideas within the workplace (Pieterse et al., 2010). In dynamic, innovation-driven workplaces, leaders must be able to foster employees' creativity and proactive problem-solving (De Jong & Den Hartog, 2008). In response to these emerging workplace demands, this review critically examines existing research on transformational leadership, focusing specifically on its role in shaping job satisfaction and fostering innovative work practices. This review systematically evaluates empirical evidence from multiple organizational contexts to explore how transformational leadership fosters critical employee outcomes and supports broader organizational success.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Transformational Leadership (TL)

TL is esteemed for its capacity to elevate followers' motivations by altering their underlying values, belief systems, and ambitions in pursuit of collective goals. This leadership style motivates followers to achieve higher performance by encouraging personal growth, commitment to shared goals, and aligning with organizational values (Bass, 1985). Transformational leaders promote a culture of adaptability and continuous development, enabling employees to strengthen their skills and advance in both personal and professional domains. Through their acts and behaviors, these leaders create a sense of shared purpose that motivates employees to significantly contribute to the company's goals (Avolio et al., 2004).

According to Avolio et al. (1999), four essential elements constitute transformational leadership:

- a. **Idealized Influence:** This component represents the leader's capacity to motivate followers with a clear vision that complements the objectives of the company, encouraging their allegiance, respect, and trust. Leaders who embody strong ethical values, integrity, and dedication serve as role models, inspiring employees to internalize the organization's mission and actively support its success (Cheng et al., 2016; Avolio et al., 1999).
- b. **Inspirational Motivation:** Leaders who exhibit inspirational motivation demonstrate confidence, optimism, and a clear vision that encourages followers to perform beyond expectations. By communicating this vision persuasively and maintaining unwavering commitment, transformational leaders cultivate enthusiasm, shared purpose, and heightened motivation levels within their teams (Cheng et al., 2016; Avolio et al., 1999).
- c. **Intellectual Stimulation:** This element stresses the importance of a leader in encouraging employees to challenge conventional thinking, critically reflect, and generate innovative solutions to complex problems. By promoting creativity and fostering a learning-oriented environment, leaders enhance their teams' capacity for problem-solving and continuous improvement (Cheng et al., 2016; Avolio et al., 1999).
- d. **Individualized Consideration:** This component highlights the leader's responsibility to provide tailored support and acknowledge each team member's particular requirements, goals, and aspirations. Transformational leaders act as coaches or mentors, providing support, guidance, and opportunities for growth tailored to individual capabilities and aspirations (Cheng et al., 2016; Avolio et al., 1999). By incorporating these four elements, transformational leaders create a creative culture, increase organizational commitment, and motivate individuals to reach high performance and success levels.

Applying Transformational Leadership (TL)

TL involves a wide variety of actions and tactics, placing greater emphasis on adaptability and flexibility rather than rigid or fixed methods. Becoming an effective transformational leader requires deliberate effort, strong self-awareness, and continuous personal development (Northouse, 2001). Adopting a transformational leadership style involves consciously striving to inspire, motivate, and guide others toward achieving shared organizational goals.

According to Northouse (2001), several key characteristics distinguish transformational leaders:

- They act as catalysts for change within the organization, serving as role models who exemplify how to initiate, manage, and sustain meaningful transformation.

- Transformational leaders involve all members of the organization in creating and communicating a compelling vision that closely reflects the firm's core values and long-term goals.
 - They inspire followers to perform at their highest potential, encouraging commitment, dedication, and a proactive attitude toward organizational success.
 - They set high standards through their behaviour, providing a clear example of integrity and ethical conduct.
 - They foster an inclusive environment by actively listening to diverse viewpoints, promoting cooperation, mutual respect, and shared decision-making.
 - They empower others by supporting their contributions and creating opportunities for individuals to add value to the organization.
- Transformational leaders create a healthy company culture that fosters individual growth and collective accomplishment by exhibiting these behaviors.

Job satisfaction

Employee dedication, motivation, and alignment with the organization's objectives and achievements are common indicators of job satisfaction, which is a critical indicator of a positive workplace culture. It shows how much employees believe their employment is personally satisfying, significant, and fulfilling. Highly satisfied employees typically think their work has significance and influence, and they recognize that their efforts are essential to achieving the organization's goals. Such employees perceive a sense of appreciation for their contributions and hold the belief that they are treated with fairness and equity, both in daily workplace interactions and in the organization's broader operational practices. Job satisfaction may thus be understood as an expression of how favourably employees assess their job roles, assigned duties, and the overall organizational environment (Sang et al., 2016). Employee satisfaction leads to increased engagement, stronger organizational commitment, and improved overall well-being, all of which enhance productivity and effectiveness within the company.

Innovative work behaviour (IWB)

It is important to first describe the major elements that influence and form innovative work behavior (IWB) before delving into the relationship between different constructs and IWB. The factors influencing IWB have been extensively studied by both professionals and scholars (Muchiri, McMurray, Nkhoma, & Pham, 2020). An investigation of the literature identifies several significant determinants of innovative work behavior (IWB), which can be roughly divided into three categories.

The first category, **individual factors**, relates to personal characteristics and personality traits. Research by Siregar, Suryana, Ahman, and Senen (2019) identified individual factors as the most influential contributors to IWB. Specific attributes such as educational background, proactive behaviour, locus of control, and self-efficacy have been shown to significantly impact employees' engagement in innovative activities (Demesko, 2017). Individuals that exhibit proactive behavior and high levels of self-efficacy are frequently more equipped and more eager to develop, advocate for, and use innovative ideas in the workplace.

The second category encompasses **organizational factors**. This refers to the organizational environment and culture that support and encourage employee creativity. An environment that fosters innovation allows individuals to experiment with new ideas, even at the risk of occasional failure (Nguyen & Do, 2021). By providing adequate resources, encouraging frameworks, and a psychologically secure atmosphere for experimenting with innovative ideas, an organization's setting plays a crucial role in motivating employees to drive innovation (Siregar et al., 2019).

The third category involves **relationship factors**, highlighting the significance of workplace interpersonal dynamics. Afsar and Umrani (2020) showed that the quality and strength of an employee's relationship with their supervisor have a significant impact on how innovative their behaviour is. Supportive leadership relationships, particularly those rooted in transformational leadership, enhance employees' willingness to engage in creative problem-solving and contribute original ideas. By encouraging people to take on new challenges, creating an innovative culture, and providing them with a clear vision that pushes them to perform above and beyond expectations, transformational leaders inspire their teams. These factors—individual, organizational, and relational—collectively interact to shape and promote innovative work behaviour, which is increasingly recognized as essential for organizational adaptability and sustained success.

HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT AND RESEARCHFRAMEWORK

The study's concept was created following careful consideration of earlier data and advisories from other academics.

1.1 Relationship between transformational leadership and job satisfaction

Employee perceptions of transformational leadership have a big impact on their job satisfaction because it influences the workplace through visionary guidance and inspirational motivation. Transformational leaders enhance morale by setting higher performance standards, recognizing achievements, and fostering a positive organizational climate. These leaders employ strategies including intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, and individualized consideration to enhance employees' emotional and cognitive engagement, which ultimately results in higher job satisfaction. Participatory decision-making practices further reinforce employees' sense of involvement and

commitment, resulting in heightened fulfillment and motivation (Bogler, 2003). Consistent with this view, Nemanich and Keller (2007) found that inspirational qualities and individualized support help employees feel valued, thereby enhancing job satisfaction. This reciprocal relationship benefits both parties, as employees who feel respected and supported tend to demonstrate stronger performance and greater organizational commitment. Similarly, Employee views of transformational leadership have been found to positively correlate with job satisfaction on both an individual and group level (Braun et al., 2013). Employees who perceive their leaders as transformative often exhibit higher satisfaction, stronger organizational identification, and deeper internalization of organizational goals. Collectively, these results imply that transformational leadership practices are essential for improving employee's satisfaction and fostering organizational success. Bass's (1985) initial empirical study confirmed that transformational leadership positively affected job satisfaction, particularly employees' contentment with their leaders. This effect operates through individualized consideration, which reinforces employees' sense of value, and through idealized influence and inspirational motivation, which drive individuals toward their full potential. Later studies corroborated these results. For instance, Worthy, Dawson, and Tavakoli (2020) demonstrated that transformational leaders significantly enhance job satisfaction by encouraging followers to adopt higher performance standards and pursue effective strategies to achieve them. Similar findings were made by Hermosilla et al. (2016), who investigated managers and subordinates in Spanish organizations and found that transformational leadership had a positive relationship with views of management success, job satisfaction, and employee effort. Castro et al. (2008) also discovered that transformational leadership promotes job satisfaction, which lowers workplace stress and improves employee well-being. Moreover, it has been demonstrated to improve performance while making up for leadership shortcomings (Mesut & Toby, 2020) and gives employees the confidence to actively pursue greater levels of pleasure (Braun et al., 2013; Judge & Piccolo, 2004; Podsakoff et al., 1996). In a study of registered nurses employed in private hospitals in Jordan, it was discovered that there was a substantial positive correlation between transformational leadership and job satisfaction. Additionally, the study found that intellectual stimulation was the most significant predictor of internal job satisfaction (Mohammad et al., 2011). Similarly, Shurbagi and Zahari (2012) demonstrated that organizational culture mediates this relationship within the National Oil Corporation of Libya, highlighting the contextual factors that shape leadership effectiveness. It has been discovered that other leadership philosophies, in addition to transformational leadership, significantly influence how satisfied workers are with their jobs. When leaders use effective leadership techniques, they can significantly increase employees' overall job satisfaction (Bernarto et al., 2020; Prameswari et al., 2020). In fact, transformational leadership has been shown to have a favorable impact on job satisfaction in numerous research (Choi et al., 2016; Kheir-Faddul & Dăniăiață, 2019; Lin et al., 2018). The evidence is not entirely consistent; other research report no significant correlation between employee outcomes and transformative leadership (Purwanto et al., 2020b). This underscores the need for additional research to settle these conflicting results.

The study makes the following hypothesis based on the foregoing discussion:

H1: There is a positive relationship between Job satisfaction and Transformational leadership.

1.2 Innovative Work Behaviour through Transformational Leadership

Prior research emphasizes the significance of transformative leadership as a major force behind organizational innovation. Transformational leaders foster a culture of empowerment and support that inspires employees to come up with innovative solutions and implement innovative ideas. Such leaders, according to Bass and Avolio (1993), encourage employees to put aside their personal interests and strive for the organization's goals, promoting a culture of innovation and constant improvement. Transformational leaders provide individualized support, motivating guidance, and recognition of each employee's unique contributions to create an atmosphere where people feel valued and empowered to propose and implement innovative approaches (Alhosani & Ahmad, 2024; Garg et al., 2023; Zhang et al., 2022; Afsar & Umrani, 2020; Minh-Duc & Huu-Lam, 2019). Studies reveal that transformational leadership stimulates employee creativity by fostering an inclusive and constructive work environment that supports change (Khalili, 2016; Watts et al., 2020). Leaders influence innovation not only by shaping employees' values, beliefs, and motivations (Le, 2020), but also by building meaningful emotional connections with followers, which enhances engagement and commitment (Bass, 1999). Hunt et al. (2004) point out that more creativity and innovative behavior can be encouraged by strong leader-follower relationships. Furthermore, transformational leaders set high standards that motivate employees to challenge accepted wisdom, take measured chances, and engage in creative endeavors (Gong et al., 2009), while exhibiting behaviors that promote innovative thinking and unconventional approaches to work (Podsakoff et al., 2009). Transformational leaders also enhance employees' self-confidence and optimism, motivating discretionary effort and commitment to achieving goals (Amankwaa et al., 2021). Their reliability, pragmatism, and effectiveness facilitate organizational goal attainment and simultaneously encourage innovative work behavior (Bass et al., 2003; Bass, 1999; Bass & Avolio, 1994). This is supported by empirical data, which shows that transformational leadership enhances workers' innovative work in a variety of organizational settings. Qu et al. (2015), for instance, found that transformational leadership increases innovation among 420 leader-follower pairs in a Chinese energy organization. Afsar and Umrani (2020) found that 338 employees and their supervisors in the manufacturing and service sectors experienced similar outcomes. Furthermore, transformational leaders encourage innovation by offering tailored assistance, establishing a development-oriented atmosphere where employees feel appreciated and inspired to respond with originality and creative actions (Alhosani & Ahmad, 2024; Garg et al., 2023; Minh-Duc & Huu-Lam, 2019; Zhang et al., 2022). They stimulate employees' innovative capabilities by demonstrating

enthusiasm and optimism toward new ideas, encouraging exploration of creative solutions, and enhancing analytical and problem-solving skills through charismatic influence (Sosik, 1997). Moreover, transformational leaders empower employees to improve existing work processes, adopt new problem-solving strategies, and develop novel solutions, often resulting in a reciprocal exchange of effort and innovation between leaders and followers (Afsar et al., 2014).

Considering the above discussion, this study proposes the following hypothesis:

H2: There is a positive relationship between transformational leadership and innovative work behavior.

Conceptual Framework

This study offers a conceptual framework that places employees' innovative behaviors at work and job satisfaction as the dependent variables and transformational leadership as the independent variable.

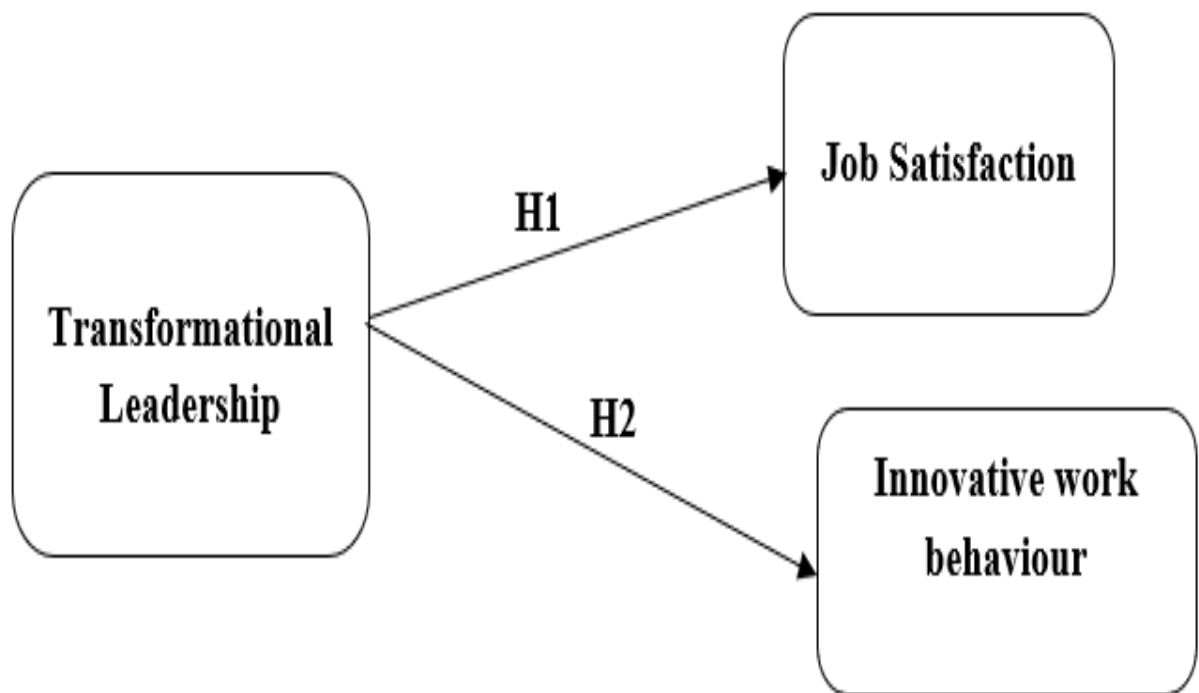


Figure1. The Conceptual model

METHODOLOGY

We conducted a systematic and organized review to examine the effects of transformational leadership on Innovative work behaviour and job satisfaction. Our review commenced with an extensive and systematic literature search across multiple academic databases, including but not limited to Academia, ResearchGate, Google Scholar, Sage, Emerald, JSTOR, Sci-Hub, ScienceDirect, ProQuest, and Springer were consulted, covering studies from 1976 to 2025. This carefully crafted search strategy aimed to encompass a wide range of research articles, ensuring inclusivity and comprehensiveness in our selection process. To ensure the quality and relevance of the selected articles, we established clear criteria for inclusion and exclusion. Papers were taken into account for inclusion if they were related to our study and was available in the English language across the aforementioned academic databases. Studies not meeting these criteria were excluded from our review.

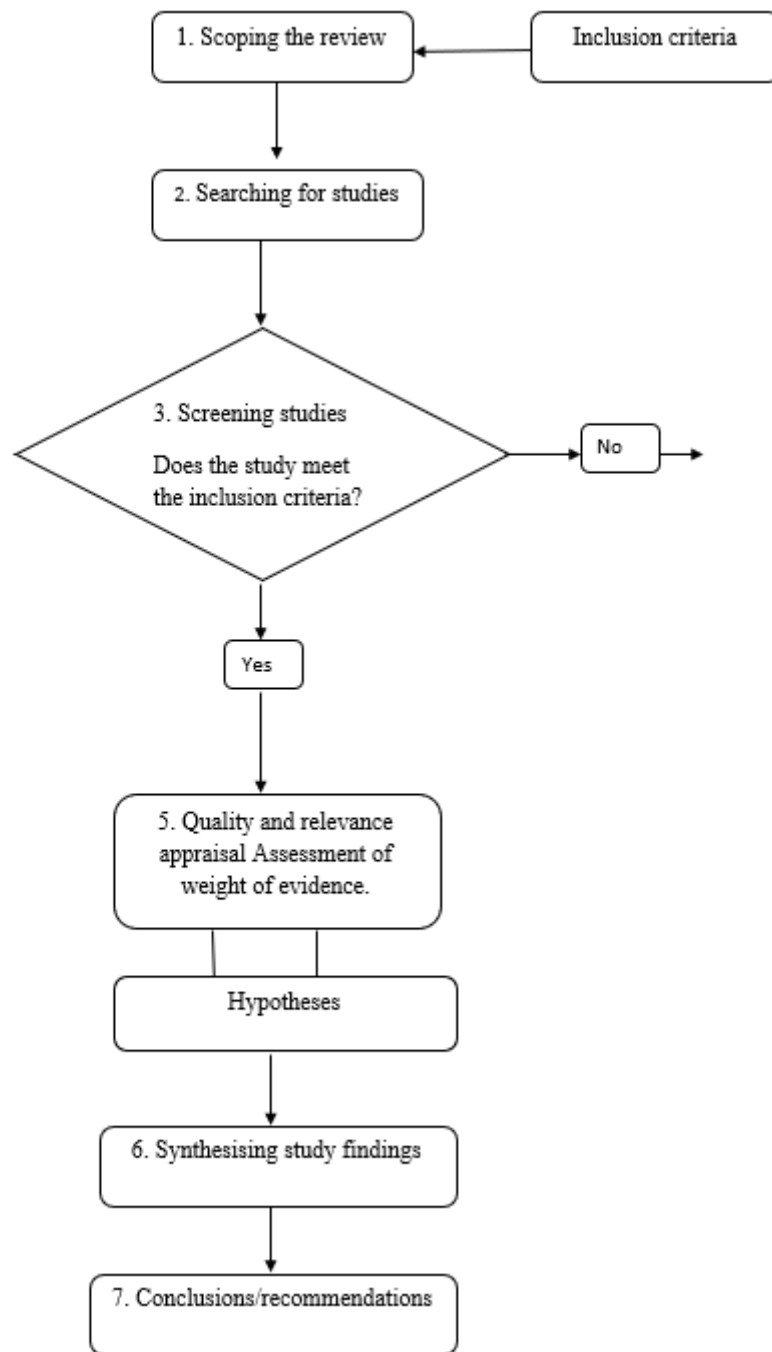


Fig. 2. Flow chart illustrating systematic review process.

Systematic literature review (SLR), also called systematic research synthesis (SRS), was the methodology used in this study to collect data for the interpretation of the publication. The definition of "a research synthesis" is "the systematic accumulation, analysis, and reflective interpretation of the full body of relevant empirical evidence related to a question" (Rousseau et al., 2008) was used by the study. The goals of doing a research synthesis are to make public policy, develop management practice recommendations, and make scientific discoveries and explanations (Rousseau et al., 2008).

The methodology used for the synthesis involved broad, open-ended, and in-depth searches of pertinent databases that were suitable for concentrating on the research topic: *What is the impact of transformational leadership on job satisfaction and innovative work behaviour?*

The following criteria were used for identifying and gathering relevant literature for this review:

1. **Search Terms:** Key terms such as "transformational leadership," "job satisfaction," "innovative work behaviour," "employee outcomes," and "leadership effectiveness" were applied. Boolean combinations (e.g., "transformational leadership" AND "job satisfaction"; "transformational leadership" AND "innovation") were also used to refine searches.

2. **Types of Sources:** Only peer-reviewed journal articles, book chapters, and scholarly books were considered. Non-academic sources, editorials, and unpublished manuscripts were excluded.
3. **Databases and Search Engines:** Searches were conducted across widely recognized academic databases, including Google Scholar, ScienceDirect, Emerald Insight, JSTOR, ProQuest, SAGE, and SpringerLink. Additional materials were accessed via the University library system to ensure comprehensive coverage.
4. **Timeframe:** No strict chronological restrictions were imposed. However, priority was given to studies published between **1985 and 2025** to capture both foundational and contemporary perspectives on transformational leadership.
5. **Final Selection:** A total of **105 publications** (96 journal articles and 9 books/working papers) were included in the review after applying inclusion and exclusion criteria.

Figure 2. Criteria for Inclusion and Exclusion

Criteria	Inclusion	Exclusion
Time Line	from 1976 to 2025	< 1976
Article type chapter review, short survey, book and conference review	Journal (Empirical Data), Thesis, books	Conference paper, Chapter
Language	English	Non-English

Figure 3. Detail of Books and Research Articles

Sr. No.	Description	Numbers of study material
1	Books, Thesis and project, working paper	9
2	Research Article	96
4	Total	105

DISCUSSION

Transformational leadership significantly influences both job satisfaction and innovative work behaviour (IWB) by fostering an environment of inspiration, motivation, and shared vision. Leaders who adopt this style articulate a compelling organizational vision and communicate it effectively, helping employees develop a sense of purpose and direction. This shared vision enhances job satisfaction by creating a positive and fulfilling workplace atmosphere where employees feel valued and engaged. A central aspect of transformational leadership is its emphasis on fostering individual growth and development. Leaders inspire employees to reach their full potential by promoting learning, skill development, and career advancement. Together with transformational leadership's motivating qualities, this emphasis on growth encourages employees to put aside their individual interests and strive toward group objectives. Employee satisfaction is increased by such motivating strategies, which also promote innovative behavior by making employees more likely to suggest and carry out ideas that are beneficial to the organization. Studies have indicated that transformational leadership has a crucial role in fostering innovation and creativity inside organizations. By supporting employees in developing and executing novel ideas, transformational leaders enhance both individual performance and overall productivity. As proposed by Burns (1978), transformational leadership enables leaders to improve their abilities, challenge traditional practices, and inspire followers to achieve higher performance levels. Employees under transformational leaders tend to exhibit greater engagement, creativity, and willingness to contribute to organizational innovation, resulting in positive outcomes for both low- and high-performing organizations. Overall, job satisfaction and innovative work behaviour are closely linked under transformational leadership. Leaders who combine vision, encouragement, and support not only boost employees' job satisfaction but also encourage their creative potential, highlighting the vital role transformational leadership plays in fostering organizational and employee success.

CONCLUSION

This analysis confirms that transformational leadership is essential in influencing employee outcomes, especially innovative work behaviors and job satisfaction. The vast majority of research shows that leaders who develop a compelling vision, encourage intellectual development, and offer tailored assistance build work environments that boost motivation and engagement. However, evidence also reveals variations depending on organizational culture, industry, and national context. For example, while many studies link transformational leadership to higher job satisfaction, others suggest that its effectiveness may diminish in highly bureaucratic or resource-constrained environments. Similarly, the relationship with innovative work behaviour is often shaped by mediating factors such as psychological empowerment and moderating conditions such as autonomy and team climate. This review synthesizes evidence across diverse empirical studies, moving

beyond description to highlight both consistencies and contradictions in the literature. It also identifies several gaps that warrant further research, including the need for longitudinal designs, cross-cultural comparisons, and greater exploration of digital-era leadership challenges. Practically, the findings underscore that organizations seeking to build motivated and innovative workforces must invest in developing transformational leadership competencies, while remaining sensitive to contextual conditions that influence their effectiveness. Organizational performance and reputation are strengthened by transformational leadership, which also increases employee satisfaction and employees' innovative behavior. By supporting employees in managing responsibilities and reducing stress, transformational leaders facilitate higher engagement and productivity. Such leaders actively involve employees in generating innovative ideas, creating mutual benefits for both individuals and the organization. Strategically applied, transformational leadership fosters skill development, motivates employees, and encourages retention, ultimately contributing to organizational success. Its efficacy, however, hinges on the leader's capacity to adjust to organizational difficulties and effectively mentor employees, underscoring the vital role that capable transformational leadership plays in fostering productive workplace outcomes. In conclusion, transformational leadership has varying effects in different organizational contexts, even though it greatly increases employee satisfaction and innovative behavior. To provide a more nuanced view of transformational leadership's role in forming contemporary workplaces, future study should continue to examine when, where, and for whom it works best.

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