

TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND JOB SATISFACTION

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Povzetek There has always been discussion about how transformational leadership influences employees` job satisfaction and by doing so positively influences their performance. It is the main goal of this paper to analyze the influence of transformational leadership on job satisfaction.

The data used for the analysis was collected via standardized internet survey in German. In the survey two standardized questionnaires were used: The SAZ (Scale for measuring job satisfaction) and the LSA (Leadership Style Assistant).

The results demonstrate a statistically significant correlation between transformational leadership and job satisfaction with a beta of 0.417 ($p < .01$). Next to the main finding, it can be shown, that the influence of transformational leadership on job satisfaction is stronger for male employees with higher education.

It can be shown, that transformational leadership is a way to improve employees` job satisfaction although individual employees react different depending on gender and education. That can be explained by different expectations on leadership as well as the influence of leadership on work organization, flexibility and inspiration.

Keywords:
leadership,
job
satisfaction,
transformational
leadership,
job,
motivation.

1 Introduction

One of the biggest challenges for companies is to provide adequate management and leadership to employees. Leadership style as well as leadership behavior has an important impact on employees job satisfaction. The management style currently most frequently discussed in literature is transformational management style also known as transformational leadership. In Particular, supporting and increasing employee satisfaction in particular places high demands on management and leadership style, because a multitude of expectations needs to be fulfilled. Young employees especially value their private lives (David, 2017). The work-life balance plays a major role. Therefore work must be flexible and adaptable (Phillips, 2019). These employee demands affect profitability and corporate performance immensely. The management style currently most frequently applied and discussed in this regard is the transformational management style (Muslichah, 2018). The focus of this paper is to investigate the effects of this leadership style on the job satisfaction of employees. It is the goal of this research to analyze the effect of leading behavior related to transformational leadership style on the individual perceived job satisfaction of employees. By doing this the question can be answered how transformational leadership style has an influence on job satisfaction.

The investigation of the impact of transformational leadership on work satisfaction is worthwhile from three perspectives (Kauffeld & Schermuly, 2014). From a business management and organization theory point of view, it is certainly most important that job satisfaction can be understood as a method for achieving organizational goals. On the one hand, job satisfaction counteracts organizational problems such as high fluctuation and absenteeism from work, on the other hand, job satisfaction can improve work performance. From a humanitarian perspective, job satisfaction can also contribute to the quality of life of employees. From a societal

perspective, job satisfaction can also help to create acceptance for the prevailing economic and social system (Kauffeld & Schermuly, 2014).

Job satisfaction is a concept that is assigned to work and organizational psychology. According to Edwin A. Locke job satisfaction results from the perception that a job for employees fulfils or permits their important work values (Hen & Locke, 1985). If the values of work are achieved, it promotes an emotion, namely that of satisfaction. If, on the other hand, the work values are not achieved, frustration follows, so that an unpleasant emotion, namely that of dissatisfaction, arises. The intensity of this emotional reaction depends on the importance of the values whose fulfilment is facilitated or disappointed by the work experience (Hen & Locke, 1985). Also, Paul E. Spector (1997) understands job satisfaction to be the way people feel about their work and various aspects of their work. Supervision and leadership are among the important facets of working conditions and tasks (Felfe & Six, 2006). Job satisfaction is the extent to which employees like their work (job satisfaction) or dislike it (job dissatisfaction). Spector, like Locke, assumes that job satisfaction is based on emotions and argues that job satisfaction is an important influencing factor for organizations. Ansfried B. Weinert defines job satisfaction as an employee's positive feeling and attitude towards his or her job. He distinguishes between three components (Weinert, 2015). The important affective component of job satisfaction is the feelings of the employee. Job satisfaction can also be seen as an attitude. This can be in the attitude that his work is boring, stimulating or challenging (Weinert, 2015). It is important to make a distinction to the concept of work motivation. Friedman. W. Nerdinger defines motivation as an explanatory component of the direction, intensity and endurance of human behavior (Nerdinger, 2014b). Uwe and Trudi Kleinbeck describe work motivation as a mental state that promotes the desired productivity of work activities (Kleinbeck & Kleinbeck, 2009). At the same time, the Kleinbecks describe work motivation as a prerequisite for productive work. It can be seen that job satisfaction certainly falls within the scope of work motivation

(Kleinbeck & Kleinbeck, 2009). However, work motivation and job satisfaction are two different issues. Job satisfaction refers to the perception and feeling of an employee's work, whereas work motivation has an impact on a person's behavior, for example how well or badly he or she does his or her job (Kauffeld & Schermuly, 2019). Job satisfaction is thus a kind of preliminary stage or condition for work motivation

Transformational leadership (Volmer, 2013), further developed by James MacGregor Burns and later Bernard M. Bass, is one of the most frequently discussed leadership theories (Kaehler, 2017; Steiger, 2013). In detail, the transformational leadership approach consists of transformational and transactional leadership (Volmer, 2013) and is situation-dependent as a leadership style (Achouri, 2011). With the transactional management style, the manager communicates goals clearly and concisely. At the same time, it offers the prospect of rewards if these objectives are achieved (Cohrs, 2015). However, if the target is not achieved, the manager can introduce sanctions as a punishment (Ahangar, 2009). Transformational leadership, as an exchange relationship between leaders and employees, is a necessary condition for a transformational leadership style.

The goal of the transformational leadership style is to influence the key beliefs of the employees being led. Based on individual appreciation and inspiration, employees are encouraged, among other things, to develop a new point of view, to adapt their demands and attitudes and to pursue new goals. According to Bass, transformational leadership means that leaders expand and promote the interests of their employees. They can do this by creating awareness and acceptance for the purpose and tasks of the employees. Furthermore, managers can motivate employees to act beyond their own interests and for the benefit of the Group (Bass, 1990).

Four components can be assigned to transformational leadership: (1) charismatic behavior, (2) inspiring motivation, (3) intellectual stimulation and (4) individual appreciation. With regard to the charismatic behavior component, the supervisor serves as a role model for employees, who place their trust in their supervisor. The aim is to get employees to do the same. Within the framework of inspiring motivation, superiors develop challenging goals together with their employees, for example. Goals relate the work of employees to the company's goals and thus give it more significance and meaning. As a further aspect of transformational leadership, managers motivate their employees to question existing processes and develop new approaches to solutions. With their confidence in the innovative ability and creativity of their employees, managers create intellectual stimulation. In the fourth and last component of transformational leadership, the individual appreciation of employees, the supervisor acts as mentor and coach (Kaudela-Baum, Holzer & Kocher, 2014). With the help of transformational leadership, managers should give employees a feeling of size, strength and success (Kanning, 2012).

To summarize, in transformational leadership, employees are emotionally influenced by their managers. The purpose is to bring about a change in thinking so that employees can identify with their company. For employees the success of the company is seen as an intrinsic reward instead of pursuing their own interests (Kanning, 2012).

It becomes clear how job satisfaction, i.e. construct of inner state and sensation, could be related to a leadership approach of emotional influence.

Bruggemann et al. developed a theoretical model which distinguishes between six levels of job satisfaction (Kircher & Hölzl, 2011). The researchers assume that situation-specific needs and expectations develop when an employee learns how the characteristics of the work situation affect his or her general needs (Bruggemann

et.al., 1975). This results in a target value for concrete needs and expectations in relation to the work situation. The actual value corresponds to the concrete characteristics of the work situation. A comparison is then made on a scale between satisfied and dissatisfied for actual and target values. From this analysis, the satisfaction levels are progressive, stabilized, resignative, pseudo, fixed and constructive. The researchers assume that from time to time every employee experiences the different forms of job satisfaction (Bruggemann et.al., 1975). The model can help to identify the individual form of job satisfaction and, if necessary, to counteract it accordingly. For the determination of the actual value, recognition, praise and the behavior of the manager play an important role among other factors.

The model of determinants of job satisfaction (Kirchler & Hölzl, 2011) according to Lawler takes the different aspects of work into account more than Herzberg's two-factor theory (Weinert, 2015). It is based on Porter and Lawler's circulation model of work motivation (Kals & Gallenmüller-Roschmann, 2017). For researchers, job satisfaction is a balance between expected and actual rewards (Kals & Gallenmüller-Roschmann, 2017). If the reward is in line with his expectations, the employee is satisfied. If, on the other hand, the reward is lower than the employee thought, his mood will turn to dissatisfaction. Lawler's model is similar to the equality theory, which calls for a fair distribution of rewards between employees and companies (Fließ, 2006). As soon as the employee receives a higher reward than he/she actually expected, he/she develops a dissatisfaction at work. For this reason, according to Lawler, job satisfaction can only arise if the actual rewards meet expectations. Rewards in this model are not exclusively monetary but may also include promotion or recognition of the leader. These aspects, in turn, collectively reflect an employee's feelings about their work and, according to Lawler, constitute overall job satisfaction (Weinert, 2015).

Common to all models is that the behavior of the manager plays a significant role in creating job satisfaction. The following hypothesis can therefore be derived from the definitions and theoretical models described above:

There is a positive correlation between transformational leadership style and the job satisfaction of employees.

In the following, relevant current findings from previous research on the connection between job satisfaction and leadership are presented in order to highlight the research gap.

Some studies deal with the type of leadership preferred by employees. In 2018, for example, Merve Bako (2018) carried out a study that looked at how the choice of leadership style differs across four generations (baby boomers and generations X, Y and Z). According to the research results, Generation Y prefers e.g. helpful leaders and those with a sense of community as well as real connections and more autonomy at work.

Other management styles are also the focus of research. A study conducted in Germany in 2017 dealt with the emotional leadership style (Kraus, 2017). The researcher Markus Kraus came to the conclusion that employees prefer the visionary leadership style (the manager defines goals but leaves the employee freedom to achieve the goal on their own path).

Further research investigates moderating and mediating effects of different variables between leadership behavior and job satisfaction. In 2018, for example, the effects of transformational leadership styles on job satisfaction has been investigated with trust in the manager as an intervening variable (Muslichah, 2018). This research provides evidence that the transformational leadership style has a positive and significant effect on trust in the leader. In summary, job satisfaction can be achieved

when managers apply the transformational leadership style and offer employees both task and relationship support.

Another line of research deals with the relationship between job satisfaction and performance. The results of a study from Indriani (2019) show that employee performance is positively influenced by motivation, which leads to improved job satisfaction, which in turn increases employee motivation. This leads to an improvement in the performance of the employees. Motivation can act as an intervening variable to influence the job satisfaction of employees in relation to their performance. The higher the job satisfaction of the employees, the higher their motivation, as it has a direct effect on the performance of the employees.

It becomes clear that there are not enough studies on the direct connection between transformational leadership and job satisfaction. In particular, there is a lack of studies that classify the leadership behavior of superiors from the perspective of employees with regard to transformational leadership and at the same time measure various aspects of job satisfaction. The empirical study presented in the following section aims to close this gap. In order to test the hypotheses and answer the research question, suitable and valid measuring instruments are used both for the management style of the superiors of the surveyed employees and for their job satisfaction.

2 Methods

The questionnaire of the test LSA - Leadership Style Assessment (Peus, Braun & Frey, 2015) was used to assess transformational and transactional leadership. The LSA is based on the full-range leadership model of Bass and Avolio (Peus, Braun & Frey, 2015). It covers the complete range of different leadership styles of the full-range leadership model, including the punishment for failure to achieve the goal.

The test was developed in 2015 by Claudia Peus, Suanne Braun and Dieter Frey. The LSA applies "the principle of the *Situational Judgement Test*". The participants are presented with comparable, simulated everyday situations and are encouraged to answer them as realistically as possible (Pundt, 2017). A distinction is made between employee and manager (external and self-assessment), which is why there are two questionnaires. In the context of this work, the LSA-M questionnaire for employees (external assessment) was used. The LSA-M consists of eight situations in which employees can come together with their leaders. These are: (1) Mistake of employee in presentations, (2) Implementing new rules of cooperation, (3) Dealing with Conflict between employees, (4) Motivation in project behavior, (5) dealing with a mistake the leader did him- or herself, (6) dealing with hierarchy, (7) integration of new employees, (8) team-conflicts due to competition. The employees are supposed to give an assessment of their manager here. To do this the questionnaire offers eight optional reactions the leader could show in every situation. The participant is asked what the probability of the predefined reactions would be? The reactions are each a dimension of the full-range leadership model. The probabilities are assessed using a Likert scale from 1 (= very unlikely) to 5 (= very likely). This is a fully standardized procedure (Peus, Braun & Frey, 2015). For the current research project 4 of the eight situations were used to test transformational leadership-style, focused on the 4 situations, most participants could identify with. Also, these 4 seemed to be the most appropriate to investigate the hypothesis presented here regarding specifically the transformational leadership style: (1) Implementing new rules of cooperation, (2) Dealing with Conflict between employees, (3) Motivation in project behavior (4) How the manager deals with his own mistake. As the full-range leadership model is used in the eight reaction options and not in the situations, the LSA-M can still be used. Also due to the processing time of the LSA-M (approx. 20-30 minutes) the questionnaire was shortened during the investigation. The background to this is that if the processing time is too long, the drop-out rate of volunteer participants could increase. So, the short version of 4 situation was used. Participants were asked to

rate the probabilities of The average score of transformational leadership on a scale between 1 and 5 was calculated afterwards and used as variable. The LSA-M has internal consistencies according to Cronbach's Alpha of .79 and .91, so this method has proven to be reliable (Pundt, 2017). Full LSA-M questionnaire (here used in German language) can be ordered via Hogrefe Verlag¹.

In order to measure job satisfaction, the survey used the Scale for the Measurement of Job Satisfaction (SAZ) (Fischer & Lück, 2014). The SAZ serves to measure individual job satisfaction and was developed already in 1972 by Lorenz Fischer and Helmut Lück (Felfe & Six, 2006). The two researchers assume that "the psychological, physiological and social reactions of employees are related to individual aspects of the workplace"(Fischer & Lück, 2014). With the help of the SAZ, they look at the general attitude towards work as well as individual facets of working life (Fischer & Lück, 2014). The SAZ comprises a total of 37 items. Four aspects are presented: "Self-fulfilment, resignation, satisfaction with the payment, as well as the assessment of the company"(Fischer & Lück, 2014). Of the 37 items, only 36 items are included in the evaluation, since the first item is considered an introduction to the test. There is a short version of the SAZ, which consists of the eight most selective items.² This was used in the present investigation. This was used because Fischer and Lück define the eight questions from the short version (SAZK) as the most separable and distinguishable items. Question categories on the SAZK are: (1) having no joy at work, (2) having joy at work, (3) work is always the same, (4) work is interesting, (5) can make use of my talents, (6) having enough career opportunities, (7) happiness with speed of work and (8) choosing same job again. These categories are questioned in a 5 scale from (1) yes much, (2) quite yes, (3) neither to (4) quite no and (5) no. The 8th question is about the same job selection in the future and participants can decide from (1) yes sure and (2) quite sure to (3)

¹ <https://www.testzentrale.de/shop/leadership-style-assessment.html>, accessed 01.02.2019.

² <http://arbeitszufriedenheit.net/saz/>, accessed 03.07.2019.

neither, (4) quite no and (5) not at all. Depending on the direction of the question (positive for job satisfaction of bad for job satisfaction) the answer scale 5 to 1 was transformed into points following the rule: positive for job satisfaction answer (1) very much equals 5 points vs. bad for job satisfaction answer (5) no equals 5 points. Out of all 8 Questions regarding the job satisfaction following the rules of analyze the variable job satisfaction was calculated by summing up all points. Higher Point equals higher job satisfaction. The Cronbachs Alpha is at .91. This means that this method has a very high reliability and proves to be reliable overall. The SAZ has established itself as the first standardized German-language procedure for measuring job satisfaction. On the GESI website the full questionnaire can be downloaded in German inclusive measurement guidelines.³ Questionnaire and data measurement followed these guidelines.

The data were collected in a standardized Internet survey (Raab-Steiner & Benesch, 2015) using the platform SurveyCircle handled out randomly via E-Mail and Social Media. It was the major goal to reach out to as many participants as possible. The only criteria to be excluded from the survey was no work experience. Here, the respondents fill out an online questionnaire. Since the survey is intended to measure job satisfaction, the survey was directed exclusively at regularly employed people. No matter if full time, part time or any other atypical work relation. In addition to sociodemographic questions on gender, age, education and work experience, the questionnaire mainly collects the described questions on job satisfaction and transformational leadership. The participants were able to take part in the survey between 09/04/2019 and 08/07/2019 inclusive. The survey was thus available online for a total of three months.

3 Results

³ <http://arbeitszufriedenheit.net/saz/>, accessed 03.07.2019.

In total, the data of 339 participants can be evaluated. 550 people started the questionnaire. That leads to a return rate of fully filled answers of 62%. 3 people had to be excluded from the analysis due to the fact that they had no work experience. 33% of the survey participants are male, 67% female. Average age of the participants is 30 years. A total of 254 participants (75%) stated that they had successfully completed a bachelor's degree or higher. On average the participants have a work experience of 7.7 years. Transformational Leadership score has a mean of 3.8 (maximum of 5). Average job satisfaction is 3.48 on a scale between 1 and 5.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Age (years)	339	29.9705	6.299175	20	55
Studies (1=B.A.)	339	.7492625	.4340783	0	1
Work Exp. (years)	339	7.707965	6.463619	0	40
Gender (1=female)	339	.6725664	.4699706	0	1
Transf. Leadership	339	3.868732	.681613	1.5	5
Job Satisfaction	339	3.486726	.7780794	1	5

The average scores of the variables transformational leadership and job satisfaction correlate strongly in a positive way ($r = 0.34$). On the basis of multivariate regressions it can be shown that transformational leadership has a stable significant influence on job satisfaction (Table 1). The influence is even quite high in the OLS estimate with the coefficient 0.41 and significant at the 1% level ($p < .01$). The influence remains stable even when the socio-demographic control variables are added for control. The measurements show that when the management style of the superiors of the surveyed employees is transformational, the job satisfaction of the respondents increases. The effect remains stable even with separate estimates for men and women. (Table 2, models 3 and 4) Men have a higher coefficient (0.48, $p < .01$) of influence than women (0.39, $p < .01$). This confirms the hypothesis. There is a

positive correlation between transformational leadership style and the job satisfaction of employees. When considering the control variables, it is interesting to note that the level of education or, more precisely, completed studies also have a significantly positive influence on job satisfaction ($p < 0.1$) (model 2). When estimated separately by gender (Table 2, models 3 and 4), the effect of education tends to be more evident in male workers (coefficient 0.366, $p < 0.05$). However, it must be held in mind that the estimate for female employees shows a higher constant. This means that female employees already start with a higher value of job satisfaction.

Table 2: Factors influencing job satisfaction (OLS estimates)

	(1)	(2)
	Job satisfaction	Job satisfaction
Transformational Leadership	0.417*** (0.058)	0.426*** (0.058)
Gender (1=Woman)		-0.135 (0.084)
Age (in years)		0.001 (0.012)
Study (1=yes)		0.163* (0.092)
Work experience (in years)		0.003 (0.012)
Constant	1.873*** (0.227)	1.757*** (0.381)
Number of observations	339	339
Pseudo R ²	0.131	0.138
Prob > chi2	0.000	0.000

Comments: Standard errors in brackets. *, **, *** show significance at the 10%, 5% and 1% levels. * $p < 0.1$, $p < 0.05$, $p < 0.01$

Table 3: Factors influencing job satisfaction by gender (OLS estimates)

	(3)	(4)
	Job satisfaction Women	Job satisfaction Men
Transformational Leadership	0.392*** (0.072)	0.487*** (0.097)
Age (in years)	-0.006 (0.016)	0.012 (0.019)
Study (1=yes)	0.081 (0.111)	0.366** (0.168)
Work experience (in years)	0.012 (0.015)	-0.008 (0.019)
Constant	1.952*** (0.479)	1.131* (0.612)
Number of observations	228	111
Pseudo R ²	0.106	0.195
Prob > chi2	0.000	0.000

Comments: Standard errors in brackets. *, **, *** show significance at the 10%, 5% and 1% levels. * $p < 0.1$, $p < .05$, $p < .01$

4 Discussion

The obtained results found are exciting, especially from a business and organizational perspective. If job satisfaction as a state, feeling and emotion of the employees leads to readiness to act, motivation and commitment, the transformational leadership obviously serves these extremely important organizational goals. Considering that transformational leadership is associated with extremely important characteristics for companies and employees, such as feedback or mentoring, the result also provides interesting insights into the principles and organization of leadership, corporate culture and human resource management. But also, from a humanistic perspective it is interesting to find that employees are obviously more satisfied with transformational leadership. Within this paper it can be shown, that the leadership style shown by the leader and perceived and reflected by the employees has a significant influence on job satisfaction and with this also on

all job-related factors that are influenced by job satisfaction itself. This can be an important addition to the current literature, showing that the general behavior of the leader is an important factor for employees work-related behavior. The combination of how a leader is dealing with implementing new rules of cooperation, dealing with Conflict between employees, motivation in project behavior or dealing with his own mistake out of the perception of the employees seems to have a strong influence on employees' job satisfaction over all. It becomes obvious that in case leaders show a leadership style following the ideas of transformational leading, employees see it as a benefit in work circumstances and culture of personal dealings. Over all it gets clear, that the expectation, employees have of leadership style is leading to different perceptions of job satisfaction. As leadership goes deep into work organization and in case of the transformational leadership style even inspiration and shaping a company's culture, leaders can learn a lot about how to deal with specific situations in the companies. Also, the additional findings, that the effect of education on job satisfaction tends to be more evident in male workers in quite interesting. This means that female employees already start with a higher value of job satisfaction. These effects can be explained by the still existing different roles of men and women in the world of work. For example, women are often more satisfied and more likely to appreciate employment than men, even when working conditions are poorer.

Of course, like any other research also this one has its limitations. The biggest one lies in the way of questioning itself. Although valid questionnaires have been combined, also more categories of leadership behavior could be measured. As it was the main goal of this research project to analyze the general impact of transformational leadership style on job satisfaction out of the perspective and perception on the employees, for future directions of research its will be interesting to look more on detail in specific leadership behavior and its effect on also detailed aspects of job satisfaction. For example, it could be interesting to analyze the leadership behavior in detail next to the reaction-categories of the LSA-M in

conversation atmosphere or feedback-style and feedback-frequency. Also, important result factors of job satisfaction like motivation and performance could be measured. In the background of digital business models, it could also be very interesting to investigate the role of personal contact and face to face communication in transformational leadership.

As a conclusion I think it is very interesting that transformational leadership style has such an impact on job satisfaction. I believe in the importance of getting aware of the influence of leadership as well on job satisfaction as on companies' culture and employees' wellbeing. Leaders should use the transformational leadership style more to improve their communication and specially to improve the relationship between employees and leadership circle.

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