



# Perceptions of Public Sector Employees on Transformational Leadership Characteristics Which Influencing Job Satisfaction

Omar Rashed Humaid Al Yahyae<sup>1</sup>, Mohd Amin Mohamad<sup>2\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Institute of Technology Management and Entrepreneurship,  
Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka, MALAYSIA

\*Corresponding Author

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30880/ijscet.2021.12.05.015>

Received 06 June 2021; Accepted 31 December 2021; Available online 31 December 2021

**Abstract:** This paper presents a study on assessing the transformational leadership styles characteristics influencing UAE public sector employees' job satisfaction. The literature review found four common types of transactional leadership styles characteristics: Individualized Consideration, Inspirational Motivation, Idealized Influence, and Intellectual Stimulation, which are considered to influence UAE public sector employees Job Satisfaction. Based on these characteristics, a structured questionnaire survey was conducted among UAE public sector employees to determine their level of influence on job satisfaction. It was found that younger respondents in the general worker category and having lower qualifications and working experiences preferred individualized consideration characteristics from the transformational leader could influence UAE public sector employees' job satisfaction. In contrast, older respondents in middle and top management with higher qualifications working experiences favoured idealized influence and intellectual stimulation characteristics that can influence job satisfaction of UAE public sector employees. It also found that the respondents have ranked Intellectual Stimulation as the most influential transformational leadership style characteristic.

**Keywords:** Transformational leadership, individualized consideration, inspirational motivation, idealized influence, intellectual stimulation

## 1. Introduction

Organizations increasingly face global challenges to maintain their competitiveness in the complex global market environment (Al-Awlaqi et al., 2021). The companies should look for alternative means of operation to be more competitive, efficient, and innovative (Bahadori et al., 2021). For an international business to succeed, it requires leaders to recognize cultural differences that could affect business practices in other countries (Zhang & Kang, 2020). Leaders need to know the Global Virtual Teams (Wilson, 2020). A study by Wang et al. (2020) indicated that leadership is a mechanism or means which can affect others' behaviour through individuality and intellectuality. Leaders are unique with different leadership styles that can shift others, and some leaders are more successful than others (Scicluna and Sammut, 2020). Leaders play a crucial role in achieving the organization's goal by boosting the performance of employees by satisfying them with their jobs. Several researchers have studied different aspects of leadership. According to Saleem (2015), Leadership is the key to trust that comes from respect for others. Angka et al. (2016) researched leadership and styles and suggested that influential leaders use their powers to improve their followers and organizations. Leadership

can be one of the leading forces to boost the quality and creativity of an organisation (Ali et al., 2013; Anastasiou and Garametsi, 2021). Leadership is directly connected to practices that involve people (Alonderiene et al. 2016). Most significant leaders have influential personalities, which positively affects job satisfaction and performance (Lim et al., 2017).

Most researchers have emphasized the importance of transformational leadership compared to transactional leadership. Boamah et al. (2018) articulating transformational style, which is more effective than transactional, is based upon personal skills, preferences, and experiences regardless of organizational nature. However, transactional leadership adversely affects the organization's output (Qing et al., 2019; Odeh et al., 2021). Where the situation is unclear, a leader must follow the transformation style to identify the key circumstances and select the correct style. Transformational leadership positively affects self-knowledge and enhances the expected performance value in terms of team financial performance. Transactional leadership is more successful if organizations achieve their goals and aims. This is because supervisors play an essential role in job satisfaction and lead new thinking. Still, transformer leaders on the other hand, may spend some time using their power to achieve personal objectives. Employees also contribute to transformative leadership. Moyes (2007) indicated that employers' loyalty and work longevity contribute to developing the correlation between leadership and job satisfaction. It also found a stronger association between change management and work satisfaction. (Alghamdi et al., 2018). Employees' perception of their work is an essential element in assessing job satisfaction. The perception refers to the reputation of their work, the growth of their jobs, and employees' self-esteem. Even though there are many studies on transformational leadership styles, there is still a lack of work on UAE leadership styles used in the organizational sector. Hence, the study aimed to identify transformational leadership characteristics influencing employees' job satisfaction in UAE public sector organizations from the employees' perspectives using a structured questionnaire survey.

## **2. Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs)**

### **2.1 Job Satisfaction**

Job satisfaction is measured in many forms, and it reveals how employees experienced while conducting their tasks. The critical element of job satisfaction is that it creates the feeling of belonging both to the workplace and to the organizational culture. Job satisfaction provides a productive atmosphere (Cabrita and Perista, 2007; Hennicks, 2014). According to Spector (1997), job satisfaction is also known as job pleasure or happiness. It is the only way people behave about their work and the different facets of their employment. This depends to what degree people enjoy their work (satisfaction) or do not like them. Employees' satisfaction is their attitude concerning employment and the organizations they do these jobs. Elements that contribute to job satisfaction amongst others are the remuneration of the workforce, minimum wages, career development, working practices, management, traditions, and experiences.

### **2.2 Transformational Leadership Style**

The transformational leadership approach has arisen significantly in leadership strategy. In this approach, a leader takes care of their followers' desires and motivations, enabling them to achieve their full potential. (Northouse, 2013). Transformation leaders empower and motivate followers to meet goals. Also, to improve their leadership knowledge and skills to achieve specific priorities and objectives of the organizations and align within fulfilling their demands (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Change management involving transformation leaders is best viewed as a partnership between the leader and a follower rather than with his followers. (Ehrhart & Klein, 2001). Leader of change/transformation allows workers to decide the company's value, above and beyond themselves (McShane & Von Glinow, 2010; Bass, 1991).

Transformation leaders create an atmosphere where everyone is able to adapt to their highest needs and become a part of a diverse culture of learning. These leaders become helpers to others and direct them to build and accept a corporate mission that encourages, generates high results, and produces an atmosphere of confidence in the honesty, a purpose above itself, plurality in thought, and inclusiveness for all races. In addition, transformation leadership strengthens workplace engagement, spirituality, and efficiency through means of different strategies such as connecting the following to the mission, the corporate image, being a role model for employees, encouraging employees to get a better understanding of the intensity and the shortcomings of their workers to match their work Transformation control attributes may be referred to as (Odumeru & Ifeanyi, 2013):

- Proactive leaders.
- Leaders who can change the organizational culture by implementing new ideas.
- Leaders who motivate employees by encouraging them to put group interest first

Transformational leaders can develop a vision and strategy that can mobilize the organization, accept and work toward achieving the vision, and institutionalize any changes. Transformational Leadership is comprised of four main domains as follow (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Odumeru & Ognonna, 2013; Northouse, 2013; Moriano et al., 2014);

#### **i. Individualized Consideration**

In this domain, the leader attends to each employee’s needs and acts as a mentor to guide the employee. The leader pays attention to the alarms and requests of each employee. If possible, provide support and empathy based on the employee's situation and background.

**ii. Inspirational Motivation**

An inspirational motivation leader can articulate an appealing vision that inspires and motivates others to perform beyond expectations. These leaders have high expectations of the employee’s ability to meet goals and show the importance of all duties and responsibilities. In addition, it motivates the employees to have a strong sense of purpose by encouraging more effort to execute the given tasks.

**iii. Idealized Influence**

Transformational leaders have an idealized influence that acts as role models for the employees by engaging high standards of ethical behaviour. Employees having this leader will tend to emulate the leaders. These leaders have very high moral and ethical conduct standards that employees respect.

**iv. Intellectual Stimulation**

Intellectual stimulation is where the transformational leader can challenge norms, take risks and seek employees’ ideas. The leaders recognize the employee’s stimulation, creativity, and innovation. Dare to try new approaches and develop innovative ways to deal with organizational challenges.

Organizations must apply a transformational leadership approach since the changing global environment has obsolete old leadership theories related to the power of performative rewards (Shibru, 2011). In this sense, "transformative leadership is profoundly available to institutions, not just to deal with transition, but also to be involved in defining their potential," said McGough (Shibru, 2011)." In developing his leadership skills, the transformative leader will inspire and stimulate his followers to exceed their expectations. Communication plays a vital function in propagating a corporate agenda. Since in the success of any project numerous parties involved to work together, communication is one of the most important factors (Ahmed et al. 2021). Also, it helps in coordinating leaders to empower his supporters to help inspire them to accomplish this goal. Transformation leaders are seen as slaves who can improve their followers' inspiration, value who efficiency by including each follower. Given all of the above, it is critical that organizations effectively lead transitions in the global environment

**3. Methodology and Data Collection**

This study adopted a quantitative approach where the data was collected through a structured questionnaire survey. The targeted respondents were UAE public sector employees. The study implemented a non-probability sampling method where the sample to be taken is not known in advance. In this non-sampling method, several types of sampling include decision sampling, snowball sampling, quota sampling, and convenience sampling (Collis and Hussey, 2013). Convenience sampling refers to collecting a most readily available sample to contribute to the analysis and provide the necessary data (Kothari, 2004). Thus, this study adopted non-probability with a convenience sampling approach.

**3.1 Sample Size**

Since the population is unlimited or unknown, then the sample size for this study was determined using the following equation adapted from Enshassi and Al Swaity (2015).

$$SS = \frac{Z^2 \times P (1 - P)}{C^2}$$

Where,

SS = Sample Size

Z = Z value (1.96 for 95% confidence level)

P = percentage picking a choice expressed as a decimal (0.5 used for sample size needed)

C = margin of error (9 %), the maximum error of estimation which can be 9 or 8%.

$$SS = \frac{1.96^2 \times 0.5 (1 - 0.5)}{0.09^2} = 118.57 \cong \approx 119$$

**3.2 Demography of respondents**

For collecting data, 300 questionnaire forms were distributed among the participants working in public sector in the UAE. However, this study managed to collect back 266 completed questionnaire form. This indicates a response rate of 88.67%, more than the required sample size. The demography of the respondents participating in the survey is presented in table 1.

**Table 1 - Rrespondents’ demography**

Items	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Age</b>		
20-30 years	75	28.2%
31-40 years	133	50.0%
41-60 years	58	21.8%
<b>Educational Level</b>		
Certificate	57	21.4%
Diploma	55	20.7%
Degree	154	57.9%
<b>Working experience</b>		
5-10 years	70	26.3%
11-20 years	105	39.5%
More than 20 years	91	34.2%
<b>Status in organisation</b>		
General worker	171	64.3%
Middle management	65	24.4%
Top management	30	11.3%

Table 1 shows that more than 50% of the respondents have age above 30 years old, indicating that most of the respondents are mature enough to answer the questionnaire. Around 58% of respondents have completed a bachelor's degree among the participants. In addition, more than 70% of respondents have working experience of ten years. This reveals that the respondents have adequate expertise and educational qualifications to answer the required questions.

### 3.3 Reliability Test

Data collected from this study was tested for its consistency. The consistency of the data can be tested with reliability assessment (Almarashda et al 2021, Memon et al. 2016). The reliability test validates a research instrument's internal consistency and stability of the data (Memon 2013). The indicator for this test is Cronbach's alpha coefficient/value, and the data is considered satisfactory if the Alpha value is more than 0.7 (Munir et al. 2019). In this study, Cronbach Alpha values for all the groups of the characteristics are shown in table 2.

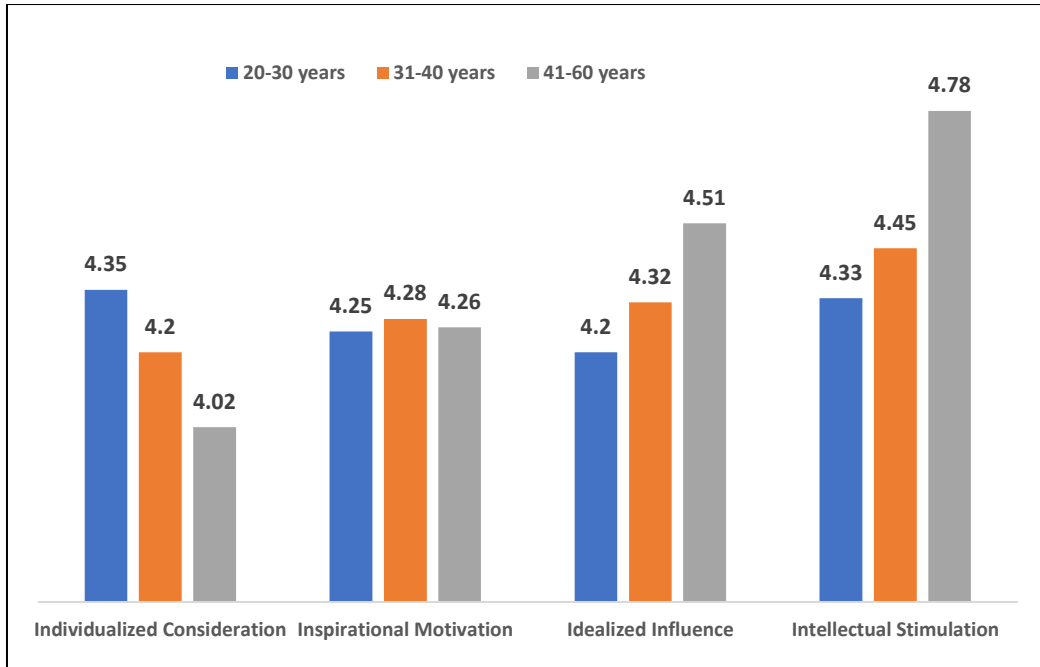
**Table 2 - Reliability test data**

No	Transformational leadership characteristics	Cronbach Alpha value
1	Individualized Consideration	0.86
2	Inspirational Motivation	0.79
3	Idealized Influence	0.88
4	Intellectual Stimulation	0.89

Table 2 indicates that the Alpha values for all the four characteristics are above 0.7. Hence, the collected data from the questionnaire survey is considered reliable and valid for further analysis.

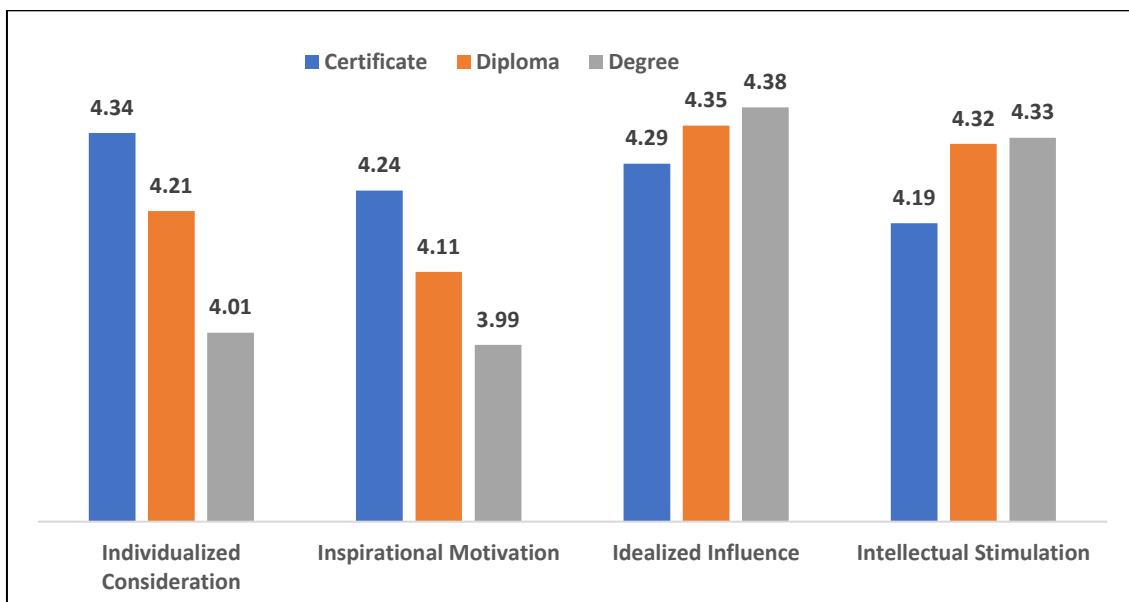
## 4. Respondents Perception on Transformational Leadership Styles Characteristics

The data was analysed to understand respondents' perceptions on the characteristics that influence job satisfaction based on age, education, working experience, and status in the organization of the respondents' group. Analysis was carried out with mean value calculation. The perception of the respondents based on respondents' ages is presented in figure 1.



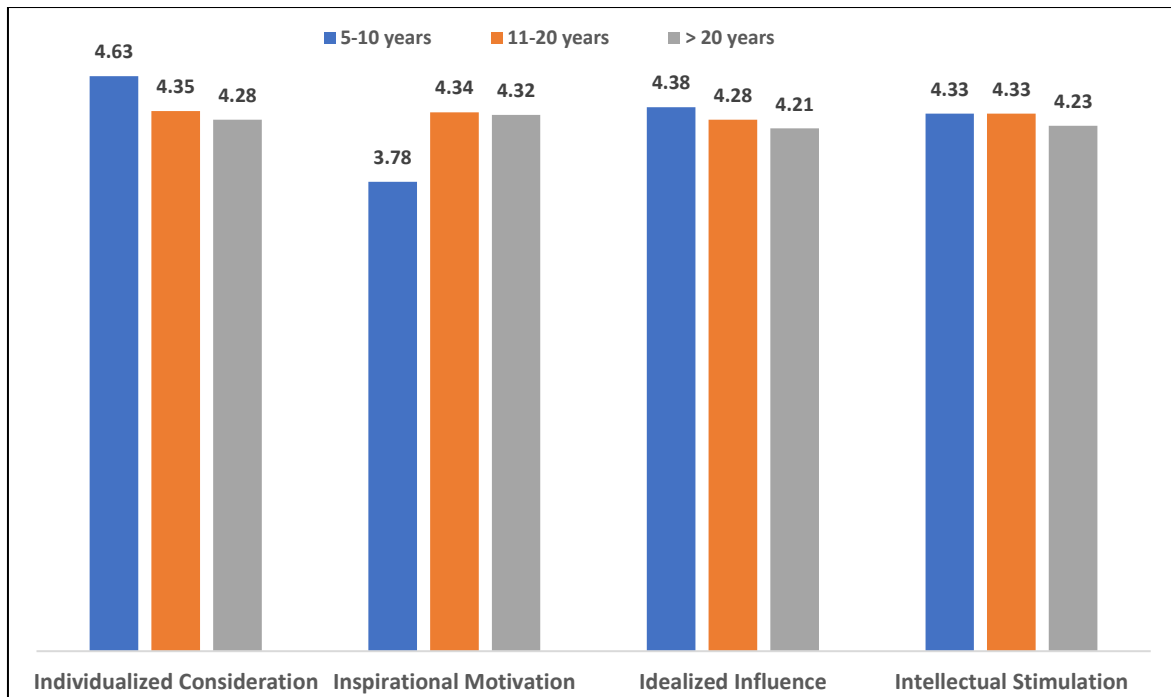
**Fig. 1 - Perception of leadership characteristics based on respondents age group**

Figure 1 indicates that only one characteristic, inspirational motivation has an almost similar mean score. This implies that all the respondents' age has not much effect on the characteristic's perception on influencing UAE public sector employee's job satisfaction. Individualized consideration is where the leader attends to each employee's needs and mentors to guide the employee. The lower age group favours this as compared to the older age group. However, older respondents are more established and may need less individual consideration. Hence, they rated idealized influence and intellectual stimulation characteristics higher than the younger respondents. The respondents' perception of characteristics from different based on qualification is analysed and presented in figure 2.



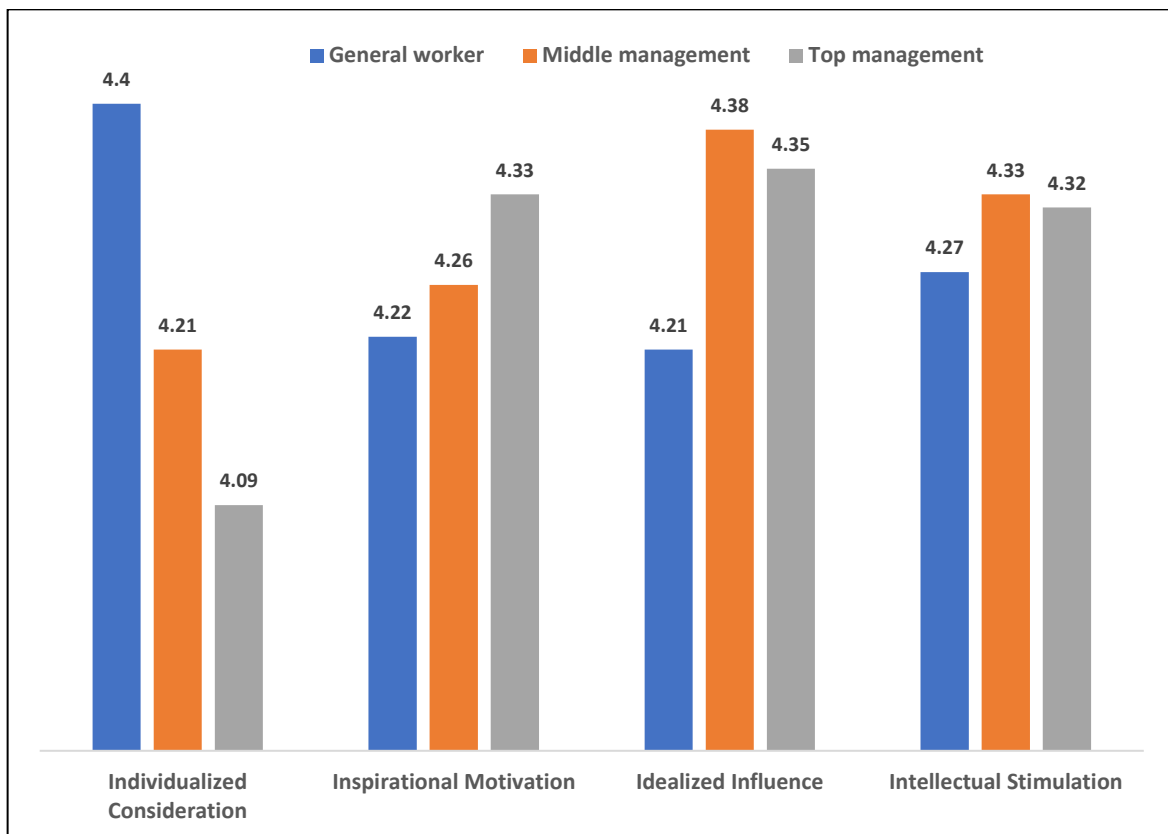
**Fig. 2 - Perception of leadership characteristics based on respondents qualification group**

Figure 2 shows that respondents with low qualifications pointed out that individualized consideration characteristics greatly influence UAE public sector employees' job satisfaction. While diploma and degree qualification groups of respondents choose idealized influence characteristics as more influencing factors. This shows that there is a change in thinking with an increased level of education. Similarly, the respondents' perception varies based on the experience as summarized in Figure 3.



**Fig. 3 - Perception of leadership characteristics based on respondents working experience group**

Figure 3 shows individualized consideration characteristics are considered as high influencing characteristics as perceived by low experience employees working in the public sector of the UAE. At the same time, the practitioners have experience of more than 10 years consider inspirational motivation as the essential characteristic. The perception of the respondents based on the level of employment is summarized in Figure 4.



**Fig. 4 - Perception of leadership characteristics based on respondents' employment group**

Figure 4 indicates that individualized consideration characteristics have received maximum response and obtained highest mean value by the least working experience respondents in UAE public services. While respondents having more working experiences selected the idealized influence and intellectual stimulation characteristics.

This analysis shows that younger respondents in the general worker category with lower qualifications and working experiences preferred individualized consideration characteristics from the transformational leader that can influence UAE public sector employees' job satisfaction. In contrast, older respondents in middle and top management with higher qualifications and working experiences favour idealized influence and intellectual stimulation characteristics that can influence UAE public sector employees' job satisfaction.

## 5. Rank of the Characteristics

Collected data from the questionnaire survey was further analysed to determine the level of influence of these characteristics toward job satisfaction. The analysis used mean score and standard deviation to rank the characteristics as in table 3.

**Table 3 - Rank of leadership characteristics**

Leadership Characteristics	Mean score	Standard deviation	Rank
Individualized Consideration	4.26	0.637	3
Inspirational Motivation	4.20	0.665	4
Idealized Influence	4.32	0.594	2
Intellectual Stimulation	4.35	0.594	1

Table 3 shows that the respondents have ranked Intellectual Stimulation as the most influential transformational leadership characteristic with a score of 4.48. The respondents feel that Intellectual stimulation is crucial for their job satisfaction because they need leaders who can challenge norms, take risks, and seek employees' ideas. In addition, the employees want leaders who can stimulate creativity and innovation by trying new approaches and developing innovative ways to deal with organizational challenges. This was followed by Idealized Influence, with a score of 4.43, then by Individualized Consideration having 4.37, and finally by Inspirational Motivation with a mean score of 4.27.

## 6. Conclusion

This paper presented a study on transformational leadership characteristics that influence UAE public sector employees Job Satisfaction. This is following the study conducted by Hansen & Birkinshaw (2016) that the workers in public organizations in the United Arab Emirates preferred transformational leadership styles over transactional leadership styles. This study identified four key characteristics in transformational leadership as Individualized Consideration: Inspirational Motivation, Idealized Influence, and Intellectual Stimulation. These characteristics influence employees Job Satisfaction working in the UAE public sector. These characteristics were assessed to prioritize based on a structured questionnaire survey. From the analysis of the questionnaires, it was found that younger respondents in the general worker category and having lower qualifications with low working experiences preferred individualized consideration characteristics from the transformational leader that could influence UAE public sector employees' job satisfaction. In contrast, older respondents in middle and top management with higher qualifications with higher working experiences favour idealized influence and intellectual stimulation characteristics that can influence UAE public sector employees' job satisfaction. It also found that the respondents have ranked Intellectual Stimulation is the most influential transformational leadership style characteristic.

## Acknowledgement

The authors would like to thank the Institute of Technology Management and Entrepreneurship, Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka, for supporting this research works.

## References

- Ahmed, N., Memon, A. H., & Memon, N. A. (2021). *Communication Modes Used for Information Sharing in Construction Projects of Pakistan*. International Journal of Emerging Trends in Engineering Research, 9(10), pp. 1305-1311
- Al-Awlaqi, M. A., Battour, M., Barahma, M. M., & Aamer, A. M. (2021). *The interaction between leadership styles and their followers' human capital: a correspondence analysis approach applied to micro-sized businesses*. Journal of Management Development, 40(1), pp. 74-93. doi:10.1108/JMD-05-2019-0172

- Alghamdi, M. G., Topp, R., & AlYami, M. S. (2018). *The effect of gender on transformational leadership and job satisfaction among Saudi nurses*. Journal of advanced nursing, 74(1), pp. 119-127
- Ali, A. Y. S., Sidow, M. A., & Guleid, H. S. (2013). *Leadership styles and job satisfaction: empirical evidence from Mogadishu universities*. European Journal of Management Sciences and Economics, 1(1)
- Almansoori, M. T. S., Rahman, I. A., & Memon, A. H. (2021). *Correlation between the Management Factors Affecting PMO Implementation in UAE Construction*. International Journal of Sustainable Construction Engineering and Technology, 12(3), pp. 155-165
- Almarashda, H. A. H. A., Baba, I. B., Ramli, A. A., Memon, A. H., & Rahman, I. A. (2021). *Human Resource Management and Technology Development in Artificial Intelligence Adoption in the UAE Energy Sector*. Journal of Applied Engineering Sciences, 11(2), pp. 69-76
- Alonderiene, R., & Majauskaite, M. (2016). *Leadership style and job satisfaction in higher education institutions*. International Journal of Educational Management
- Anastasiou, S., & Garametsi, V. (2021). *Perceived leadership style and job satisfaction of teachers in public and private schools*. International Journal of Management in Education, 15(1), pp. 58-77
- Angka, A. T., & Darma, G. S. (2016). *The Impact of Leadership Style on Employee's Satisfaction*. Jurnal Manajemen Bisnis, 13(1), pp. 78-91
- Bahadori, M., Hosseini, S. M., Alimohammadzadeh, K., Hasanpoor, E., & Ghasemi, M. (2021). *The influence of ethical leadership on the organizational commitment in fire organizations*. International Journal of Ethics and Systems, 37(1), pp. 145-156. doi:10.1108/IJOES-04-2020-0043
- Bass, B. M., & Riggio, R. E. (2006). Transformational leadership
- Bass, B.M. (1991). From transactional to transformational leadership: learning to share the vision. Organizational Dynamics, 18(3), pp. 19-31
- Boamah, S. A., Laschinger, H. K. S., Wong, C., & Clarke, S. (2018). *Effect of transformational leadership on job satisfaction and patient safety outcomes*. Nursing outlook, 66(2), pp. 180-189
- Cabrita, J. & Perista, H. (2007). *Measuring job satisfaction in surveys: comparative analytical report*. European foundation for the improvement of living and working condition. <http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/ewco/reports/TN0608TR01/TN0608TR01.pdf>, Accessed on 30 Mar. 2015
- Collis, J., & Hussey, R. (2013). *Business research: A practical guide for undergraduate and postgraduate students*. Macmillan International Higher Education
- Ehrhart, M. G., & Klein, K. J. (2001). *Predicting followers' preferences for charismatic leadership: The influence of follower values and personality*. The leadership quarterly, 12(2), pp. 153-179
- Enshassi, A., & Al Swaity, E. (2015). *Key stressors leading to construction professionals' stress in the Gaza Strip, Palestine*. Journal of Construction in Developing Countries, 20(2)
- Hennicks, E. C. (2014). *Psychological contract breach, job satisfaction and turnover intention in the utility industry*, Doctoral dissertation, North-West University
- Kothari, C. R. (2004). Research Methodology: Methods and techniques. New Age International, New Delhi, India
- Lim, A. J. P., Loo, J. T. K., & Lee, P. H. (2017). *The impact of leadership on turnover intention: The mediating role of organizational commitment and job satisfaction*. Journal of Applied Structural Equation Modeling, 1(1), pp. 27-41
- McShane, S., & Von Glinow, M. A. (2010). *Organizational behaviour: Emerging knowledge and practice for the real world*. McGraw-Hill/Irwin



- Memon, A. H., Soomro, M. A., Bhangwar, S. N., Memon, A. H., & Memon, M. U. (2016). *Consultants' Perspective on Factors Causing Construction Waste Generation in Less Developed Regions*. International Journal of Engineering Inventions, 5(06), pp. 57-62
- Memon, A. H. (2013). *Structural modelling of cost overrun factors in construction industry*, Doctoral dissertation, Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia
- Moriano, J. A., Molero, F., Topa, G., & Mangin, J. P. L. (2014). *The influence of transformational leadership and organizational identification on intrapreneurship*. International entrepreneurship and management journal, 10(1), pp. 103-119
- Moyes, G. (2007). Determinants of Job Satisfaction and retention of Mexican-American accounting professionals. Journal of Business & Economics Research, 5(5), pp. 77-88
- Munir, M. A., Zaheer, M. A., Haider, M., Rafique, M. Z., Rasool, M. A. & Amjad, M. S. (2019). *Problems and barriers affecting total productive maintenance implementation*. Engineering, Technology & Applied Science Research, 9(5), pp. 4818-4823
- Northouse, P.G. (2013). *Leadership: theory and practice*. 6<sup>th</sup> ed. Los Angeles, CA: Sage
- Odeh, M. M. M., Azam, S. F., & Rafida, N. (2021). *Effect of Transformational Leadership on Employees' Innovativeness and Job Satisfaction in Kuwait Private Sector*. Psychology and Education Journal, 58(1), pp. 2573-2588
- Odumeru, J. A., & Ifeanyi, G. O. (2013). *Transformational vs. transactional leadership*
- Odumeru, J. A., & Ogbonna, I. G. (2013). *Transformational vs. transactional leadership theories: Evidence in literature*. International review of management and business research, 2(2), pp. 355
- Qing, M., Asif, M., Hussain, A., & Jameel, A. (2019). *Exploring the impact of ethical leadership on job satisfaction and organizational commitment in public sector organizations: The mediating role of psychological empowerment*. Review of Managerial Science, pp. 1-28
- Saleem, H. (2015). *The impact of leadership styles on job satisfaction and mediating role of perceived organizational politics*. Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences, 172(27), pp. 563-569
- Scicluna, A., & Sammut, R. (2020). *Nurses' and nurse managers' perceived transformational leadership behavioural practices: a survey*. Leadership in Health Services, 33(4), pp. 385-396. doi:10.1108/LHS-01-2020-0002
- Shibru, B., & Darshan, G. M. (2011). *Transformational leadership and its relationship with subordinate satisfaction with the leader (The case of leather industry in Ethiopia)*. Interdisciplinary Journal of Contemporary Research in Business, 3(5), pp. 686-697
- Spector, P. E. (1997). *Job satisfaction: Application, assessment, causes, and consequences*, 3. Sage
- Wang, J., Morrison, A. M., Xie, C., Zhang, J., & Coca-Stefaniak, J. A. (2020). *Responding to a major global crisis: the effects of hotel safety leadership on employee safety behavior during COVID-19*. International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management, 32(11), pp. 3365-3389. doi:10.1108/IJCHM-04-2020-0335
- Wilson, D. E. (2020). *Moving toward democratic-transformational leadership in academic libraries*. Library Management, 41(8/9), pp. 731-744. doi:10.1108/LM-03-2020-0044
- Zhang, H., & Kang, F. (2020). *Ethical leadership and newcomer adjustment: examining a moderated mediation model*. Leadership & Organization Development Journal, 41(8), pp. 1053-1068. doi:10.1108/LODJ-10-2019-0427