
**Relationship between Leadership Style and Organisational Culture with
Intention to Leave' Expatriates in Saudi Health Care System**

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Abstract: Employees' turnover has always been the main concern and interest of both academics and practitioner in healthcare sector. Also, both leadership styles and organisational culture as the main contributors to employee's intention to leave have always been in central attention of most of scholars in different disciplines including healthcare and organisational studies. After developing a conceptual framework and hypotheses related to the relationships, a questionnaire was designed based on the existing literatures in these areas and distributed among 850 employees working in one public hospital in Saudi Arabia. Out of 850 questionnaires distributed 354 usable questionnaires were returned which provide around 40 percent response rate. The results of this study were interesting and in some respect unexpected in some area. The findings show that transactional leadership style has no both direct and indirect relationship with intention to leave which was surprising and require further investigation. On the other hand, the results of this study confirm the importance of both transformational leadership style and organisational culture on the intention to leave among expatriates in public sector

Keywords: *Leadership style, Organisational Culture, Intention to leave, Public health car.*

Introduction

This research, aims to investigate the direct relationship between leadership style and organisational culture with intention to leave in the public health care system in Saudi Arabia. The health care system in Saudi Arabia can be classified as a national health care system that is part of the public sector where the Saudi government provides health care through several government agencies. Having said that, in recent years private health care has grown significantly in Saudi Arabia and it plays a crucial role in improving the health of the Saudi population. However, this study is focussed on the investigation of public health care by exploring challenges existing in the public health care system like the shortage of Saudi health professionals which has, to some extent, forced the government to recruit expatriate professionals to fill this shortage. Therefore, there are some major differences, mainly cultural differences, that exist between expatriate professionals and Saudi health care workers which, potentially, may cause some problems for public health care, including high turnover among expatriates.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) is a rentier state and has approximately 20% of the world's verified reserves of natural oil and gas, the revenues from which represent 80% of aggregate revenue in its economy (Alkhatlan, 2013). It is an economically developing country facing considerable skill shortages within its indigenous workforce and is, therefore, highly reliant on expatriate labour. According to an IMF report, almost two-thirds of the labour force is made up of expatriate nationals and only 12% of Saudi women are employed (Fayad et al., 2012). The reliance on expatriate nationals persists despite the Saudi government's Saudisation policy encouraging the employment of Saudi nationals instead of expatriates (Baqadir et al., 2011; Al-Asfour et al., 2017). This suggests that there is limited diversity in employment

amongst Saudis. It also indicates that expatriate staff fill the void created by high unemployment amongst Saudi nationals in general (Aarts and Roelants, 2015; Khorsheed, 2015), and the underemployment of Saudi women (Aarts and Roelants, 2015; Zoepf, 2016), in particular. The dependence on overseas workers is set to continue in the Kingdom, especially as eliminating these workers without replacing them with equally, if not more, competent Saudi nationals, could lead to increased inflation and economic disruption in the Kingdom (Platt, 2014).

Research indicates that there are significant wage disparities between Saudis and expatriate nationals, in favour of the former, particularly at the lower levels of the earnings' scale (Fayad et al., 2012). Such disparities could negatively affect the job satisfaction, extrinsic motivation, level of perceived organisational support and organisational commitment of expatriate workers in the Kingdom. In addition, Showail et al. (2013) points out that role ambiguity, types of expectation, and the extent of information seeking, socialisation, organisational identification, uncertainty, isolation and psychosocial comfort affect the employment intention of expatriate workers in Saudi Arabia. Thus, it is incumbent on the Saudi public health sector organisations to develop leadership, management, organisational and strategic human resource management (SHRM) policies, procedures and practices that resonate with, engage, satisfy and motivate the sector's expatriate workers. Despite the Saudi Arabian government investing more in its health system than other countries in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), and the Saudi Arabian Ministry of Health having a policy goal to develop a world class public health system (Fielden, 2012), the performance of the Saudi public health sector is threatened by this complex and challenging employment scenario, dependent as it is on a large proportion of expatriate clinicians (Almalki et al., 2011). Therefore, this research aims to fill the gap in literature on intention to leave among expatriates in developing countries by investigating the impact of both leadership style and organisational culture on the intention to leave among expatriates in public health care in Saudi Arabia.

Literature Review

Leadership style

Leadership phenomenon has captured the attention and the interest of many academics in the past decades all over the world within the organizational context since it is crucial role in organizations, and its direct influence on group process and outcomes (Bass, 1990). The concepts of leadership and leadership style has always been a main focus of researchers and practitioners in both the public and private sectors as it is considered to be the major factor that contributes to the success or failure of any organisation. Moreover, the relationship between leadership style with both organisational culture and employees' intention to leave has always been the major concern of researchers regardless of the context, type of industry or sector, private or public (Park and Kim, 2009; Sojane et al., 2016). Bass and Avolio (1994) strongly argue that organisations, in order to achieve higher organisational performance, need to implement an appropriate leadership style that helps to reduce employees' turnover and enhance their performance. They further argue that organisations that are planning to achieve high performance need to make sure the leadership style chosen is consistent with the organisational culture implemented.

Studies of the impact of leadership style and organisational culture on employees' intention to leave in public hospitals are very few (Tekingunduz and Kurtuldu, 2015) and they are even more scarce when it comes to the context of developing countries like Saudi Arabia. By exploring the literature on the national culture in a country like Saudi Arabia with high power distance, high collectivism and high uncertainty avoidance it could be argued that employees may prefer a leader who can guide them with a clear level of authority while, at the same time, being kind and generous (Hofstede, et al., 2010). This could be interpreted by scholars as Saudi's workers preferring an autocratic or transactional leadership style rather than a

transformational leadership style and consider hierarchical organisational culture as more beneficial in their work place. However, this may not be the preference of expatriates who are from low power distance, high individualism and low uncertainty avoidance cultures where transformational leadership would be preferred, and adhocracy or market culture considered as beneficial for the success of the organisation.

Therefore, this study identifies the gap in the literature on this area and aims to investigate the impact of both transactional and transformational leadership style on employees' intention to leave through organisational culture.

Organisational Culture

Researchers as well as human beings at different moments of life in different places all over the world have discussed organizational culture as a terminology from different perspectives and in different situations of life. Organizational culture as a concept has raised the attention of many academics as well as researchers in the last decade of the 20th century, specifically in the 1980's (Smircich, 1983). According to Schein (2016), there around 172 different definitions for organisational culture. As a result, there is general agreement among scholars that organisational culture is one of the most difficult concepts to define. He further proposed that organisational culture has three different layers: an outer layer, middle layer and inner layer. The outer layer is related to elements that are visible to everyone like logos, architecture, and corporate clothing. On the other hand, both the middle and inner layers are factors that are not visible to outsiders and can only be understood by becoming involved with the organisation, like values, beliefs and assumptions. Hofstede et al. (2010) also defined organisational culture as the glue that holds organisations together, which gives an identity to employees, and defines the communication style that distinguishes it from other organisations.

According to Schein (2016), it is a mistake to separate leadership and organisational culture from each other as these are two sides of the same coin. Although there is no doubt that the main source, or root, of organisational culture is the leaders, and leaders have a major influence on the creation of organisational culture (Schein, 2016), scholars like Schimmoeller (2010) also argue that organisations, in order to survive in the competitive market, need to apply an appropriate leadership style where it is aligned with the organisation's situation and employees' emotion which are influenced by the organisational culture. Therefore, as Schein (2016) argues the relationship between leadership and organisational culture is a two-way relationship.

There are several studies that investigate the impact of either leadership style or organisational culture on employees' intention to leave (Tekingunduz and Kurtuldu, 2015; Park and Kim, 2009). However, there is lack of studies that investigate the impact of leadership style and organisational culture on employees' intention to leave by exploring the influence of other factors like job satisfaction, organisational commitment and perceived organisational support in public hospitals. Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by investigating the impact of leadership style and organisational culture on employees' intention to leave through job satisfaction, organisational commitment and perceived organisational support.

The position taken in this study with regard to cultural competence is consistent with diversity management (Taggart, 2007) and its focus on managing, promoting and preparing employees to be effective in cross-cultural communications and interactions with other organisations. It is also informed by the criticisms directed towards the concept and practice of diversity. Cultural competence is significant in relation to leadership, management, organisation development and SHRM within the Saudi public health sector. This is because leadership, management, organisational and individual employee cultural competencies separately and in unison contain the potential to institutionalise cultural competence as a means of improving work experience, job satisfaction, extrinsic motivation, level of perceived organisational support, organisational commitment, retention and performance of expatriate workers, including those in Saudi public hospitals.

Intention to leave

Employees' intention to leave construct used in this study as explained in the previous section borrowed from the expatriate employees' experiential perspectives model. There are many reasons why employees' intention to leave was chosen as the dependent variable. The main reason for choosing it lies in the nature of this study where the research aim is to explore factors that have a major influence on employee retention in general and for expatriates in particular. Furthermore, as Tekingunduz and Kurtuldu (2015), among many other researchers, have argued, one of the major factors that directly contributes to the success or failure of hospitals is employee turnover. Furthermore, Ugwa (2014) argues that hospitals, in order to achieve high performance/ effectiveness, need to make sure employees turnover is minimised by providing financial and non-financial motivation. Moreover, Xuehu (2016), in a study of public hospitals in China, found that there is a strong relationship between job satisfaction and intention to leave among senior professionals which has a major impact on hospital financial success. Therefore, the author strongly believes that, in order for public hospitals to be successful both financially and maintain good morale, there is a need for an investigation into how to reduce employees' intention to leave.

For the purpose of this study the questions that measure intention to leave have been borrowed from the work of Cerdin and Le Pargneux (2014) which was based on the expatriate employees' experiential perspectives model.

Relationships between leadership style and organisational culture with intention to leave

There are several studies that investigate the relationship between leadership styles and organisational culture in different industries and sectors including the public sector. Tsai (2011) in a study of 300 nurses in Taiwanese hospitals found that there is a significant relationship between organisational culture and leadership behaviour. Moreover, Wong et al. (2012), in a study of hospital nurses, found that there is a strong relationship between the leadership style chosen and the organisational culture implemented in the hospital. Furthermore, Lin et al. (2015), in a cross-sectional study of nurses in Taiwan, found that the transformational leadership style has a major influence on the quality of nurses' working lives through the organisational culture implemented in the workplace. Moreover, Muls et al. (2015), in a study of NHS institutions in the wake of the Francis Report (2014), which argues the need for NHS trusts and hospitals to adopt a culture of learning, safety and transparency, found that there is a strong relationship between leadership and organisational culture change. They further argue that leadership across all levels has a big influence on organisational culture and, most importantly, leaders can ensure that patients always remain the main focus of any changes implemented in the NHS

H1: There is a relationship between leadership style and organisational culture in public hospitals in Saudi Arabia

According to scholars such as Lok and Crawford (2004), or Barlow (2013), leaders' behaviour has a major impact on employees' intention to leave and, in turn, on organisational performance. Therefore, in order to achieve high employee retention, which in turn enhances organisational performance, leaders need to implement a leadership style that is aligned with the organisational culture. Sojane et al. (2016), in a study of 204 medial and surgical units in both private and public hospitals, found that there is a strong relationship between leadership style and intention to leave. In addition Bealer and Bhanugopan (2014) in the study of 213 managers from different countries working in UAE found that there is big difference in understanding the leadership practice between expatriate and national managers which may

have an impact on manager behaviour with employees that may result in employees intention to leave. Moreover, in a study of 208 permanent hospital staff in Turkey, Tekingunduz and Kurtuldu (2015) found that there is a moderate relationship between transformational leadership style on employees' intention to leave. Furthermore, Barlow (2013), in a study of around 9500 nursing personnel, found that the transformational leaderships style has a major impact on the organisational decision-making process as well as maximising employees' retention and quality of nursing personnel. In addition, Lin et al. (2015), in a study of nurses in both private and public hospitals in Taiwan, found that leadership style has an indirect impact on employees' intention to leave through the quality of nurses working lives in hospitals which is directly related to organisational culture. Based on the arguments provided, this hypothesis is proposed for testing.

H2: There is a relationship between leadership style and expatriates' intention to leave in public hospitals in Saudi Arabia.

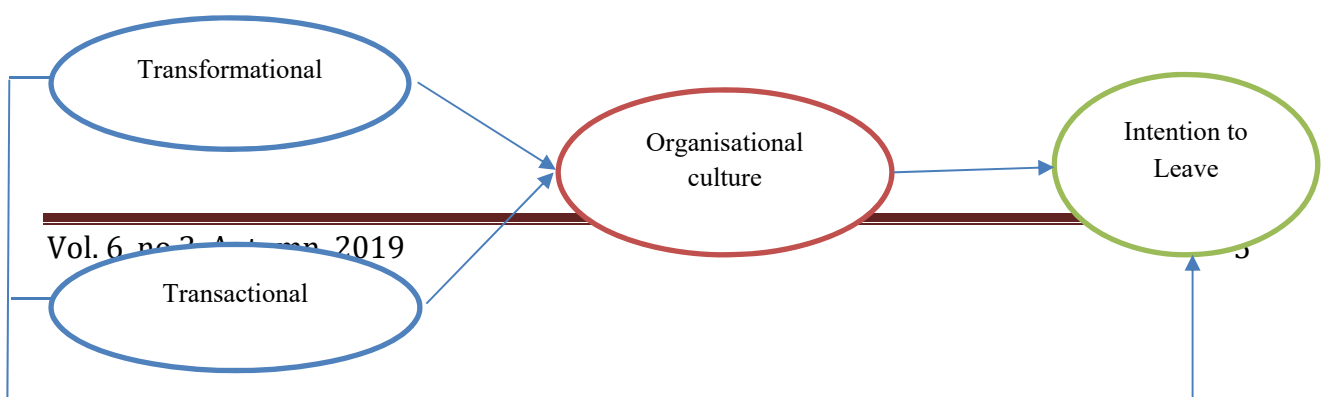
There are numerous studies that investigate the relationship between organisational culture and employees' intention to leave. In one of the studies of the relationship between organisational culture and employees' withdrawal intentions in Israeli healthcare, Carmeli (2005) found that, if the organisational culture implemented in healthcare could provide challenging jobs, both the employee's absenteeism and withdrawal intention from occupation, job and organisation would be significantly reduced, which in turn would improve hospital performance. Furthermore, Tasi (2011) argues that organisational culture has an indirect impact on job satisfaction and, in turn, on nurses' intention to leave through leadership behaviour in a Taiwanese context. Furthermore, in a study of 527 nurses working in two major public hospitals in Korea, Park and Kim (2009) found that among all organisational cultures consensual culture showed strong negative association with turnover intention of the nurses, while hierarchal organisational culture showed a positive association with turnover intention. Choi et al. (2014), in a study of 286 nurses from three general hospitals, found that there is a negative relationship between relationship orientated organisational culture and innovation organisational culture with turnover intention. They further argued that if managers in hospitals wishing to reduce turnover intention, they must promote a relationship or innovation orientated organisational culture in the hospital. Therefore, based on arguments provided in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3, this study proposes this hypothesis

H3: There is relationship between organisational culture and expatriates' intention to leave in public hospitals in Saudi Arabia.

H4: Organisational culture act as a mediator on the relationship between leadership style and intention to leave

The conceptual framework provide for this research presented as below

Figure 1: Conceptual framework



Methodology

In order to achieve the main objectives of the study and to test variables under investigations the researcher adopted positivistic research philosophy followed by a deductive research design. A quantitative research method was applied, in which data collection was done using self-administrated questionnaires that were distributed as a hard copy to target participants. In fact, primary data collection was analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences Version 22 (SPSS 22).

Sample

Stratified random sampling was used for the online questionnaire survey sent to expatriate employees and managers within the hospital. This research population was divided (stratified) into professional and occupational groups including, for example, physicians, surgeons, senior nurses, nurses, administrative staff and manual employees. Thereafter members from each group were randomly selected. The stratification, enabled via the hospital's employee databases, ensured that expatriate employees across different occupational groups and hierarchical levels were represented in the research populations. Not only does this process permit comparison of data between the groups, it "reduces variability from systematic sampling" (Acharya et al., 2013, p.331).

Research instruments

The questionnaire was divided into seven sections starting with a section related to demographics information such as gender, age group, position and other questions. Then in the other sections, the items related to other variables involved in this study such as leadership style, organisational culture, job satisfaction, perceived organisational support, organisational commitment and intention to leave. Before conducting the pilot study, the researcher was aware there might be a need to review the questionnaire format and, perhaps, remove some items from the final version before doing further final data collection.

The questionnaire designed for this study was mainly borrowed directly from the existing literature and tools on leadership style, organisational culture, job satisfaction, perceived organisational support, organisational commitment and intention to leave. The language used for the questionnaire was English as all the respondents, both expatriates and managers, were fluent in English.

The questions used in this study were all borrowed from the existing literature and tools, mostly in organisational and management studies. The independent variables for this study were leadership styles, transactional and transformational, and organisational culture. The leadership style questions were directly borrowed from the MLQ5X, designed by Bass and Avolio (2004), with 22 questions of which 16 questions measure the transformational leadership style and 6 measure the transactional leadership style. The organisational culture questions were borrowed from the organisational culture assessment instrument (OCAI) developed by Cameron and Quinn (2011) with 16 questions that measure organisational culture based on the competing values framework (CVF). The dependent variable of this study is intention to leave and in order to measure this variable this study adopted questions borrowed from Cerdin and Le Pargneux's

(2014) study which was based on expatriate employees' experiential perspectives model and has five questions.

Results

Descriptive statistics

Description of the demographic analysis of this study indicated in Table 1 exhibits that 34% of the Survey respondents are males and 65 % are females. In addition, it was found that the majority of the sample respondent, 46 % of the sample belonged to 25-34 years of age. Furthermore, more than 50% of the total respondents obtained a Under-graduate educational level. Finally, results showed that more than 80% of the respondents are lying in the employees position.

Table 1. Demographic analysis.

Variable	N	%
Gender		
Male	112	34.2
Female	241	65.8
Age		
25-34	164	46.3
35-44	111	31.4
45-54	68	19.2
above 55	11	3.1
Education Level		
College	25	7.1
UG	187	52.8
PG	135	38.1
PhD	7	2.0
Position		
Employee	287	81.1
Junior Management	14	4.0
Middle Management	30	8.5
Senior Management	23	6.5
Years of experience		
Less than 1	3	.8
from 1 to <3 years	29	8.2
from 3 to <5	26	7.3
more than 5 years	296	83.6

Reliability Analyses and Correlations Analysis

Table (2) indicates that all variables under investigation are considered as highly reliable. Where results from Cronbach alpha for measuring internal consistency of the variables corroborate with previous scholars suggestions about the acceptable level of reliability analysis (De Vaus, 2002; Bryman, 2012; Sekaran and Boogie, 2014).

On the other hand, Table (2) shows that there exists a strong negative relationship between leadership styles and organizational culture with intention to leave. Moreover, transformational and transactional leadership are positively strongly correlated with organizational culture.

Table 2. Reliability, and Correlation

	TSF	TSC	OC	ITL	Cronbach Alpha
TSF	1				.78

TSC	.861**	1			.66
OC	.636**	.567**	1		.75
ITL	-.239**	-.183**	-.259**	1	.75

Testing Research hypothesis

Table (3) is divided into two parts, the first part shows the direct relationship between the leadership styles and organisational culture with intention to leave, and the second part shows the indirect relationship between these variables. For the direct relationship between the variables, there are 5 relationships defined. (1) There is a direct relationship between transactional leadership with intention to leave. (2) There is a direct relationship between transformational leadership with intention to leave. (3) There is a direct relationship between transactional leadership and organizational culture. (4) There is a direct relationship between transformational leadership and organizational culture. (5) there is a direct relationship between organisational culture and intention to leave.

As for the indirect relationship, two outcome relationship results were found. (1) There is not an indirect relationship between transactional leadership and intention to leave. Therefore, organizational culture does not mediate the relationship between transactional leadership and intention to leave. (2) There is an indirect relationship between transformational leadership and intention to leave, which is mediated by the organizational culture. As a conclusion, results suggest that organizational culture is considered as a partial mediator on the relationship between different leadership style (transformational, transactional) and intention to leave within Saudi public hospital. Again, this entire outcome relationships are supported the previously mentioned hypotheses of this study.

Table (3) Hypothesis Testing

Direct Relationships					
Relationships	R ²	F-statistics	T-statistics	β	Supported/Not Supported
TLS ----> ITL	.249	19.609**	.998	.101	Not Supported
LFL----> ITL			-1.941	-.209**	Supported
OC ----> ITL	.456	152.289**	11.341**	.490	Supported
TLS ----> OC	.405	119.653***	.931	.075	Not Supported
LFL----> OC			7.039**	.571***	Supported
Indirect Relationship					
TLS ----> OC----> ITL	.243	11.003**	.854 .998	.087 .101	Not Supported
TFL-----> OC-----> ITL	.281	89.545**	-3.078** -1.941**	-.341 -.209	Supported

Discussions and Conclusion

Based on the previous literature on different disciplines like organisational studies or organisational behaviour, both leadership styles and organisational culture have a major impact on employees' intention to leave or stay. There are numerous studies in different industries and context that explored the direct relationship between these factors and intention to leave. However, there is a lack of a comprehensive study that investigates the both direct and indirect impact of these factors on expatriate intention to leave in the context of health care in one developing country like Saudi Arabia. Both leadership style and organisational culture can

change as a result of international factors (organisational size or change in management) or even external factors (government intervention in public sector, national culture of host country) which may have a major impact on employees' intention to leave or stay.

Although, there are some and medium positive correlation exist among independent and intervening variables, showing negative correlation among all variables with intention to leave was not surprising. This could be argued by discussing how better leadership style, or stronger organisational culture may result to reduce the intention to leave among employees. However, some of these correlations were not quite strong which possibly require further investigations. To further investigate these results researcher explored further the existing literature to find out an explanation for these results. Unfortunately, there are very limited explanation could have been found that could possibly provide a convincing argument for the results. However, based on anecdotal evidence and conversation with several expatriates and expert in organisational studies researcher could manage a hypothetical theory. There were several reasons both internal and externals mentioned by expatriates which worth further investigation in future studies one of which is the differences in national culture between expatriates and Saudi's managers. Also expatriate perception of organisational culture could be identified as more clan culture where there is more coherent and team working whereas managers perception of organisational culture is quite similar to hierarchy and clearly division of authority and responsibilities.

The further analysis using regression analysis showed that transactional leadership has no relationship either directly or indirectly with intention to leave which require further investigation. This anomaly is not aligned with existing literatures on leadership styles in similar countries to Saudi's in the region where results show there is strong existence of transactional leadership style and its impact on effectiveness, job performance or even satisfaction (Nazarian, 2013; Masadeh et al., 2016). This nonexistence of any relationship between transactional leadership style with intention to leave can be studied from cultural perspective where there is a cultural differences between managers and employees. Hofstede et al. (2010) argues that cultural differences exist among people in terms of values, beliefs and assumption are the base of human behaviour in the larger society like an organisation. This could be even more significant in the organisation like the case here where there are expatriates from several countries with different cultures which are sometimes entirely different from managers who are from the host country. Therefore, it would be very interesting to look at the national culture as a variable in the future studies on leadership style and intention to leave.

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