

# A Conceptual Framework of Transformational and Transactional Leadership on Nurse Educators Job Satisfaction

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**Abstract:** The conceptual framework is based on the Full Range Leadership by Avolio and Bass (2004) that theorized that transformational leadership can be clustered in five sub-constructs whilst the transactional leadership into two sub-constructs. Each dimension is measured using four items. The Full Range Leadership Theory being an effective leadership theory uses both transformational and transactional attributes in differing degrees depending on the situation and the ability of the subordinates. Even though transactional leadership is not able to develop trust and full potential of the followers but if coupled with the individualized consideration attribute of the leader, it can provide the platform for transformational leadership to ensue. This then can positively affect subordinates' motivation and performance. Organizations presently are marked by high interdependency and integration; hence the need for leadership that goes beyond that of transactional to transformational leadership styles with attributes such as inspiration, stimulation, motivation and charisma as these attributes are believed to be able to bring about cohesion, commitment, trust and performance. The conceptual framework assumes that transformational and transactional leadership-work place engagement is indirect and impacted through the mechanism of perceived subordinates' well-being, ultimately leading to job satisfaction. The importance of the nursing administrator in determining the nature of work environment is well documented and is of increasing significance to the retention of nurse educators. Perception of work place engagement could play the role of perceived work environment and thus mediate between the relationship between leadership styles and job satisfaction of subordinates.

**Keywords:** Conceptual framework, transformational leadership style, transactional leadership style, work-place engagement, job satisfaction, nurse educators.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Researchers have found the relationship of leadership styles and workplace empowerment, organizational commitment and job satisfaction of subordinates' in hospitals (Arruda, 2005; Dumdum, Lowe & Avolio, 2002; Falk-Rafael, 2001; Gifford et al., 2002; Upenieks, 2003). Leaders in hospital settings face many challenges such as the type of leadership style appropriate to lead their subordinates (Apker, Ford & Fox, 2003). According to a survey carried out by Bangajam (2009) one of the key element of job dissatisfaction is ineffective supervisory leadership. Anderson (2002) indicated that academic nursing leaders increased expectations for nursing faculty without addressing resource concerns. This in turn increased nursing faculty performance anxiety and distrust of nursing academic leaders (Bangajam, 2009). Additionally, a perceived lack of leadership support and healthy work environment create a sense of job dissatisfaction (Kramer, et al., 2007; Shirey, 2006). Leaders are expected to exhibit leadership styles that reflect empathy, respect and trust; the essential elements for positive team cohesion (Larrabee, Janney & Ostrow, 2003). With regards to this, researchers have concluded that transformational leadership styles far outweighed that of transactional leadership styles (Bolman & Deal, 2003; Mrayyan 2004; Prothero et al., 2000). By implementing transformational leadership styles, subordinates feel empowered leading to organizational commitment and solving of employee morale problems which in turn lead to job satisfaction (Loke-Foong, 2001; Prothero, et al., 2000). Thus, nursing managers' leadership skills seemed to be one of the factors that contribute to job satisfaction and retention and as such, can mitigate the nursing shortages (Grossman & Valiga, 2000).

The significance of job dissatisfaction poses severe setbacks for nurse educators, students, faculty and the nursing profession at large. During the time when the nursing profession is facing a critical shortage of qualified nurses, qualified nurse educators play a vital role in warranting the adequacy supply of qualified nurses in the future in sustaining the nursing profession. The importance of the nursing administrator in determining the nature of work environment is well documented and is of increasing significance to the retention of nurse educators and the ability to provide quality education to the nursing students and ultimately the quality of patient care in health care settings.

Skilled nurse educators play an important role in the future health care system. With a combination of practical experience and the passion for teaching, their roles are undoubtedly important. Acting as professional role models and disseminating knowledge they act as “gate-keepers” to the profession. Undoubtedly they serve as the back bone to the profession in preparing nurses to carry the profession forward. Studies indicated that enhancing job satisfaction will augment retention of nurse educators and result in fewer nurse educators leaving the profession and help eliminate the staff shortage (Kleiman, 2004; Manion, 2004). Thus the ability to retain nurse educators is one of the most important aspects of a nursing administrator’s responsibility. It is therefore important to continue to investigate how and why, what and how perceived leadership styles affect nurse educators’ job satisfaction and thus help in the retention.

## 2. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The issue of professional nursing staff shortage to deliver care, in the healthcare sector is well documented nationwide and locally (Buchan & Calman, 2004; Fletcher, 2001; Mark, 2002; Mitchell, 2003; Simoens et al., 2005). As the aging population crippled the ability of these institutions, retaining qualified staff remains an enigma. The nursing workforce in Malaysia comprised of between two to three percent females and a large fraction of the healthcare workforce. Approximately two thirds of nurses are with the public sector where they worked full time and required to retire when they attained 55 to 60 years of age (MOH, 2012). With a population of 29 million (Department of Statistics, Malaysia, 2010), Malaysia is considered to be having an ageing population as an expected proportion of the population aged 65 years and above is set to double by the year 2030. The government allocates approximately seven percent of the national budget to health (MOH, 2012) and is besieged by a large increase in non-communicable diseases as well as an aged workforce; resulting in more nurses retiring or seeking part-time work (Barnett, et al., 2010).

The effect has worsened by the globalization of nursing workforce (Kingma, 2007). This impact has brought about employers’ increment as well as governments via immigration policy in employing nurses’ globally (Barnett, et al., 2010). This then contributed to nurses’ shortage in countries that are targeted at for recruitment including Malaysia (Chua, 2004). Through observation, efforts to recruit nurse educators have by far been successful. However, determining how to keep high quality educators providing meaningful and effective instruction has remained an enigma. Continuous hiring of new employee is expensive and recurrent employee turnover upsets staff morale (Sofie & Young, 2003). After a lapse of so many years since researchers advocated for a more dispersed form of leadership, it is time to look at the profile of educational nursing leadership and to determine whether a relationship exists between job satisfaction of nurse educators and that of the leadership styles of their nursing administrators. Reports indicated migration of nurses to the middle-eastern countries and other principally Muslim countries where less adaptation is needed to apt with the local customs (Barnett, et. al., 2010). However no data could be obtained from MOH to substantiate this fact. Working under short term contracts in these countries proved rewarding for nurses from the public sector that have retired who have chosen to enhance their quality of life in later years by netting considerably more salaries overseas (Barnett, et. al., 2010)

Low job satisfaction as a result of inferior work life can have an effect on current and future workers (Duffield, 2007). Nursing staff that are dissatisfied probably will leave or lessen the number of work hours and those intending to come into the workforce will be deterred from being committed to the profession on a long term basis as other employment can offer better alternatives of better job satisfaction, wages and remunerations (Barnett et al., 2010). Thus, this study was carried at a timely moment when Malaysia is committed to expand higher education opportunities not only to the people of the country but also internationally. While job satisfaction has been frequently studied in the field of business and industry in recent decades, relatively few of these studies have involved college and faculty and in particular nursing faculty. This is more so in Malaysia, where to the best of the researcher’s knowledge, there is only one study conducted by (Bangajam, 2009) on job satisfaction among nurse educators. However some studies have been performed in schools, colleges and universities (Ahmad, 1997; Cheah, 2008; Lang, 1997; Subramaniam, 1997; Taib, 1997). This topic is therefore

commendable of exploration because the capability of an institution of higher learning depends on the quality, drive and commitment of the faculty. Many factors affect job satisfaction or dissatisfaction. As such if factors concerning leadership styles that influence job satisfaction could be identified, better appreciation of nurse educators' needs and steps could be taken to satisfy those needs. Mardanov, et al., (2008) indicated that turnover authorities, both academic and practitioner have stressed that supervisory style utilized by leaders play an important role in subordinate turnover decisions. It had not been determined how satisfied or dissatisfied nurse educators in the nursing colleges under MOH, Malaysia specifically in relationship with academic leadership styles. There were however occasional reports of dissatisfaction with the academic leaders and academic staff turnover. The flow is not in terms of an exodus but palpable enough to warrant an investigation (Bangajam, 2009).

With the advancement of science and technology with the rapid flow of information and knowledge, nursing education becomes more and more complex. Good and effective leadership are essential to bring about greater job satisfaction among nurse educators which then will bring about quality teaching and ultimately better student achievement as well as their retention. Researchers have found that leadership styles of nurse managers play a vital role in promoting job satisfaction of the subordinates (Arruda, 2005; Dumdum et al., 2002; Upenieks, 2003). Nurse leaders face many challenges as to what type of leadership style is suitable for leading their subordinates (Apker et al., 2003) as today's varying work settings beacon for greater appreciation of leadership behaviors and its' impact on staff job satisfaction. The popularity of leadership books indicated that leaders are aware of the importance of new and different leadership styles that are needed to meet the demand of today's rapid and changing work environment (Utley & Dawn, 2000). The search to identify those effective leadership behaviors have intensified to promote subordinates' job satisfaction and continue to be the key apprehension amongst enthusiastic leaders. Subordinates way of thinking and inspiration about their work constitute the revenues for job satisfaction to be materialized. As organizations weave and position themselves to succeed, they recognize that they cannot afford to ignore the people factor that can result in employee dissatisfaction and ultimately loss of the individual.

The problem of modern organization is how to build effective leaders that are as practicable as possible to produce minimum side effects and at the same time maximum satisfaction. Over centuries, the world of business and industry had demonstrated obligations to analyze and understand the whole spectrum of leadership behaviors and its relation with subordinates' job satisfaction. Specifically, they have focused on studying transformational leadership and subordinates' job satisfaction as documented in a myriad of reports. These reports have shown relatedness of transformational leadership to that of subordinates' job satisfaction (Anuar, 2007; Lokman, 2007; Martin & Bush, 2006; Mardanov, et al., 2008; Nicholson, 2009). Although the positive effects of transformational and transactional leadership on subordinates' job satisfaction are relatively well researched in the nursing faculty in the western countries context, no study has been researched in the nursing colleges or program under the Ministry of Health Malaysia to examine how transformational and transactional leadership particularly Avolio and Bass (2004) is related to nursing academic leadership behaviors with subordinates' overall job satisfaction.

The transformational leadership influence may vary across organizational culture which then can lead to subordinates' job satisfaction in different ways (Gifford et al., 2002; Shermont & Krepcio, 2006; Stone et al., 2003). Further, past research also rarely indicate explicitly how effective leadership styles or behaviors should be enacted or investigate the underlying mechanisms particularly working environment through which leadership styles influence outcomes. Thus it is of utmost importance that researchers broaden their understanding of leadership behaviors that lead to symptoms of satisfaction among subordinates. Ultimately, this might aid in increasing nurse educators' satisfaction and more qualified recruits choosing a career in nursing education. Further, researches especially the past decade have shown considerable attention in the examination of mediating or moderating mechanisms between leadership styles and several outcomes. On the contrary, the role of numerous variables that can play a mediating or moderating role in leadership styles outcome relationship has not been fully explored. To fill this gap, this study intends to investigate how and why, what and how perceived transformational and transactional leadership styles affect nurse educators' job satisfaction moderated by demographic factors that aided retention of nurse educators in the nursing colleges and or programs under the MOH, Malaysia.

Training leaders to be effective has been suggested as the crucial factor to professionalism in nursing (Mahoney, 2001). However, in Malaysia, even though there is nursing leadership training, no data could be found to suggest its effectiveness. Most academic leaders in the nursing arena were selected for leadership roles based on academic accomplishments (Goldenberg & Waddell, 1990). Majority of nursing deans and heads of department ascend to their roles insufficiently prepared for leadership (Mastura, 2008; Redman, 2001). A leader with inadequate leadership capabilities might be drained in trying to achieve organizational goals. This then will result in burnout in the leader and dissatisfaction amongst subordinates (Corning, 2002). To this end, a transformational organization should be equipped and select leaders that are suitable to implement the desired change. The correct orientation between leadership behavior and organizational vision and mission can steer the change of the organizational environment bringing about subordinates' job satisfaction and ultimately the job performance; that is producing students that are capable to address the needs and demands of the present workforce. This study is therefore timely to gather information in order for the human resource department, MOH to use them as guidelines in planning, conducting leadership courses as well as strategizing its developmental and succession plans.

### 3. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

A conceptual framework is an argumentative concept chosen for investigation or interpretation anticipated relationship between variables that are appropriate and useful. The framework maybe based on the practitioner's knowledge or what the researcher perceived to be relevant and important to address the research problems. The conceptual framework guiding the quantitative study postulates that transformational and transactional leadership styles are related to effective leadership practice behaviors that can impact subordinates' overall job satisfaction via the engaging attributes of the leader. The relationship is as illustrated in figure 1. The conceptual framework that guided this study is based on three major variables namely (a) transformational and transactional leadership styles as independent variables, (b) subordinates' overall job satisfaction as dependent variables and (c) demographics of nurse educators as moderators as well as an independent variable between their (nurse educators) job satisfaction.

This research proposed that demographic variables of nurse educators to be a moderating variable based on the study by Green, (2000) and Khadijah, (2010). The moderator effect of demographic variable of nurse educators was tested to better understand the mechanism through which predictors of subordinates' demographic variables interfere with the relationship between the independent variable (transformational and transactional leadership styles) and dependent variable (subordinates' overall job satisfaction). Moderator effects play a considerable practical importance in reducing or enhancing specific independent variables on other specific dependent variable for example job satisfaction of nurse educators maybe impossible to change just by changing leadership styles immediately but it may influence the outcomes for the more matured or even the more experienced group.

Transformational and transactional leadership styles are assimilated by Bass (1985) in the creation of the full range leadership model by identifying that both leadership styles can contribute to the accomplishments of organizational goals and objectives and most organizational cultures have cultures that are distinguished by both styles (Bass & Avolio, 1991). The full range leadership model by Avolio and Bass (2004) consists of three main practices: transformational, transactional and laissez-faire along with nine related factors. However, for this research only the transformational and transactional leadership practice components will be utilized. For the transformational leadership practice part, the elements are idealized influence attributes, idealized influence behaviors, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration. The transactional leadership is based on the exchange process that involves fulfilling contractual obligations, setting objectives and monitoring and controlling outcomes. This leadership is made up of two main factors: contingent reward and management by exception active. Subordinates' overall job satisfaction concerns the feelings of subordinates with regards to their job satisfaction which is measured using the 14 items overall job satisfaction by Brayfield-Rothe (1951) and modified by the researcher.

The conceptual framework also presupposes that the transformational leader and the contingent element of transactional leadership attributes are able to facilitate work environment via engaging leadership attributes via a high level of support that the subordinates perceived they have been valued. The conceptual framework via the qualitative component intends to explicit how effective leadership styles or behaviors should be enacted as well as to elucidate underlying mechanisms particularly working environment through which leadership styles influence subordinates' job satisfaction.

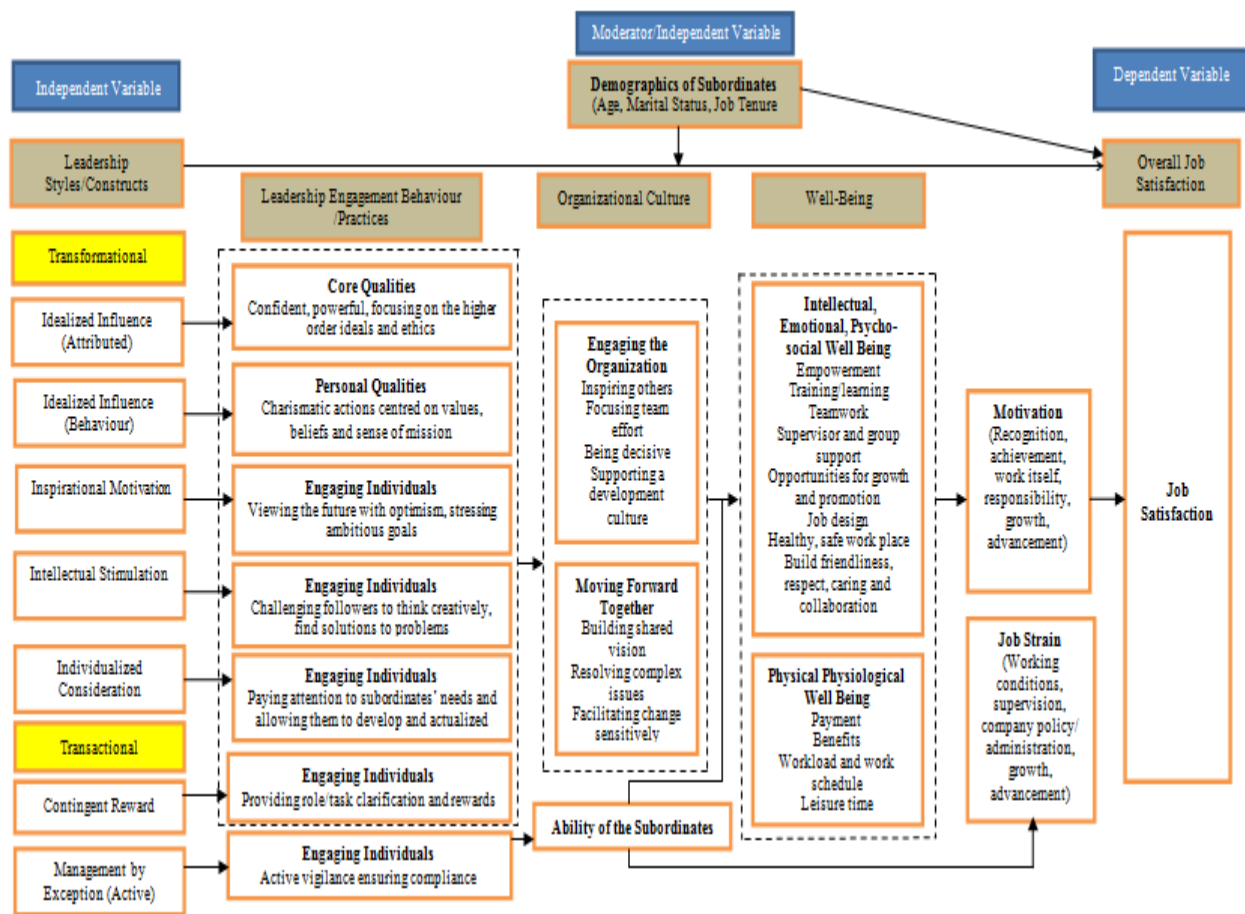


FIGURE 1: The CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

### Transformational Leadership:

Transformational leadership is a process in which “leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality” (Burns, 1978, p. 20). This motivation is supposed to invigorate people to accomplish beyond expectancy by generating belongingness in achieving the vision (Grossman & Valiga, 2000). Transformational leadership embraced the assumption that people have immense potential and can be successful if they are given the vision and support from highly engaging, positive and inspiring leaders (Gates, 2009). Through motivation, a change process happens and subordinates become encouraged and are enthusiastic in achieving organizational goals and objectives.

Transformational leadership demarcated for this FRLM (full range leadership model) behavior identify the leadership as being proactive, transcend followers collective interests to a higher level and assists followers in attaining higher level goals. These behaviors were quantified using the instrument MLQ (5X) developed by Bass and Avolio (2004). The following is the list of these behaviors as defined by Antonakis et al., (2003).

1. Idealized influence attributes (IIA) denotes the social personality of the leader and her perception of confidence, powerfulness and level of focus of the higher order needs and moral principles of the followers.
2. Idealized influence behaviors (IIB) denotes the alluring actions of the leader based on ethics, beliefs and sense of mission.
3. Inspirational motivation (IM) denotes behaviors that leaders used to invigorate their followers by viewing the future positively, emphasizing ambitious goals including communicating an inspiring vision.
4. Intellectual stimulation (IS) denotes the leader’s behavior that is pleasing to the followers as well as challenging the followers’ thinking, creativity and finding answers to thought-provoking problems.

5. Individualized consideration denotes the leader's behavior that provides coaching, advising, supporting and encouragement allowing followers to develop and actualize thereby contributing to the satisfaction of the followers.

#### **Transactional Leadership:**

In contrast to the transformational perception of leadership, the transactional leaders, in the initial phases of development, establish their world based on personal goals and plans. They motivate followers by recognizing their needs in exchange for their performance and support. Transactional behaviors focus on task as well as good relationship in exchange for desirable rewards. Even though transactional leadership is not able to develop trust and full potential of the followers (Avolio, Bass & Jung, 1999) but if coupled with the individualized consideration attribute of the leader, it may provide the platform for transformational leadership that can positively affect followers' motivation and performance (Hay, 2007). As a construct, transactional leadership encompasses two types of behaviors and these two types of behaviors run along a continuum and range from using positive methods to using negative methods to motivate subordinates which are:

1. Contingent Reward: To impact behavior, the leader makes clear the work obligatory for the rewards. This attribute ensures that rewards are reliant on suitable behaviors to attain results when expectancies are met.
2. Active Management by Exception: To influence behavior, the leader actively monitors subordinates looking for errors and implementing rules to prevent errors from happening (Bass, 1985).

The importance of subordinates' ability affecting leadership style has not been stressed and discussed in the theoretical and management literatures. However, findings from past literatures postulated that the type of influential leadership style used to a large extent is dependent on the ability of the subordinates (Lee & Low, 2012). The rationale is that whilst transformational leader would give more latitude and support to subordinates with high ability to perform efficiently and effectively, on the contrary when subordinates' ability is low, the leader may be expected to adopt transactional leadership style.

#### **Transformational Leadership, Workplace Engagement and Subordinates Well-being:**

A healthy work environment would not emerge without leaders playing a prominent role and involving others in its success (AACN, 2005). A deeply satisfying organizational culture could solidify if leaders engaged subordinates in the development of shared work values. It is likely that transformational leaders engaging in the idealized influence behaviors heighten subordinates' appealing self-interests and emotional response by increasing their maturity, ideals and personal identification (Bass, 2008). By demonstrating humbleness, values and concern for the well-being of others, subordinates are keen to show enthusiasm in their work (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Additionally, via the intellectual stimulation leaders are able to encourage subordinates to be more creative thinkers and innovators which will enhance their need to make significant contributions towards work. These contributions are likely to increase intrinsic motivation of subordinates and work engagement (M. Ghadi & Caputi, 2010). It has also been suggested that there is a positive linkage between supervisory coaching and feedback, which are key attributes of individualized consideration and workplace engagement (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Leaders who play the effective role of coaches heighten the leader-subordinate relationship, resulting in the subordinates feeling empowered and proud thereby, generating a positive psychosocial and emotional well-being (Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004).

Inspiration motivation, another transformational leadership attribute impart a sense of self significance to their subordinates/followers (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Leaders who engage idealized influence attributes and inspirational motivation are often expected to depend on idealistic visions and persuasive communication to influence subordinates to immerse themselves in their work (M. Ghadi & Caputi, 2010). Empowering subordinates what is significant and ignore others (Bass & Riggio, 2006). These influencing and motivational attributes enhance the development of subordinates work identification and enjoyment in their task or role which in turn act as a powerful subordinates' motivating effort (Piccolo & Colquitt, 2006). Thus it is likely that transformational leadership as a motivational leadership style can play a positive role in generating work engagement (vigor, dedication and absorption) leading to the intellectual, physical and psychosocial well-being of the subordinates.

#### **Job Satisfaction (Brayfield-Rothe, 1951):**

Subordinates job satisfaction is ascertained by using the Overall Job Satisfaction Index (OJS) developed by Brayfield and Rothe (1951). The fundamental assumption used by the authors is that an individual's job satisfaction can result from his/

her attitude towards his/ her job which then led to the concept of attitude scaling. Attitude scaling as the result of an individual reaction or feeling towards a subject allows the researcher to make certain postulations on the attitude of the individual or subject. The creation of OJS is based on these characteristics of attitude scaling and consists of the following desirable attributes:

1. It should give an indicator of overall job satisfaction than to precise facets of job satisfaction.
2. It can be used across a broad range of jobs.
3. It should be susceptible to disparities in attitude.
4. The items should be stimulating, credible and diverse that would affect and induce support from management and employees.
5. It should result in a dependable and acceptable index
6. It should be simple, easily understood and marked

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Nursing academic leaders need to utilize a leadership style that best suit the environment and their subordinates. The leader should be able to recognize and analyse their subordinates as well as the college environment where they worked. The importance of the nursing administrator in determining the nature of work environment is well documented and is of increasing significance to the retention of nurse educators. Perception of work place engagement could play the role of perceived work environment and thus mediate between the relationship between leadership styles and job satisfaction of subordinates. Leadership styles that are not suitable in leading the subordinates can pressurized the subordinates leading to unfavourable organizational outcomes such as reducing their job satisfaction. Leaders that engage in transformational leadership style and the contingent reward attribute of transactional leadership style tend to increase the value and significance of their work, resulting in subordinates to be intrinsically motivated via the psychological perceptions of well-being. In this respect, leadership styles utilized is considered to be effective if citizens in the college or program perceived its' acceptability (Abdul Shukur, 2004). However, nursing academic leadership styles that are successfully utilized in one college might not be successful in another due to the influence of different college environment and the subordinates that worked in it. The conceptual framework assumes that transformational and transactional leadership-work place engagement is indirect and impacted through the mechanism of perceived subordinates' well-being, ultimately leading to job satisfaction.

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