An Exploration of the Current Leadership Style in Umluj College at Tabuk University, Saudi Arabia: The Relationship between Leadership, Gender and Work Engagement

Yasraa Alharbi[12*], Suze Mathews[2]

[1]Human Resource Management, Faculty of Business Administration, Tabuk University, University College in Umluj, Tabuk 71491, Saudi Arabia

[2]Strategic Human Resource Management, Faculty of Business, Oxford Brookes University, Oxford, United Kingdom

Abstract: **It is commonly stated that culture is one of the factors that may affect leadership styles, but the question arises as to the extent of this impact. This article seeks to explore the current leadership style in Umluj College at Tabuk University, Saudi Arabia and to determine the relationship between leadership, gender and work engagement. To discover whether or not the findings could be applied to Umluj College, this study devised hypotheses to test the theories of leadership, which could either be supported or rejected after analysing the gathered data. Both quantitative and qualitative approaches were used to gather data and reach findings. Triangulation was implemented to compare outcomes and reach conclusive results. After testing the hypotheses and using theories to compare and contrast data, findings revealed that transformational leadership is the dominant style of leadership at Umluj College. Furthermore, both males and females in the college were found to be transformational leaders. This shows that leadership style at Umluj College is independent from gender. Moreover, transformational leadership does not have a significant influence on work engagement at this college.**

Keywords: **Leadership; Gender; Work Engagement; Saudi Arabia.**

I. INTRODUCTION

The success of an organisation depends on its employees. The success of employees depends, to a great extent, on their leaders. Despite there being a global recognition for the significance of leadership, there is a difficulty in assigning a specific definition for it. The GLOBE research conference 1994, reached a consensus for a universal definition of organisational leadership "The ability of an individual to influence, motivate and enable others to contribute towards the effectiveness and success of the organisations of which they are members" [1]. This definition will be used herein as a guide in analysing leadership and its relation to work engagement.

As this study will focus on leadership in a higher education institution in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, it is vital to point out the cultural factors involving leadership. While some researchers present organisational leadership as a culture free framework, as stated by the Aston School, which can take a unified international structure that follows the same framework globally [2], others firmly believe that culture has a direct impact on leadership due to its relations with background, history, customs and geography [3]. However, if certain factors such as a higher level of management, the education levels of upper management, the size of an organization, its international connections and its sector are taken into account, a global structure of leadership can certainly be considered. It is known as corporate culture which demonstrates a corporate pattern of

leadership [4, 5]. A combination of culture free and culturally influenced leadership methods can be established in some cases. A study conducted by Child and Kieser [6], found that operational decisions were made with a cultural influence whereas decisions of upper management followed a global corporate structure of leadership within the same organisation.

A mix of culture free and culturally binding structure can be found particularly in higher education. American universities play a major role in influencing leadership styles in education around the world [7].

In addition, European Higher Education institutions are also playing a global role by uniting their approaches and undergoing reforms to improve, following the Bologna Declaration (1999) [8], to harmonise their education institutions in Europe and create a basic framework for education.

Universities in Saudi Arabia, being internationally affiliated, are influenced by the international styles of leadership, while also following cultural and political regulations. An in-depth study into the culture of leadership in Saudi Arabian universities will be provided in the research.

The corporate culture of leadership can be divided into a variety of leadership styles. In 1978, Burns [9] introduced styles of leadership, transactional and transformational. These two styles were elaborated by Bass [10]. Finally, a third style, laissez faire [11] was added. Mullins [12] also defined these three main styles of leadership under similar labels, Authoritarian, democratic and laissez faire.

Today, these three styles form the guidelines for most of the recent researches involving leadership internationally, and will be used in the case study of this article.

SAUDI ARABIA AT A GLANCE

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the largest producer and exporter of oil in the world since 1938, was established as a kingdom after its unification in 1932 [13]. Its legal system follows the Islamic Sharia law [14]. Education is free at all levels with an emphasis on Islamic studies. With the exception of nursery schools, kindergarten and some schools of medicine, there is segregation of males and females in education. The Ministry of Higher Education is responsible for universities in Saudi Arabia [15]. The literacy rate among males is 90.4% and 81.3% among females [16].

UMLUJ COLLEGE

Umluj College was chosen as a sample of higher education institutions in Saudi Arabia. It is part of Tabuk University. This university was chosen for several reasons:

a) The ease of acquiring information and ease of contacting key staff members and authorities since the conduction of the research is done by a member of staff **b)** Due to the separation of male and female sections of the college, it will be easy to acquire data related to gender differences in leadership **c)** Accuracy and possibility of validation due to an understanding of the culture and work system at the college **d)** Possibility of providing a positive influence by making suggestions and recommendations

RESEARCH AIMS AND PURPOSE

There are many studies covering leadership styles in the sector of Higher Education in countries such as Japan, Germany, the UK and the USA. Many studies suggest that one leadership style is better than the others. Many researchers focused on transformational leadership being the most highly recommended style [10]. However, studies of leadership styles in Saudi universities are limited. Additionally, there is a preconceived notion about leadership being authoritative in most sectors in Saudi Arabia [17] stating that dominance is seen as a sign of strength in the kingdom.

This study aims to explore different leadership styles in Higher Education in Saudi Arabia taking Umluj College as an example of a modern day institution of Higher Education in Saudi Arabia.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research attempts to provide answers to the following questions: **a)** Are all leadership styles culture free? **b)** Is there a preferred leadership style that can be applied in all sectors and/or departments in higher education in general and Saudi Arabia in particular? **c)** Is the best leadership style, as stated by researchers, transformational?

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Through answering the previous questions, and after researching leadership styles in the case study of Umluj College, the study aims to achieve the following: **a)** Critically review on leadership styles **b)** Construct and investigate three hypotheses that define the dominant leadership style at Umluj College and consider different factors which affect the dominant leadership style **c)** Offer suggestions for developing leadership at Umluj College and propose solutions to improve work engagement.

II.   METHODOLOGY

A. RESEARCH PHILOSOPHY

Understanding the philosophy behind research plays a vital role in the quality of the research results [18]. The basic understanding of reality, whether it is external and inflicts itself on people, or a result of individuals and the nature of being, is the basic ontological theory from which research can begin [19]. The research at Umluj College considers whether the culture of the college affects the employees or whether the employees create their organisational culture. The culture of segregation in Saudi Arabia is a reality that affects gender roles. It may affect female employees positively and for this reason, the culture of segregation is encouraged internally. Therefore, it can also be said that individuals are determining their reality at Umluj College. Epistemology subsequently discusses how individuals can understand reality and how knowledge can be obtained and through which philosophies. Finally, the methodology suggests the tools used for the investigation of the research topic.

There are two main research philosophies to consider. Positivism views the ontological assumption of reality being external and studies reality using an objectivist approach. Positivism explains reality through questionnaires, surveys and random sampling. These methods of research view reality as an external factor which affects individuals. Interpretivism, which is also named constructivism, states that reality is determined by individuals and therefore uses a more inductive approach [18, 20]. Interpretivism uses tools such as interviews and analytical approaches. These inductive tools use conclusions to explain how people affect reality.

There is a need to avoid generalisation and understand that individuals in different societies cannot be analysed within the same context as others. The experiences, biased tendencies of the researcher and personal perspective on the subject should also be taken into account. It is for this reason that the research is directed with an unbiased approach that is based on scientific evidence and not influenced by media, personal opinions or any factors that could distort the epistemology.

Due to the nature of the subject of the research, and taking into consideration the cultural restrictions, social beliefs, segregation and gender issues, as well as other factors, a pragmatist view that both positivist and interpretivist approaches can be used for more accurate and impartial findings [20]. A mix of both quantitative and qualitative approaches is ideal for this research in order to analyse the data both subjectively and objectively because those methods complete each other and would be most suitable for the case study covering Umluj College in Saudi Arabia [21]. Segregation, religious laws and cultural guidelines of society affect Umluj College but the employees of Umluj College also create their own culture. A quantitative approach, using questionnaires alone, is not enough in Saudi Arabian culture because it is not taken seriously in many cases, even though it presents how culture affects the people. Therefore, using interviews as a qualitative method is necessary to show how people really view the culture from the inside out.

B. CASE STUDY ORGANISATION

The research takes place in Umluj College which is a part of Tabuk University. Tabuk University is a public academic institution located in the northwest of Saudi Arabia. It was established in 2006 to serve the community, and has ten different colleges and five branches scattered in different cities. Umluj College, one of the main colleges of Tabuk University, was the best educational institution to test the theories in Saudi Arabia in order to analyse the different types of leadership and the effect of transformational leadership on employees' performance and engagement. It is ideal for the case study due to the ease of obtaining information, and the current status of the researcher being a member of staff.

Umluj College has nine departments and nine administrative units. It is composed of 115 employees and it includes 2900 male and female students with a majority of female students [22]. The status of segregation at the college allows for the comparison of results according to gender easily, since most females report to female leaders and most males report to male leaders.

Limitations of the Case Study: Only primary data will be used for the case study because there is not enough research covering leadership in higher education in Saudi Arabia and none available at Umluj College. Because this will be the first research of leadership at Umluj College, previous data is unavailable. In addition, Umluj College is a relatively new college existing for 7 years only which means that the number of employees is still small and their participation in research will be limited. There are many new employees at Umluj and they will be hesitant to provide feedback because they are not accustomed to the organisation. Finally, employees at Umluj College do not all speak English which will result in a need for translation for any questions and responses related to the research and could result in a lack of communication and inaccurate interpretation of Arabic phrases and expressions.

C. RESEARCH STRUCTURE

QUESTIONNAIRE

At the beginning, a positivist approach, using online questionnaires to gather data, will be used in order to test the theories and test the hypotheses. This strategy is found to be most appropriate because it gives a wide possibility of results [20]. However, in Saudi Arabia, questionnaires are not taken seriously and socially acceptable opinions are usually given. Also, since the questionnaire will be internet-based, there is no possibility of further explaining the questions in case of a misunderstanding. These limitations will be taken into account while analysing results.

This method of using positivism enabled the acquisition of quantitative numerical data and the use of data analysis to reach specific findings. The questionnaire was used in order to gather the responses of participants in a fast, economic and simple way [20]. It was most convenient because the period of the research coincided with the summer holidays, and because most of the university employees had travelled, internet-mediated questions were the best option. Due to the limitation of the summer holiday, not all the employees will be available to complete the interview questions. Some employees at the college renew their contracts annually while others have permanent contracts. Therefore, the survey will be sent only to those who have functional emails during the summer holiday and long-term contracts. The survey was designed, conceptualizing the research and methodology and considering the possible relationships which may appear according to different variables especially the relationship between gender and leadership as well the relationship between leadership and work engagement [23]. The questionnaire is designed to provide a sense of independence and authority for the participants [20]. The participants will be given two weeks to complete the questionnaires individually and without management interference to attempt to gather the most honest and reliable replies. It will be composed of questions that cover three types of leadership styles, transformational, transactional and laissez-faire leadership, without directly referring to them. The questions will be categorized into threes to reflect the three styles of leadership. They will cover transformational, transactional and laissez-faire leadership in the order they are mentioned. For example, questions one, four and seven will test transformational leadership. Questions two, five and eight will examine transactional leadership and questions three, six and nine will investigate laissez faire leadership, and so on. The cultural factor of life in Saudi Arabia was not addressed while designing the questionnaire. This factor was intentionally avoided to test whether leadership styles can truly be culture free and to create a more general questionnaire. The questions were arranged in a way that is both simple to answer and simple to analyse using a deductive method to reach conclusions based on facts and figures. A five point Likert Scale [24] was used to measure the strength of how participants felt about leadership starting from strongly agree and ending with strongly disagree.

Pilot Test:

Before administering the questionnaire, it was pilot tested by the researcher for reliability. Mitchell [25] outlined that various approaches can be used to test the reliability of a questionnaire and his test re-test approach was used in this case. The custom-made questionnaire prepared for the research was first printed and then circulated within Oxford Brookes University to test whether or not the designed questions would be able to identify the leadership style of middle managers at the university. It was printed and distributed to 20 employees in different departments including the library and the IT departments at Headington Campus, as well as the library and academic faculty at the Wheatley Campus of Oxford Brookes University. Although this pilot test is not ideal, it was the best option available as it is extremely difficult to ask members of Umluj College to reply to achieve the same questionnaire twice. A summative scale was used to rate the responses using simple hand calculation by giving values ranging from 1 point for strongly disagree, to 5 points for strongly agree. The

replies were gathered, calculated, and an average was found. Higher numbers indicated how much participants agreed with each style of leadership. One change to the survey was made according to the feedback. The 'not available' option was replaced by 'neutral' in the rating scale. Participants suggested to replace the 'not available' option because they felt impartial to some questions and stated that the neutral option would be more suitable than not available. The Likert Scale proved to be successful in analysing leadership styles because the researcher managed to deduce findings according to it. The findings indicated that the questions were mostly reliable enough to identify leadership styles. Through analysis of the responses of employees following leaders in the same department, a leadership style could be found. The results however, were only used to test the questionnaire itself and not leadership; therefore it could not be relied upon due to the large differences between the two universities, their cultural background, political factors and other variables. The pilot test was only conducted to check whether the custom-made questions were reliable and how long it would take to complete these questions.

INTERVIEWS

The qualitative approach of gathering will be used as a second approach to establish the leadership style in Umluj College. For the purpose of this research, open ended questions will be used through interviews. They will be translated into Arabic by the researcher and structured interviews will be held by phone because of the difficulty of reaching participants who are away on holiday. Structured interviews will be used to avoid any bias [20]. Corbetta [26] stated that structured interviews use the same order and the same wording to ask the same questions to all participants. Since this common layout is used, data is easier to analyse, categorize and compare. In addition, structured questions take a short amount of time which shows respect to the employees' time while they are on holiday. However, structured questions are limited in details and not flexible. They do not allow for additional questions which can provide more information in one or more aspects. Furthermore, they are difficult to analyse and there is no fixed method used for analysis of data. Despite their limitations, structured questions were found to be suitable to maintain an unbiased approach between males and females in Saudi Arabia by asking the exact same questions without deviation, and to respect the time of employees while on holiday.

Because of the segregation in Saudi Arabia, and because of the inability to be directly present with males since the researcher is female, structured telephone interviews were found to be the most appropriate solution to facilitate discussing the questions with males and females in the same setting. Unlike the positivist approach, the cultural and gender factors will be taken into consideration when designing the questions in order to provide a method of further analysis in case the positivist approach is not sufficient.

The questions will be designed to provide an understanding of leadership style at Umluj and present opinions through questions which narrow leadership styles down to their fundamental elements. The questions will also be designed to suit middle management which allows each participant the opportunity of replying both as a manager and an employee. The interviewees will be selected as men and women from the middle management of the mathematics department who are located in different buildings but work in identical fields. They will also be chosen according to the number of years spent within Umluj College. The selection process will use samples from the same department, identical positions within the university and more than a year of working experience. They will only differ in gender. The mathematics department, due to previous knowledge of the researcher, is the most cooperative in Umluj College. The members are proactive in comparison with other departments based on previous knowledge of the researcher. Also, there is a culture of reluctance to express opinions in Saudi Arabia which is less present in the mathematics department at Umluj College. This is why the department is selected for interview questions. After conducting the interviews and recording them, the audio results will be transcribed. Everyone will be asked exactly the same question. They will be limited and might not give a variety of opinions or flexible replies. Telephone interviews have many limitations such as lack of facial expressions, unclear tone of voice and inability to have face to face contact with participants which limits the understanding of body language. However, this method will be used in an attempt to avoid biased settings as a result of segregation.

TRIANGULATION

Finally, by comparing the two resources through triangulation, a more inductive approach will be feasible and conclusions can be drawn. Saunders et al [20] refers to triangulation as the method of dealing with different data collection techniques within the same study to ensure that the outcome is correct.

After obtaining data from both quantitative and qualitative resources, the links between both will be compared and grouped into categories according to similarities and differences, while taking the variables into consideration. Categorizing data can help to achieve a focused argument [27]. Conducting two methods of research and using triangulation to compare the data can help to provide more accuracy in the output of the research.

HYPOTHESES

Sarantakos [28] defined a hypothesis as a clarification to the research topic and an educated prediction of the findings. A hypothesis is also a prediction of the relationships between two or more variables [29]. As part of the impartial approach used, the aim will not be to prove any hypothesis but to support or reject it. This will be handled in line with the data collected. Hypotheses help the researcher in making correct decisions about tools, formulating questions for the research, dealing with the data collected and reaching a conclusion. It provides a focused framework for the research [29].

After applying to the research at Umluj College, the following hypotheses were made prior to conducting both quantitative and qualitative approaches:

Hypothesis 1: Transformational leadership is the dominant style of leadership in higher education at Umluj College in Saudi Arabia

Hypothesis 2: Transformational leadership is independent from the gender factor at Umluj College

Hypothesis 3: Transformational leadership affects work engagement at Umluj College

D. RESEARCH PROCEDURES

QUESTIONNAIRE

A self-administered questionnaire will be translated into Arabic and sent by email to 70 employees at Umluj College. The questionnaire will be comprised of a section for general information including the variables and the remaining two parts will be attempt to reveal the most dominant style of leadership at Umluj College and how far transformational leadership affects work engagement.

The first hypothesis will be tested in the questionnaire to see whether or not transformational leadership is truly the most dominant at Umluj College.

The first part of the questionnaire which includes general information will help to categorise participants in terms of age, gender, department, years of experience and other variables which will be essential for testing the second hypothesis. Finally, the last section of the questionnaire will test the relationship between leadership and work engagement and this will present the findings related to the third hypothesis. All questions related to leadership and work engagement will be close ended questions to facilitate analysing the data gathered from a large number of participants. The 5-point Likert Scale will be used for the 2 parts of the survey testing leadership and work engagement in order to capture the strength of how employees feel about Umluj College in terms of leadership.

INTERVIEWS

The interview questions will be used as a tool to gather information and complete any unclear data gathered from the questionnaires. The interview questions, which are structured using the hypotheses, will help to reach more conclusive findings. These findings can then be compared to those found in the questionnaire which was also arranged using hypotheses. These questions will handle leadership in general, gender factors, cultural factors and work engagement using open questions.

Open ended questions will be used in order to provide an opportunity for clarification and to provide a chance for participants to express themselves more than they did in the questionnaire which used only closed questions. These questions will also be structured questions because they are easy to replicate and test for reliability since all respondents will reply to the exact same questions without additions.

The participants will be informed that their replies will be recorded and transcribed while remaining anonymous. The sample of chosen interviewees is shown in the table below.

TABLE 1: Demographic Sample of The Interviewees

Participant	Gender	Age	Position	Number of years at Umluj
1	Female	45	Head of Mathematics Department	6
2	Female	48	Teaching faculty	6
3	Female	37	Teaching faculty	6
4	Female	31	Teaching faculty	5
5	Male	49	Head of Mathematics Department	2
6	Male	45	Teaching faculty	1
7	Male	38	Teaching faculty	7
8	Male	39	Teaching faculty	1

Taking segregation into account, eight participants from the Mathematics department, four males and four females, will be asked nine questions in Arabic.

E. ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

QUESTIONNAIRE

IBM SPSS 22.0 will be used to analyse the data. The questions will be coded and entered into the program using titles and values for each reply.

Leadership questions will be labelled according to leadership style and question number. The leadership styles will be distributed in the survey in groups of threes. Questions 1,2 and 3 will be allocated for transformational, transactional and laissez-faire styles respectively. This process will be repeated throughout the questionnaire for two reasons. Firstly to avoid listing all the qualities of one style one after another, by distributing the three styles through the questionnaire. Secondly, to make it easier for analysis as they are placed in threes. For example, transformational leadership questions will be labelled as L1transfo, L4transfo and so on. Similarly, transactional questions will labelled as L2transc, L5transc and so on. This method will make it easy to categorise the questions and sort the data according to leadership style.

INTERVIEW

Saunders et al [20] presented three types of analysis for qualitative data. Summarising, categorisation and structuring can be used to analyse data on their own or in combination. The responses to the interview questions will be translated into English, summarised and then presented. A combination of summarising and categorisation will be used to group the responses according to the hypotheses, in order to reach findings which either support or reject these hypotheses. The matrix tool for display, which uses tables to recognise relationships and patterns and helps draw conclusions, will be employed to facilitate data analysis [30]. The interview questions will be analysed using a table to present the data in a way that is simple to read, analyse and understand. Each point will be handled in relation to one or more hypotheses.

F. ETHICAL ISSUES

Objectivity is one of the most important aspects to be considered throughout this research when taking into account the various ethical issues related to research and data finding. This is because objectivity is essential in presenting clear conclusions and recommendations [20]. Since the participants are mostly from the same cultural background and due to the segregation in universities in Saudi Arabia, it is necessary to study this culture with an awareness and objectivity when considering the differences between Western cultures and Saudi culture. Additionally, it is necessary to present the findings as genuinely as possible without being selective about which data to include [31].

Confidentiality is equally important as participants who share their opinions should be guaranteed that their feedback is anonymous and will remain confidential especially to the organisation in which they work [20].

QUESTIONNAIRE

Participants from Umluj College in Saudi Arabia will be emailed the online Arabic translation of the questionnaire which specifies that the personal information of the participants will remain confidential and is only to be used for research purposes. The questionnaire will not request any name, phone or other personal details that can show who the participant is.

INTERVIEW

The research will be conducted in the specified mathematics department at Umluj College. To conduct the research ethically, it was agreed with the dean of the college that the results will be discussed in general without

disclosing which department was being interviewed. Recommendations will be shared as general suggestions to the college. This will be done in order to exempt participants from the possible consequences which could occur are a

result of the sharing of conclusions and recommendations [32].

Interviewees will be contacted by email and asked to be interviewed. A guarantee form associated with the interview questions will be sent by email in Arabic to all participants prior to conducting the interviews. It will introduce

the researcher, clarify the interview process in terms of length and timing, describe the purpose of the research and provide a guarantee of anonymity.

Once the data has been gathered, it will be approached with objectivity as well as anonymity to ensure that the results are genuine and serve the purpose of this research in a fair and neutral manner.

G. LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

The findings of the study should be considered after taking into account the limitations of this research. The first limitation is that the researcher works in the same college and therefore participants may be uncomfortable sharing information especially through interview questions. Despite many assurances, the culture in Saudi Arabia is reserved when it comes to giving opinions about management. The second limitation is that many participants were on holiday and the numbers of completed questionnaires may be low. In addition, most participants speak Arabic as their mother tongue and the interviews will be conducted in Arabic. The results will be translated into English and some expressions could be lost in translation. Even though those limitations exist, the research is expected to give important feedback and reliable conclusions because two methods to gather findings will be used and then the triangulation between those two methods will ensure more coherent and conclusive results.

III. FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

The case study firstly attempts to find the dominant style of leadership at Umluj College in Saudi Arabia. Once this style is discovered, the study aims to discuss whether or not this style is affected by gender and to what extent this leadership style can affect work engagement. The researcher used both positivist and interpretivist approaches and each approach was analysed separately. Each approach will be discussed individually and then triangulation will be used to discuss the findings and provide the final results.

A. QUESTIONNAIRE ANALYSIS

Using the data management software IBM SPSS 22.0, the data from the questionnaire was recorded, categorized, given numerical codes and sorted. The replies were given numerical values in order to reach results through analysis in a more efficient way and with fewer errors [20].

The data of the completed questionnaires was entered manually, due to the difficulty in decoding the results which were in Arabic, into the data management software IBM SPSS 22.0. The data was checked for discrepancies and only complete questionnaires including all variables were used. In total, 37 completed questionnaires were used out of 39 questionnaires received. This is because two questionnaires were incomplete and had identical replies for all the questions asked.

In order to test the hypotheses, variables from the general information section were analysed first. The pie charts below show the factors to be considered when analysing leadership styles. The largest segments of participants who completed the survey from both genders were aged between 40 – 49, held PhD degrees, were working as assistant professors with more than 3 years of experience at Umluj and were married with children. However, it was later noted that marital status added no value to the research.
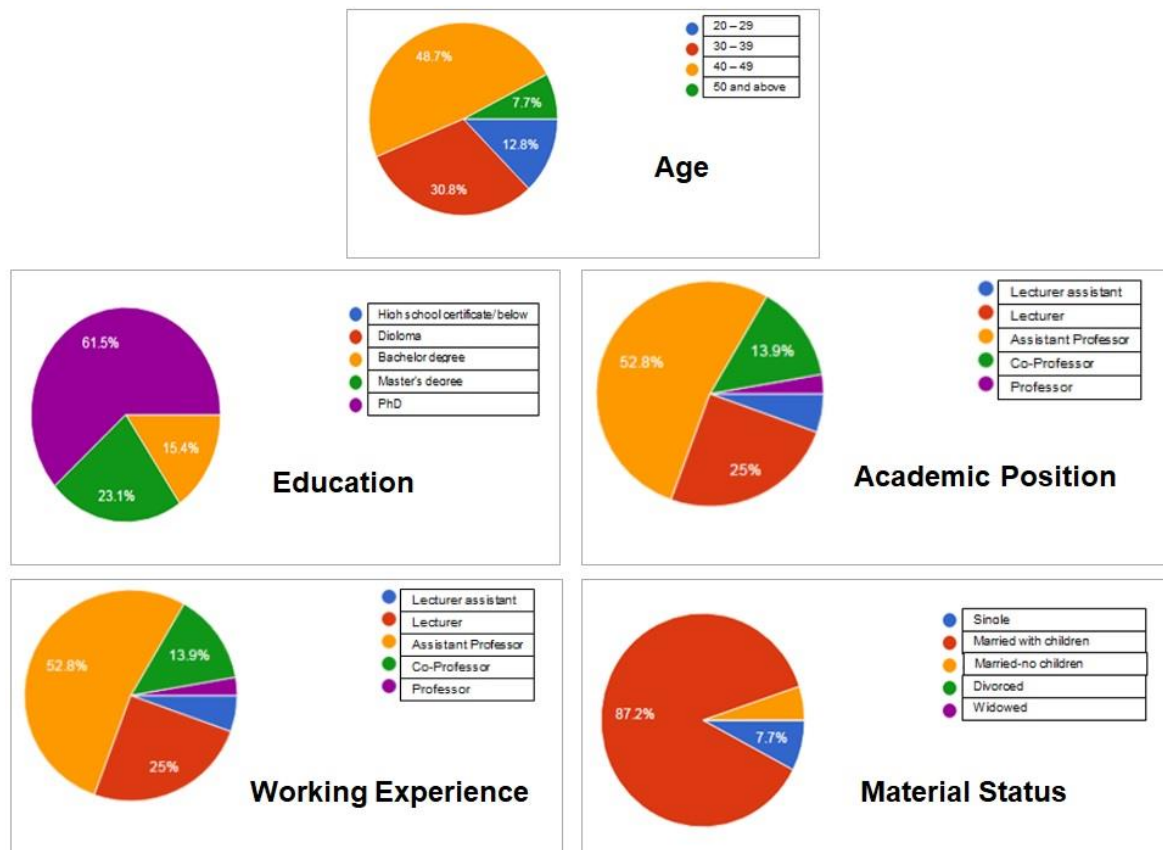
FIGURE 1. Participant Characteristics

The percentages of males and females at Umluj College were (n=16, 43.2%) and (n=21, 56.8%), respectively. Female employees were the prevailing gender out of the 37 completed questionnaires. When comparing the results with previous study [33], this research showed that the majority of students at colleges in Saudi Arabia today are females. It is reasonable that the majority of staff is female as well since female students are only allowed female teachers and administrative officers.

LEADERSHIP STYLE

To test hypothesis 1, the questions were rearranged and categorized into the three main leadership styles. The replies from the Likert Scale were given values to calculate the average on a scale of 1 to 5. The mean is the average result of responses given to each question and is used to analyse scales [20]. Strongly agree was given the maximum value of 5, and at the other end, strongly disagree was given the minimum value of 1. The value of the mean shows how strongly participants generally agreed with the questions on the mentioned scale as shown in the tables below.

The following table shows the statements related to transformational leadership. These statements describe transformational leaders. Participants' replies show how much they agree with the statements thereby showing how far their leaders can be considered transformational leaders in comparison with the other two leadership styles.

TABLE 2: Descriptive Statistics for Transformational Leadership

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean ± SD
L1Trasfo	37	1.00	5.00	4.13 ± 0.82
L4Transfo	37	1.00	5.00	3.95 ± 0.97
L7Transfo	37	1.00	5.00	4.05 ± 0.91
L10Transfo	37	1.00	5.00	4.30 ± 0.99
L13Transfo	37	2.00	5.00	4.16 ± 0.80
L16Transfo	37	1.00	5.00	4.14 ± 0.89

Likert Scale: 1: Strongly Disagree, 2: Disagree, 3: Neutral, 4: Agree 5: Strongly agree

Statement L1: My manager suggests new methods for executing tasks

Statement L4: My manager comes up with new ideas for the department

Statement L7: My manager is concerned about the well-being of his/her team

Statement L10: My manager enhances my sense of value within the college

Statement L13: My manager talks optimistically about the future

Statement L16: My manager spends time teaching and coaching

Out of 37 participants, most replies showed that participants agreed with the statements related to transformational leadership. The mean for statement 1 was 4.13 showing that most participants agreed with the statement that their manager suggests new methods for executing tasks. A frequency table provides more information about the percentages of people's opinions for the same statement. The valid percent is used in the analysis.

TABLE 3: Frequency Table for L1 Transfo

L1Trasfo	Frequency	Percentage %
Strongly Disagree	1	2.7
Neutral	4	10.8
Agree	20	54.1
Strongly Agree	12	32.4
Total	37	100.0

From this table, it can be seen that 54% of participants agree with the first statement while a minority of participants disagree with it and only 10.8% are neutral to the statement provided, 32% of participants strongly agree with the statement. When looking at the means, it can be noticed that the result on the scale was a value closest to 'agree'. The same result is presented in the frequency table. The frequency table shows the results of one question at a time while the descriptive table shows the means for 6 questions therefore it displays more information in one table.

Both the frequency table and the descriptive table can be used to analyse the scale to show how far participants agree with each statement. However, to facilitate displaying more results in one table, the descriptive table analysing means will be used for the analysis of leadership styles. In order to make it easier to compare transformational leadership to transactional and laissez-faire leadership styles, an average mean for these questions can be found by adding the values of the means and dividing them by their total number of 6 questions. The average mean calculated for transformational leadership is 4.12. It shows that most participants agree with the statement presented according to the scale. This average mean can be used to compare the results for all three styles of leaderships using descriptive tables.

TABLE 4: Descriptive Statistics for Transactional Leadership

	N	Mean ± SD
L2Transc	37	4.35 ± 0.79
L5Transc	37	3.54 ± 0.96
L8Transc	37	4.05 ± 0.85
L11Transc	37	4.05 ± 0.97
L14Transc	37	4.19 ± 0.91
L17Transc	37	2.83 ± 1.09

Likert Scale: 1: Strongly Disagree, 2: Disagree, 3: Neutral, 4: Agree 5: Strongly agree

Statement L2: My manager follows the rules of the university

Statement L5: My manager offers rewards for tasks that are done well

Statement L8: My manager prioritizes task achievement

Statement L11: My manager sets clear goals and tasks

Statement L14: My manager gives clear instructions and expectations

Statement L17: I feel closely monitored by my manager

The average mean calculated for transactional leadership is 3.84. This shows that out of 37 participants, the general opinions regarding the statements describing a transactional leader were between neutral and agree. The average transactional mean is less than the average mean for transformational leadership, indicating that transformational leadership is more dominant than transactional leadership.

TABLE 5: Descriptive Statistics for Laissez-Faire Leadership

	N	Mean ± SD
L3LF	37	4.05 ± 0.84
L6LF	37	3.54 ± 1.09
L9LF	37	4.32 ± 0.82
L12LF	37	4.64 ± 0.69
L15LF	37	2.19 ± 1.26
L18LF	37	2.16 ± 1.19

Likert Scale: 1: Strongly Disagree, 2: Disagree, 3: Neutral, 4: Agree 5: Strongly agree

Statement L3: My manager is concerned about his/her own image

Statement L6: My manager doesn't interfere in my work

Statement L9: I am expected to solve work related problems on my own

Statement L12: I take responsibility for my decisions and actions

Statement L15: My manager is not always present in the department

Statement L18: My manager is not involved in the work process

The average mean calculated for laissez-faire leadership is 3.45. This shows that out of 37 participants, the general opinions regarding the statements describing a laissez faire leader were between neutral and agree. The average laissez faire mean is less than the average mean for both transactional and transformational leadership styles showing that laissez-faire leadership is the least present leadership style at Umluj College.

To show central tendency, the mean is the most frequently used measure [20]. It was found through analysing and comparing means, that the main style of leadership at Umluj College is transformational leadership which is in line with hypothesis 1.

GENDER FACTORS IN LEADERSHIP

When studying the relationship between gender and leadership at Umluj College, it is interesting to note that out of the 37 questionnaires analysed, most females reported to female leaders and a few females reported to male leaders. Male employees, however, only reported to male leader as shown in the cross-tab table below.

TABLE 6: Cross-Tab: Gender of Employees and Managers

		Manage Gender		Total
		Male	Female	
Gender	Male	16	0	16
	Female	4	17	21
	Total	20	17	37

To further analyse the gender factor at Umluj College, it was necessary to study the academic position and years of experience between males and females. Out of 19 females, 31.6% were lecturers and 42.1% were assistant professors. Out of 14 males, 14.3% were lecturers and 71.4% were assistant professors. Most females (66.7%) have between 3-6 years of experience at Umluj College, while 43.8% of males have less than 3 years of experience. This comparison shows that out of the 33 people who completed this section, males at Umluj College held higher academic positions than females even though females had more years of experience, as can be seen in the Table 7.

Segregation is one of the aspects of culture that affects gender roles in Saudi Arabia. Both males and females should have similar positions at Umluj College. The segregation of this university ensures that male students have male teachers and female students have female teachers and because there are more female students than males ones at Umluj College, it was expected that there will be more female teachers with high academic positions. However, the figures show that this is not the case. Males have higher academic positions than females and fewer years of experience. For this reason, another analysis was conducted to show the academic level of males and females at Umluj College.

Table 7 shows that out of 37 completed questionnaires, 47.6% of females hold a PhD while 81.3% of males hold a PhD degree at Umluj College. At Umluj College, the academic level of teachers determines their position at the college. Despite the males having fewer years of experience in Umluj College than females, they hold higher degrees. This can be one of the reasons that their academic positions are higher than females at Umluj College.

TABLE 7: Academic Position, Years of Experience, and Education among Participants

		Frequency (Percentage %)		
		Female (n= 21)	Male (n=16)	All (n=37)
Academic Position	**Lecturer assistant**	2 (10.5 %)	-	2 (5.4 %)
	Lecturer	6 (31.6 %)	2 (14.3 %)	8 (21.6 %)
	Assistant Professor	10 (42.1 %)	12 (71.4 %)	22 (59.5 %)
	Co-Professor	2 (10.5 %)	2 (14.3 %)	4 (10.8 %)
	Professor	1 (5.3 %)	-	1 (2.7 %)
Years of Experience	**Below 3 years**	4 (19 %)	7 (43.8 %)	11 (29.7 %)
	3-6 years	14 (66.7 %)	4 (25 %)	18 (48.7 %)
	7-9 years	1 (4.8 %)	1 (6.2 %)	2 (5.4 %)
	Above 9 years	2 (9.5 %)	4 (25 %)	6 (16.2 %)
Education	**Bachelor's degree**	5 (23.8 %)	1 (6.2 %)	6 (16.2 %)
	Master's degree	6 (28.6 %)	2 (12.5 %)	8 (21.6 %)
	PhD degree	10 (47.6 %)	13 (81.3 %)	23 (62.2 %)

Since the questionnaire does not represent the majority and because the sample is too small, the replies cannot be considered as sufficient to reach an explanation and more will be asked to clarify this point in the interview questions.

GENDER FACTORS AND TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Hypothesis 1 states that transformational leadership is the dominant style of leadership at Umluj College and this theory is supported by the data gathered from the questionnaire. To show whether or not transformational leadership is affected by gender, descriptive tables were used using the split file option which separates the results of males and females.

**TABLE 8: Transformational Leadership Between Females and Males**

	Mean ± SD	
	Females (n= 21)	Males (n=16)
L1Trasfo	4.00 ± 0.89	4.03 ± 0.70
L4Transfo	4.00 ± 1.09	3.87 ± 0.80
L7Transfo	3.90 ± 1.04	4.25 ± 0.68
L10Transfo	4.33 ± 0.96	4.25 ± 1.06
L13Transfo	4.19 ± 0.74	4.12 ± 0.88
L16Transfo	4.12 ± 1.01	4.12 ± 0.72

Likert Scale: 1: Strongly Disagree, 2: Disagree, 3: Neutral, 4: Agree 5: Strongly agree

When comparing results, we can see that in addition to transformational leadership being the dominant style of leadership, the figures show that females and males both believe their leaders are transformational at similar rates. This supports hypothesis 2 which states that transformational leadership is independent from gender. After comparing results, it can be stated that gender affects the position of leaders at Umluj College but not the leadership style.

LEADERSHIP AND WORK ENGAGEMENT

Hypothesis 3 was tested to find out whether transformational leadership affects work engagement at Umluj College. In order to test whether or not a relationship existed, the correlation between the two variables was tested using the correlation coefficient. This value ranges between -1, which shows that there is a negative correlation and +1 which means there is a positive correlation. When the value is 0, the two variables are independent from one another [20].
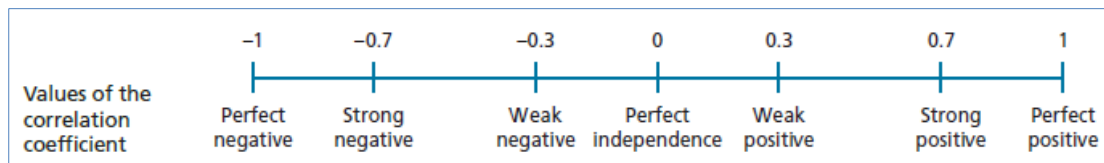
FIGURE 2. Correlation Coefficient [20]

Due to the fact that both variables were given numerical values, Pearson's product moment correlation coefficient was used [20]. This method is used as a tool to measure the strength or the relationship between two or more variables with numerical values.

The table below shows through Pearson Correlation, using the correlation coefficient, that the relationship between leadership and work engagement is unstable. This Correlations table was suggested as a research tool by the statistics assistant professor who is a colleague of the researcher at Umluj College.

TABLE 9: Correlation Between Leadership and Work Engagement

	N= 37	WE1Transfo	WE4Transfo	WE7Transfo
L1Trasfo	Pearson Correlation	0.698[***]	0.348[*]	0.215
	Significance	0.000	0.035	NS
L4Transfo	Pearson Correlation	0.627[***]	0.307	0.060
	Significance	0.000	NS	NS
L7Transfo	Pearson Correlation	0.613[***]	0.392[*]	0.227
	Significance	0.000	0.017	NS
L10Transfo	Pearson Correlation	0.487[**]	0.243	0.191
	Significance	0.002	NS	NS
L13Transfo	Pearson Correlation	0.562[***]	0.151	0.160
	Significance	0.000	NS	NS
L16Transfo	Pearson Correlation	0.411[*]	-0.047	-0.058
	Significance	0.011	NS	NS

[***]Correlation is significant at the 0.001 level; [**]Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level;

[*]Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level; NS: no significance.

Statement WE1: I work in a team environment with a clear goal

Statement WE4: My job inspires me to be creative and/or to come up with new ideas

Statement WE7: I gain a lot of knowledge and experience at work

The first statement showed a positive correlation between transformational leadership and work engagement. The third statement shows no correlation between work engagement and transformational leadership. The results indicate that hypothesis 3 which states that transformational leadership affects work engagement cannot be tested using the questionnaire because the relations between different questions yielded different results.

SUMMARY OF QUESTIONNAIRE FINDINGS

The results from the questionnaire show that hypothesis 1, which states that transformational leadership is the dominant style of leadership at Umluj College, can be supported after analysing the opinions of all completed questionnaires. Hypothesis 2, which states that transformational leadership is independent from gender, was also supported. However, an

additional finding showed that gender affects the position of leaders at Umluj College even though it does not affect leadership style. The data gathered from the questionnaire did not provide sufficient evidence to reach conclusive results for hypothesis 3 which explores the relationship between leadership style and work engagement.

The participants who completed the questionnaires were only 37 members of the college and the findings introduced new questions and inconclusive evidence. It was therefore necessary to consider the interview questions and analyse them in order to gain more decisive findings.

B. INTERVIEW ANALYSIS

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Participants were ensured that the interviews will be dealt with anonymously and asked to give their true opinions. The interviews were conducted by phone, recorded and then transcribed after obtaining the permission of the respondents. A total of 8 interviews were held. 4 interviews were completed from each gender in the mathematics department, consisting of 3 followers and one leader.

The replies were checked for accuracy and it was found that some replies were non-critical and somehow positive as their feedback presented excellent leaders without stating any areas of conflict and used a lot of praise and endorsements. This is due to the culture of Saudi Arabia which gives high respect to managers. Therefore, only the four most reliable responses were selected for analysis. The head of department and one member of the teaching faculty were selected from each gender by the researcher. It should be noted that there is no standardised method of analysing the results of interviews. Miles and Huberman [30] identified the steps of data analysis and display. They summarised the process into three stages: data reduction, data display and drawing and verifying conclusions.

For this case study, the key points mentioned were categorised, as can be seen in the table below, the relationships between the replies were found [34] and the findings were displayed in a matrix form [30]. As mentioned earlier, the interviews were all held by telephone to ensure that the same setting was available for males and females.

The interviews were conducted in a time frame of 15 – 30 minutes. The analysis below is a summarisation using the words of the researcher and not direct quotes. It is presented in a manner relating findings to the hypotheses. Responses are analysed according to the elements of leadership styles by using key words from the interviewees.

The hypotheses are either found to be compatible and approved, or found to be incompatible and disproved.

FINDINGS OF INTERVIEWS – LEADERS

Question	Response: Head of Mathematics Department/ Female	Analysis according to the hypotheses	Response: Head of Mathematics Department/ Male	Analysis according to the hypotheses
1) Do you feel that your work achievements are more influenced by your personal qualities or by the leadership of your manager? Please explain	*Personal qualifications, because I strive to be a good member of the college regardless of its leaders*	Hypothesis 3 disproved Leadership does not affect work engagement.	*Personal qualifications They are more important*	Hypothesis 3 disproved Leadership does not affect work engagement
2) Do you feel there are any leaders in Umluj College who are an example of an excellent leadership? Why are they great leaders	*Yes, they have distinctive capabilities in decision-making and human resource management*	Hypothesis 1 approved The response shows idealised influence, one of the elements of transformational leadership	*Yes, they manage work efficiently and give rewards and encouragement*	Hypothesis 1 partially approved Transformational leadership is dominant/ one element of transactional leadership, contingent rewards, is present

3) Do you think female leaders are different than male leaders at Umluj College? Why?	*No, they are the same and both are professional and experienced. However, as top leaders, only males are accepted. Men are freer to get more exposure and obtain higher degrees but this is difficult for females because of the culture. higher degrees but this is difficult for females because of the culture.*	Hypothesis 2 approved Gender does not affect leadership styles. However, gender does affect roles.	*Yes, female psychology is different and women are more emotional. Throughout our history men's leadership played a very big role in Saudi Arabia. Also, they are able to travel and gain experiences without any restrictions compared to Saudi women. Women are limited because of household responsibilities. However, women and men are equal in mental and scientific abilities.*	Hypothesis 2 disproved Gender affects leadership style (emotional influence)
4) Do you feel that your achievements are recognised by your manager at Umluj College? How?	*Yes, mainly because, my direct boss takes my notes into account and he also consults me in many subjects for action*	Hypothesis 1 approved The response shows individualised consideration, one of the elements of transformational leadership	*Yes, I receive appreciation for my actions and I am trusted at work*	Hypothesis 1 approved Trust is a part of idealised influence, one of the elements of transformational leadership
5) Do you receive/offer rewards for achievements? Are these rewards job related (financial rewards, promotions, vacations) or personal (sense of achievement, success, learning, self-development). Please elaborate	*Yes, financial rewards and self-development*	Hypothesis 1 partially approved Combination of transformational leadership elements, and rewards which demonstrate transactional leadership	*Yes, financial rewards and intangible rewards*	Hypothesis 1 partially approved Combination of transformational leadership elements, and rewards which demonstrate transactional leadership
6) What are the priorities in your department	•*Creating a satisfactory work for students and faculty environment* • *Development of student achievements* • *Improvement of staff members*	Hypothesis 1 approved The response demonstrates inspirational motivation, one of the elements of transformational leadership	*To create a generation of highly skilled individuals*	No hypothesis can be approved or disproved
7) Do you prefer to solve your problems and achieve your given tasks independently or would you prefer involvement from your manager? Why?	*I prefer to solve my problems with my boss, because through her participation at work, I was able to get the job done better and faster*	Hypothesis 1 approved The response shows idealised influence, one of the elements of transformational leadership	*I prefer involvement from my manager, because they have more experience.*	Hypothesis 1 approved The response shows idealised influence, one of the elements of transformational leadership
8) As a manager, do you prefer to be involved or to allow employees to make their own decisions and take responsibility for their actions?	*I prefer to allow employees to make their own decisions and take responsibility for their actions.*	Hypothesis 1 approved Trust is a part of idealised influence, one of the elements of transformational leadership	*I allow employees to make their own decisions with limits*	No hypothesis can be approved or disproved. Transactional leadership elements are presented in the response

| 9) How do you think leaders can get the best performance out of their employees? | *By encouraging the team and motivating it to be better.* | Hypothesis 1 approved The response demonstrates inspirational motivation, one of the elements of transformational leadership | *By rewarding employees for their work and supporting them to improve* | Hypothesis 1 partially approved Combination of transformational leadership elements and contingency reward |

FINDINGS OF INTERVIEWS - FOLLOWERS

Question	Response: Member of Mathematics Department/ Female	Analysis according to the hypotheses	Response: Member of Mathematics Department/ Male	Analysis according to the hypotheses
1) Do you feel that your work achievements are more influenced by your personal qualities or by the leadership of your manager? Please explain	*Personal Qualities. The experience, abilities and personal attributes of an individual are the reasons for success. I am dedicated to my work regardless of my manager.*	Hypothesis 3 disproved Leadership does not affect work engagement	*The manager has a big role in task achievement but personal qualities are what have a big effect on achievement. An employee without personal skills will not succeed even if he had an exceptional leader*	Hypothesis 3 partially disproved The response shows that personal skills are more important than good leadership
2) Do you feel there are any leaders in Umluj College who are an example of an excellent leadership? Why are they great leaders	*Yes one. She possesses both ethical and managerial qualities and she has the ability to create an innovative working environment*	Hypothesis 1 approved The response shows intellectual stimulation, one of the elements of transformational leadership	*Yes, there are good leaders for different reasons*	No hypothesis can be approved or disproved
3) Do you think female leaders are different than male leaders at Umluj College? Why?	*As leaders, they are similar but men have less empathy.*	Hypothesis 2 approved Gender does not affect leadership style	*I have no reply because I don't deal with the female department of this college*	No hypothesis can be approved or disproved
4) Do you feel that your achievements are recognised by your manager at Umluj College? How?	*Sometimes, but not always. My manager makes positive comments sometimes*	No hypothesis can be approved or disproved	*Yes, my manager follows up the work and he is fair. He also constantly motivates the team.*	Hypothesis 1 approved The response demonstrates inspirational motivation, one of the elements of transformational leadership
5) Do you receive/offer rewards for achievements? Are these rewards job related (financial rewards, promotions, vacations) or personal (sense of achievement, success, learning, self-development). Please elaborate	*Personal rewards such as sense of achievement, experience and self-development. Also, we receive promotions and bonuses.*	Hypothesis 1 partially approved Combination of transformational leadership elements, and rewards which demonstrate transactional leadership	*Yes, gratitude from the management as well as a personal sense of achievement. There are also financial rewards but only under certain conditions*	Hypothesis 1 partially approved Combination of transformational leadership elements, and rewards which demonstrate transactional leadership
6) What are the priorities in your department	*Creativity, and finding solutions to problems*	Hypothesis 1 approved The response demonstrates intellectual stimulation, one of the elements of transformational leadership	*Preparing students for the academic and practical sides of life*	No hypothesis can be approved or disproved

7) Do you prefer to solve your problems and achieve your given tasks independently or would you prefer involvement from your manager? Why?	*Independently until I am confident with my decision and then I share my ideas with my manager*	Hypothesis 1 approved The response shows idealised influence, one of the elements of transformational leadership	*Sometimes a manager should intervene if the issue is general and relates to the department. Other times, employees should take responsibility for their own tasks*	Hypothesis 1 approved The response shows idealised influence, one of the elements of transformational leadership
8) As a manager, do you prefer to be involved or to allow employees to make their own decisions and take responsibility for their actions?	*I allow the employees to make their own decisions and give them responsibilities*	Hypothesis 1 approved Trust is a part of idealised influence, one of the elements of transformational leadership	*It depends on the situation. Sometimes a manager should be involved and sometimes, the employees should take full responsibility*	No hypothesis can be approved or disproved. Transactional leadership elements are presented in the response
9) How do you think leaders can get the best performance out of their employees?	*Providing an environment of freedom, creativity and motivation as well providing justice*	Hypothesis 1 approved Inspirational motivation, and intellectual stimulation represent transformational leadership	*Employees should be chosen carefully each employees needs should be met*	Hypothesis 1 approved Individualised consideration is one of the elements of transformational leadership

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS OF THE INTERVIEWS

While conducting telephone interviews, it was noticed that females were more comfortable discussing leadership styles at Umluj College from their tone of voice and eagerness to reply. The summarised responses were analysed according to the basic elements of each leadership style and compared to the hypotheses in order to simplify finding the results and avoid biased analysis.

Hypothesis 1 stating that transformational leadership is the dominant style of leadership at Umluj College was supported. However, the presence of contingent rewards, one of the elements of transactional leadership, was very evident because rewards, both financial and intangible, were discussed.

Hypothesis 2 was partially approved. Both females found that gender does not affect leadership. The male leader stated that women are more emotional as leaders while the male follower was unable to provide a reply.

Hypothesis 3 was disproved because all participants answered that they were more influenced by their personal qualities than the leadership qualities of their managers.

C. TRIANGULATION AND SUMMARY

When considering the data gathered from both the questionnaire and the interview, transformational leadership is found to be the dominant style of leadership at Umluj College. This is evident in both male and female replies and can be found in both methods. However, the interview questions demonstrated that in addition to transformational leadership, one aspect of transactional leadership, which is contingency reward, is very important as part of the leadership expectations from both genders at Umluj College.

Regarding hypothesis 2, despite the small sample of participants who replied to the questionnaire, gender is not found to affect leadership style at Umluj College because both males and females showed that transformational

leadership is the dominant style with similar values. Although gender was not found to affect leadership style, the analysis showed that gender strongly affects the academic position of leaders at Umluj College.

The questionnaire provided inconclusive findings for hypothesis 3, regarding whether or not transformational leadership affects work engagement at Umluj College. The interview, however, shows that transformational leadership does not affect work engagement to a large extent because the interviewees from both genders clearly stated that their personal qualities affected their work regardless of their leaders. Both males and females took pride in being dedicated to their work for personal reasons regardless of the leadership skills their managers had.

IV. DISCUSSION

The research aims to explore the current leadership style at Umluj College. Most studies found that transformational leadership was the dominant style of leadership [10, 35]. The elements of transformational leadership were discussed and used in analysis. Another perspective displayed in the research was that a combination of transformational leadership and

contingency rewards was the ideal form of leadership [36]. A previous study stated that Saudi Arabian universities in particular, follow transformational leadership and present equal opportunities for both men and women. This is because segregation enforces the creation of equal roles for both men and women within these institutions [37]. Finally, many researchers concluded that transformational leadership has a positive effect on work engagement.

The culture, gender segregation, Islamic ruling and traditional lifestyle in Saudi Arabia present many factors which may affect the outcome of the analysis. For this reason, two approaches were used to gather data and reach conclusions after triangulation was implemented to reach conclusive results. Using two methods ensured a wider scope of research and new findings as well as new areas of discussion.

This research was the first of its kind at Umluj College, therefore secondary data was not available. To find out whether or not the findings in the introduction can be applied to Umluj College, this study used hypotheses to create specific theories which can either be supported or rejected after gathering the findings and analysing the data.

A. DISCUSSION OF HYPOTHESES

Burns [9] identified transformational leaders as those who are capable of engaging employees through inspiration, motivation, and influence to achieve more within their organisations. In 1985, Bass [38] elaborated on this theory referring to transformational leadership as the superior leadership and introducing four elements which lead to the successful implementation of transformational leadership. Idealised influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualised consideration are the basic elements that constitute transformational leadership according to Bass [38]. Those elements were used in designing both the questionnaire and interview questions in order to test the hypotheses.

HYPOTHESIS 1: Transformational leadership is the dominant style of leadership in higher education at Umluj College in Saudi Arabia.

The questionnaire found through using means that transformational leadership is the dominant style of leadership when compared with transactional leadership and laissez-faire leadership. The average mean for transformational leadership was 4.12 which was higher than transactional leadership and laissez-faire leadership (3.83 and 3.45) respectively.

The analysis of the interview questions, using keywords from the replies of participants and categorising them according to the elements of transformational leadership, found that both men and women agreed on transformational leadership being the dominant style of leadership at Umluj College. The interview questions also showed that idealised influence was the most recurring element of transformational leadership at Umluj College. In addition, the findings showed that contingency reward, an aspect of transactional leadership, was also present among leaders at Umluj College. This finding is consistent with the previous study which states that the reward system in transactional leadership is favoured in Saudi Arabia because it matches the existing ideologies [39].

It is interesting to note that although the element of contingency reward was clearly shown in the interview questions, the questionnaire did not reveal that it was an important part of leadership. The mean in the descriptive statistics for transactional leadership (Table 4) was 3.54 for statement L5: 'My manager offers rewards for tasks that are done well', which is between neutral and agree on the Likert Scale used in the questionnaire. The first hypothesis was proved, as both males and females in both methods showed unison stating that transformational leadership is the dominant style of leadership at Umluj College.

HYPOTHESIS 2: Transformational leadership is independent from the gender factor at Umluj College

The gender factor at Umluj College had a strong effect on the roles of males and females within the college but not on their leadership style. The questionnaire showed that males held higher degrees and higher positions than females in Umluj College. The findings, however, revealed that both men and women identified their leaders as transformational leaders regardless of their positions and the roles they play in the organisation.

On the other hand, the interview questions showed interesting results. The male head of department stated that women are more emotional as leaders, reconfirming the opinion of Saudi society, which identified women as followers by nature [40]. He also added that males have the freedom of travelling, participating in external conferences and sharing experiences with others around the world without restrictions compared to females who are more limited in travelling. One of the reasons for this according to the head of department is that women are more occupied with responsibilities at home. However, another reason could be that the law in Saudi Arabia prevents women from travelling alone. This is widely accepted in Saudi Arabian society and viewed in the culture as a form of protection for women by guaranteeing safety through the presence of a male. It is clear that gender roles, as viewed in Saudi culture, are very different than those in the Western world.

The male follower stated that he had no contact with the females in the college due to segregation showing a lack of interaction and communication between males and females. Consequently the decision making process could become more difficult for females who report to male leaders.

The second hypothesis is accompanied by many additional findings such as the differences among genders in position, degree, and working experience. In addition, the interview questions reveal that when looking at elements of other leadership styles, males showed more transactional characteristics. This is revealed in the replies to question 8. While both females replied that they prefer to give full responsibilities to their employees, both males stated that the manager should be involved in decision making.

Many interesting findings related to gender were discovered while examining the data. However, when studying the specific hypothesis, the main result shows that transformational leadership as a style is not related to gender at Umluj College which supports hypothesis 2.

HYPOTHESIS 3: Transformational leadership affects work engagement at Umluj College

The questionnaire was not sufficient to provide reliable findings related to the third hypothesis. When using the Pearson correlation tool, the first question had a significant correlation, the second question showed a partial correlation while the third question showed no correlation. This could be due to a lack in the number of questions or a proof of no relation between transformational leadership and work engagement. Because of the inconsistency and the limitation, the questionnaire is not relied upon in analysing the third hypothesis.

Transformational leadership generally has a direct and positive relationship with work engagement [41, 42]. In addition, Almutairi [43] stated that transformational leadership in Saudi Arabia, is also positively related to work engagement and job performance. However, when asked in the first interview question whether achievements were more influenced by the personal qualities of the employee or the leadership skills of the manager, both leaders and followers from both genders had the same response. All interviewees stated that their personal qualities are the reasons behind their success as employees regardless of the skills of their leaders.

When viewing leadership and its relationship to work engagement around the world, the strong relationship between the two is evident. However, this is not the case in Saudi Arabian culture in general. Discipline at work is one of the values that are sustained within society in Saudi Arabia [13].

This is clearly stated in the response of the female member of the mathematics department "I am dedicated to my work regardless of my manager". The personal attributes of a manager do not directly affect employees because the culture encourages people to be self-disciplined from a religious perspective. This could result in more efficiency at work, however it could also lead to confusion at work due to the lack of vision that leaders usually share with employees.

Despite the limitations, the findings, which depend mainly on the replies of the interview questions, show no relationship between transformational leadership and work engagement at Umluj College disproving hypothesis 3.

The three hypotheses were analyzed and discussed, and the research objectives were met and the relevant hypotheses investigated. By means of this study, recommendations can be made for Umluj College and the findings of this research can be used to develop the college and potentially, Tabuk University as a whole.

V. CONCLUSION

This study concluded that one aspect of transactional leadership, contingency reward, was part of the leadership at Umluj College. Both males and females at Umluj College were found to be transformational leaders, this shows that leadership style at Umluj College is independent from gender. However, the additional finding displayed that males had higher qualifications and positions at Umluj College. In addition, transformational leadership was not found to have a measurable effect on work engagement. Due to cultural factors, the study revealed that employees at Umluj College were self-disciplined and achieved their tasks irrespective of the leadership style of their managers.

LIMITATIONS: Despite the benefits of using two methods of research and the ability to extract more findings than a single method would produce, the comparison was difficult between both methods because each method displayed results in a particular manner and presented new findings. Despite the limitations, the research was able to reach conclusions and meet its objective. Other limitations include the small number of interviewees and participants who completed the questionnaire.

These numbers do not represent the majority of employees at Umluj College and could therefore, it cannot be said that the results are sufficient. The translation of questions from English into Arabic followed by the translation of answers from Arabic to English in the interview questions could have resulted in the loss of meaning of some local expressions.

FUTURE RESEARCH: The study, being the first of its kind in Umluj College and Tabuk University, presents an opportunity for further similar studies which could be aimed at enhancing leadership within the university in Saudi Arabia. Conducting a research that covers transactional leadership and laissez-faire leadership in detail and relating them to the different variables and factors in the local environment could present different and interesting findings. Further research could expand the framework of this study by including other departments to show comparisons between departments or comparisons among Gulf countries since they share similar cultures.

REFERENCES

[1] R. House, M. Javidan, P. Hanges, and P. Dorfman, "Understanding cultures and implicit leadership theories across the globe: an introduction to project GLOBE," Journal of world business, vol. 37, no. 1, pp. 3-10, 2002.

[2] D. J. Hickson, C. R. Hinings, C. J. McMillan, and J. P. Schwitter, "The culture-free context of organization structure: A tri-national comparison," Sociology, vol. 8, no. 1, pp. 59-80, 1974.

[3] M. Tayeb, "Organizations and national culture: Methodology considered," Organization studies, vol. 15, no. 3, pp. 429-445, 1994.

[4] G. Hofstede, G. J. Hofstede, and M. Minkov, Cultures and organizations: Software of the mind. Mcgraw-hill New York, 2005.

[5] P. Evans, Y. Doz, and A. Laurent, Human resource management in international firms. Palgrave Macmillan, 1990.

[6] J. Child and A. Kieser, "Organizational and managerial roles in British and West German companies: An examination of the culture-free thesis," DE GRUYTER STUDIES IN ORGANIZATION, pp. 455-455, 1993.

[7] C. Dimmock and A. Walker, "Globalisation and societal culture: Redefining schooling and school leadership in the twenty-first century," Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education, vol. 30, no. 3, pp. 303-312, 2000.

[8] J. Marquand and P. Scott, "The Bologna Declaration of 19 June 1999," in Democrats, Authoritarians and the Bologna Process: Emerald Publishing Limited, 2018, pp. 183-186.

[9] J. Burns, "Transformational leadership [7]," ed: Harper and Row, 1978.

[10] B. M. Bass, "From transactional to transformational leadership: Learning to share the vision," Organizational dynamics, vol. 18, no. 3, pp. 19-31, 1990.

[11] B. Avolio and B. Bass, "The full range of leadership development: Basic and advanced manuals Binghamton," NY: Bass & Avolio, 1991.

[12] L. J. Mullins and G. Christy, "Management and Organisational Behaviour, Harlow," Financial Times Prentice Hall, London, 2005.

[13] J. Wynbrandt, "A Brief History of Saudi Arabia. New York, NY: Facts on File," ed: Inc, 2004.

[14] D. Campbell and C. T. Campbell, Legal Aspects of Doing Business in the Middle East 2009. Lulu. com, 2009.

[15] L. Smith and A. Abouammoh, "Higher Education in Saudi Arabia," Netherlands: Springer, 2013.

[16] Cia.gov. The World Factbook. https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/sa.html. (Accessed 30 Jun. 2016).

[17] D. Livermore and A. Soon, Leading with cultural intelligence: The real secret to success. Amacom, 2015.

[18] M. Easterby-Smith, R. Thorpe, and P. R. Jackson, Management research. Sage, 2012.

[19] G. Burrell and G. Morgan, Sociological paradigms and organisational analysis: Elements of the sociology of corporate life. Routledge, 2017.

[20] M. Saunders, P. Lewis, and A. Thornhill, Research methods for business students. Pearson education, 2009.

[21] A. Tashakkori, C. Teddlie, and C. B. Teddlie, Mixed methodology: Combining qualitative and quantitative approaches. sage, 1998.

[22] Tabuk University. https://www.ut.edu.sa/ar/web/university-branch-in-ummluj/unitscollege (Accessed: 13 July 2016).

[23] P. Ghauri, K. Grønhaug, and R. Strange, Research methods in business studies. Cambridge University Press, 2020.

[24] R. Likert, "A technique for the measurement of attitudes," Archives of psychology, 1932.

[25] V. Mitchell, "Assessing the reliability and validity of questionnaires: an empirical example," Journal of Applied Management Studies, vol. 5, pp. 199-208, 1996.

[26] P. Corbetta, "The qualitative interview," Social research: Theory, methods and techniques, pp. 264-286, 2003.

[27] B. Blumberg, D. Cooper, and P. Schindler, EBOOK: Business Research Methods. McGraw Hill, 2014.

[28] S. Sarantakos, "Feminist research," Social research, vol. 3, 2005.

[29] F. N. Kerlinger, Foundations of behavioral research: Educational, psychological and sociological inquiry. Holt Rinehart and Winston, 1973.

[30] M. B. Miles and A. M. Huberman, Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook. sage, 1994.

[31] W. G. Zikmund, B. J. Babin, J. Carr, and M. Griffin, "Research methods," Health economics research method, vol. 2, 2003.

[32] A. Dale, S. Arber, and M. Procter, Doing secondary analysis. Unwin Hyman, 1988.

[33] M. Al-Ohali and J. Shin, "Higher Education in Saudi Arabia; Achievements, Challenges and Opportunities," Higher Education Dynamics. Knowledge-Based Innovation and Research Productivity in Saudi Arabia, vol. 40, pp. 95-102, 2013.

[34] S. Kvale, "The 1,000-page question," Qualitative inquiry, vol. 2, no. 3, pp. 275-284, 1996.

[35] G. Yukl, "An evaluation of conceptual weaknesses in transformational and charismatic leadership theories," The leadership quarterly, vol. 10, no. 2, pp. 285-305, 1999.

[36] P. M. Podsakoff, S. B. MacKenzie, J. B. Paine, and D. G. Bachrach, "Organizational citizenship behaviors: A critical review of the theoretical and empirical literature and suggestions for future research," Journal of management, vol. 26, no. 3, pp. 513-563, 2000.\

[37] A. Hamdan, "Women and education in Saudi Arabia: Challenges and achievements," International Education Journal, vol. 6, no. 1, pp. 42-64, 2005.

[38] B. M. Bass and M. Bass Bernard, "Leadership and performance beyond expectations," 1985.

[39] H. Drummond and F. B. Al-Anazi, "Leadership styles in Saudi-Arabia: Public and private sector organisations compared," Cross Cultural Management: An International Journal, 1997.

[40] D. M. Al-Tamimi, "Saudi women in academic medicine. Are they succeeding?," Saudi medical journal, vol. 25, no. 11, pp. 1564-1567, 2004.

[41] W. Zhu, B. J. Avolio, and F. O. Walumbwa, "Moderating role of follower characteristics with transformational leadership and follower work engagement," Group & organization management, vol. 34, no. 5, pp. 590-619, 2009.

[42] K. Breevaart, A. Bakker, J. Hetland, E. Demerouti, O. K. Olsen, and R. Espevik, "Daily transactional and transformational leadership and daily employee engagement," Journal of occupational and organizational psychology, vol. 87, no. 1, pp. 138-157, 2014.

[43] D. O. Almutairi, "The mediating effects of organizational commitment on the relationship between transformational leadership style and job performance," International Journal of Business and Management, vol. 11, no. 1, p. 231, 2016.