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#### **Abstract**

The aim of this study is to systematically investigate the influence of transformational, transactional, and servant leadership styles on employee job satisfaction, with organizational culture serving as an intervening variable. A Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method was adopted, sourcing literature from Scopus-indexed journals (Q1–Q4) published between 2020 and 2025. The analysis employed descriptive, thematic, and content-based approaches. The results reveal that transformational and servant leadership styles significantly enhance affective and psychosocial dimensions of job satisfaction, while transactional leadership is more effective within structured organizational environments. Furthermore, organizational culture functions as a strategic mediator that strengthens these relationships. These findings highlight the critical importance of aligning leadership styles with organizational culture to foster inclusive, sustainable leadership practices and contribute to the realization of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly those related to decent work and economic growth.

Keywords: Transformational Leadership, Transactional Leadership, Servant Leadership, Organizational Culture, Job Satisfaction, Decent Work, Sustainable Organizations.

### INTRODUCTION

In the dynamics of contemporary organizations, leadership styles have emerged as strategic instruments shaping work behavior, psychological well-being, and employee satisfaction. The transition from structural to humanistic leadership paradigms necessitates that leaders foster environments that are not only productive but also emotionally fulfilling. Transformational leadership, emphasizing inspiration, idealistic motivation, and empowerment, consistently correlates positively with job satisfaction (Xanthopoulou et al., 2025; Cappelli et al., 2024) and fosters enhanced voice behavior and interpersonal relationship quality (Korang & Der, 2025; Dirik et al., 2025). Conversely, transactional leadership—relying on structured supervision, clear task delineation, and reward systems—remains pertinent in cultivating job satisfaction within formal and bureaucratic organizational settings (Ali et al., 2024; Kumar & Rizwan, 2023; Hassan & Malik, 2024). Servant leadership, offering an altruistic and emotionally empowering model, further contributes to psychological empowerment and affective job engagement (Udin, 2024; Yayha et al., 2024; Gathmyr et al., 2024), positioning itself as a vital approach in holistic organizational development.

Within these leadership dynamics, organizational culture acts as a critical systemic lens through which leadership styles are perceived and interpreted. Research affirms that inclusive and empowering cultures amplify leadership influence on job satisfaction (Iqbal et al., 2024; Ruslan et al., 2024; Almeida et al., 2024). Nevertheless, theoretical integration between leadership styles and organizational culture remains insufficiently explored, leaving gaps in holistic conceptualization. Prior studies predominantly focus on direct leadership-job satisfaction relationships, often neglecting organizational culture's mediating role (Alqahtani & Alshagrawi, 2025; Ata & Jain, 2024) or treating culture independently from leadership frameworks (Abiddin, 2024; Bamford dkk., 2023). Moreover, while servant leadership's contribution to empowerment is acknowledged, its comparative positioning across leadership paradigms remains underexamined (Gathmyr et al., 2024; Yayha et al., 2024). Similarly, the potential mediating influence of organizational culture is frequently overlooked (Iqbal et al., 2024).

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Other scholarly efforts have diverted focus toward job loyalty without explicitly associating it with leadership styles (Ali et al., 2024; Salim & Wahab, 2025; Zafar & Abu-Hussin, 2025), or have failed to position organizational culture as a causal connector between leadership behaviors and work outcomes (Tsapnidou et al., 2024; Udin, 2024). Additionally, comparative analyses encompassing multiple leadership styles in tandem with organizational culture remain scarce (Cappelli et al., 2024; Kulandai et al., 2024; Yayha et al., 2024; Abiddin, 2024). Although the role of organizational culture in influencing work experiences is increasingly acknowledged (Almeida et al., 2024; Salim & Wahab, 2025; Andrés-Reina et al., 2024), leadership's catalytic contribution within this dynamic remains insufficiently theorized.

Addressing these critical gaps, this article conducts a systematic literature review examining the influence of transformational, transactional, and servant leadership styles on employee job satisfaction, mediated by organizational culture. This study aims to construct a more integrative theoretical framework, identify dominant relational patterns, and outline avenues for future inquiry. Accordingly, the research is guided by the following questions: (1) How do transformational, transactional, and servant leadership styles influence employee job satisfaction?; (2) To what extent does organizational culture mediate these relationships?; and (3) What conceptual gaps and research opportunities emerge from the existing literature?

### **METHOD (TNR, 12 BOLD)**

This study employs a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach to systematically identify, evaluate, and synthesize scientific literature regarding the influence of transformational, transactional, and servant leadership styles on job satisfaction, with organizational culture as an intervening variable. The SLR method was selected due to its rigor in presenting evidence-based syntheses while minimizing selection bias and enhancing transparency in the review process (Page et al., 2021). The review process was conducted manually through systematic stages, encompassing literature search, critical reading, and analytical documentation of selection outcomes. Data were exclusively sourced from the Scopus database, selected for its comprehensive indexing of high-quality journals across Q1 to Q4 quartiles (Falagas et al., 2020). The inclusion criteria comprised Scopus-indexed journal articles published between 2020 and 2025, written in English, and directly relevant to the variables under study. Studies deemed irrelevant, duplicate, non-peer-reviewed, lacking full-text access, or methodologically opaque were excluded from the final corpus.

The literature search utilized Boolean operator-based keywords, namely: "Transformational Leadership AND Employee Satisfaction," "Transactional Leadership AND Employee Satisfaction," "Servant Leadership AND Employee Satisfaction," and "Organizational Culture AND Employee Satisfaction." Keyword selection was aligned with Scopus' index terms and thesauri to ensure terminological precision and maximize retrieval accuracy (Gough, Oliver, & Thomas, 2017). Analytical procedures combined descriptive, thematic, and content-based approaches. Descriptive analysis identified publication characteristics, such as publication year, regional focus, and methodological orientation. Thematic analysis explored patterns linking leadership styles, organizational culture, and job satisfaction. Content analysis examined conceptual models and underlying theoretical frameworks. This multi-layered analytical strategy provides a robust basis for the formulation of integrative theoretical models and the advancement of future research directions in organizational behavior studies.

#### **RESULTS**

This systematic literature review culminated in the identification of 71 relevant articles sourced from Scopus-indexed journals, encompassing investigations into transformational, transactional, and servant leadership styles, as well as organizational culture, in relation to employee job satisfaction. Specifically, 32 articles addressed transformational leadership (Yayha et al., 2024; Iqbal et al., 2024; Gathmyr et al., 2024; Hakim Febriani & Rahman, 2024; Cappelli et al., 2024; Xanthopoulou et al., 2025; Dirik et al., 2025; Korang et al., 2025; Da & Rany, 2025; Mansor et al., 2025), 20 articles focused on transactional leadership (Alqahtani & Alshagrawi, 2025; Udin, 2024; Hassan & Malik, 2024; Ali et al., 2024; Ata & Jain, 2024; Rahman & Hidayat, 2024; Patel & Singh, 2025; Youssef et al., 2025), 6 articles examined servant leadership (Udin, 2024; NZ Abiddin, 2024; Yayha et al., 2024; Gathmyr et al., 2024; Saeed et al., 2019), and 13 articles investigated organizational culture (Ruslan et al., 2024; Almeida et al., 2024; Andrés-Reina et al., 2024; Antofie et al., 2024; Nguyen & Phan, 2025; Salim & Wahab, 2025; Davoudi et al., 2025). In terms of publication distribution, the trend shows an escalation of research activity between 2020 and 2025, peaking notably in 2024 and 2025. Publications concerning transformational leadership and organizational culture surged during these years (Yayha et al., 2024; Almeida et al., 2024; Ruslan et al., 2024; Andrés-Reina et al., 2024; Tsapnidou et al., 2024; Hakim Febriani & Rahman, 2024), highlighting the increasing academic urgency to examine

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leadership and culture amid global transitions, particularly post-pandemic organizational restructuring and the advancement of digital workspaces (Xanthopoulou et al., 2025; Dirik et al., 2025; Mansor et al., 2025; Nguyen & Phan, 2025). Geographically, the studies predominantly originate from Southeast Asia (Indonesia, Malaysia) (Udin, 2024; NZ Abiddin, 2024; Salim & Wahab, 2025; Ruslan et al., 2024), the Middle East (Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates) (Alqahtani & Alshagrawi, 2025; Zafar & Abu-Hussin, 2025), Europe (Greece, Spain) (Dirik et al., 2025; Xanthopoulou et al., 2025; Almeida et al., 2024), and South Asia (India, Pakistan) (Ata & Jain, 2024; Kumar & Rizwan, 2023). This broad distribution enriches the cross-cultural understanding of leadership dynamics and job satisfaction, although Southeast Asian and Middle Eastern contexts are notably more prominent. Methodologically, the reviewed studies employed a diverse range of approaches. Quantitative survey-based methods were most prevalent (Ali et al., 2024; Udin, 2024; Kumar & Rizwan, 2023; Hassan & Malik, 2024), often utilizing PLS-SEM techniques (Salim & Wahab, 2025; Lim & Lee, 2025; Nguyen & Phan, 2025). Bibliometric analyses and systematic reviews also contributed substantially (Rahman & Hidayat, 2024; Hakim Febriani & Rahman, 2024; Muadzah & Herachwati, 2024; Cappelli et al., 2024). Several studies adopted conceptual and scoping reviews (Yayha et al., 2024; Da & Rany, 2025), while others incorporated mixed-methods approaches for triangulation (Korang et al., 2025; Fatima et al., 2024).

Regarding the thematic distribution, transformational leadership remains the dominant topic, primarily linked to enhancing voice behavior, psychological empowerment, and organizational citizenship behavior (Xanthopoulou et al., 2025; Gathmyr et al., 2024; Dirik et al., 2025). Transactional leadership was mainly discussed in relation to role clarity, reward mechanisms, and work governance structures (Ali et al., 2024; Hassan & Malik, 2024; Youssef et al., 2025). Servant leadership studies emphasized empowerment, relational harmony, and value-based leadership, often within higher education and green industry contexts (Udin, 2024; Saeed et al., 2019). Organizational culture was primarily examined as a mediating or moderating factor enhancing leadership outcomes on job satisfaction, with an emerging focus on spiritual and ethical dimensions (Ruslan et al., 2024; Almeida et al., 2024; Davoudi et al., 2025). Finally, based on Scopus quartile distribution, most articles were published in Q2 and Q3 journals (Saha et al., 2024; Almeida et al., 2024; Salim & Wahab, 2025; Roša et al., 2025; Ruslan et al., 2024), indicating a strong academic reputation and visibility. A significant number of Q1 publications were also identified, particularly for healthcare and education sectors (Cappelli et al., 2024; Tsapnidou et al., 2024), demonstrating that leadership and organizational culture studies are increasingly regarded as critical research domains within high-impact journals.

### **DISCUSSION**

### Theme 1: Transformational Leadership and Employee Satisfaction

Transformational leadership emerges as the most prominent style in fostering job satisfaction due to its emphasis on inspiration, intellectual stimulation, and individualized support. This leadership model facilitates emotional bonding and psychological empowerment by creating meaningful and engaging work environments. According to Xanthopoulou et al. (2025), the encouragement of voice behavior and participatory communication significantly boosts satisfaction levels among employees, especially within the younger workforce. Likewise, Dirik et al. (2025) emphasize the alignment of this style with Generation Z's preference for autonomy, inclusivity, and workplace recognition. Theoretical insights from Ata and Jain (2024) and Iqbal et al. (2024) reinforce the function of leaders as ethical role models who catalyze the internalization of cultural values, which strengthens team cohesion and climate positivity.

This leadership style's psychological contributions are also extensively evidenced. Gathmyr et al. (2024) argue that trust-based leadership encourages self-efficacy and autonomy, while Hakim Febriani and Rahman (2024) highlight the emergence of organizational citizenship behavior as a downstream benefit. Furthermore, studies by Yayha et al. (2024) and Lima et al. (2024) demonstrate that non-financial motivational strategies such as purpose-driven tasks and recognition are critical levers for well-being under transformational leaders. In the health services sector, research by Saha et al. (2024), Tsapnidou et al. (2024), and Cappelli et al. (2024) indicates that transformational leadership improves both service quality and employee loyalty, whereas Kulandai et al. (2024) link it directly to talent retention mechanisms. The role of transformational leadership in shaping supportive work climates is amplified in academic contexts. Abiddin (2024) and Da and Rany (2025) found that the promotion of autonomy and feedback culture enhances faculty satisfaction and organizational commitment. Meanwhile, studies like Mansor et al. (2025) and Iqbal et al. (2024) portray transformational leaders as "cultural architects" who mold team values, reinforce purpose, and serve as anchors for collective motivation. Ultimately, transformational leadership exerts its effect not just through strategic control, but via motivational, affective, and cultural vectors that underpin the broader experience of job satisfaction.

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### Theme 2: Transactional Leadership and Employee Satisfaction

Transactional leadership remains relevant in contemporary organizational structures, particularly in contexts emphasizing formality, role clarity, and results-based performance. Its foundational pillars—contingent rewards, clear expectations, and supervisory control—have been shown to provide psychological structure and behavioral consistency that contribute to job satisfaction (Alqahtani & Alshagrawi, 2025; Udin, 2024). Although often considered secondary to transformational leadership in terms of motivational impact, this style plays a central role in environments where predictability and compliance are operational priorities. Ahmed et al. (2024) and Hassan & Malik (2024) found that employees respond positively to transparent reward mechanisms, as these systems reduce ambiguity and foster a sense of fairness and achievement. The association between transactional leadership and satisfaction appears especially salient in sectors such as banking, government, and traditional education, where rule adherence and hierarchical control are embedded cultural norms (Kumar & Rizwan, 2023; Wijaya & Rahmat, 2022; Fatima et al., 2024). In public administration, Youssef et al. (2025) observed that structured work environments, when paired with clear feedback mechanisms, enhance not only compliance but also emotional security. This is echoed by Patel and Singh (2025), who argue that transactional leadership maintains operational discipline and aligns with employees' expectations in procedural work settings. While not transformational in nature, its strength lies in establishing consistent expectations, offering predictable reinforcement, and preventing relational confusion.

Psychologically, transactional leadership contributes to perceived empowerment by assigning unambiguous roles and responsibilities. Gathmyr et al. (2024) indicate that structured authority reduces decision fatigue and enhances employees' task confidence. Salim and Wahab (2025) also affirm that extrinsic motivators under transactional leadership—such as bonuses and recognition—serve as effective levers for enhancing satisfaction, particularly among employees motivated by tangible achievements. In their bibliometric analysis, Rahman and Hidayat (2024) confirmed that reward orientation remains one of the most recurrent variables associated with positive employee outcomes in transactional settings. Interestingly, even within academic institutions and multinational environments, transactional leadership has found strategic foothold. NZ Abiddin (2024) and Dewi & Pratama (2023) highlight the style's function in sustaining work discipline, ensuring fairness in appraisal systems, and reinforcing institutional protocols. Fatima et al. (2024) further demonstrate that, in cross-cultural contexts, transactional leadership provides psychosocial stability by setting standardized behavioral norms, thereby minimizing cultural misunderstandings and ensuring consistency across teams. This reinforces the leadership style's adaptability across sectors and sociocultural systems.

Beyond structural elements, transactional leadership also provides psychological safeguards. Ratnasari et al. (2023) and Nugroho & Kurniawan (2022) reported that defined responsibilities and supervisory routines reduce role ambiguity and mitigate workplace stress. These mechanisms are particularly crucial in highly regulated or pressure-intensive environments where emotional exhaustion and cognitive overload are common. Ata and Jain (2024) offered a unique perspective by connecting transactional leadership with CSR frameworks, noting that equitable reward distribution within ethical systems enhances emotional attachment and reinforces perceptions of fairness and purpose in the workplace. In summary, transactional leadership represents a pragmatic and stable leadership paradigm that nurtures satisfaction by fulfilling structural and extrinsic motivational needs. While its influence may not penetrate the emotional or self-actualizing domains as deeply as transformational or servant leadership, its contributions remain vital for sustaining operational efficiency, fostering psychological security, and maintaining behavioral consistency. This style is especially effective in organizational contexts that prioritize performance management, procedural rigor, and compliance, thereby confirming its enduring relevance in modern management practices.

#### Theme 3: Servant Leadership and Employee Satisfaction

Servant leadership has gained notable traction in recent organizational studies as a leadership model that prioritizes empathy, empowerment, and holistic employee well-being. Distinct from transactional and transformational styles, servant leadership begins with the leader's internal motivation to serve, emphasizing community building, mutual respect, and emotional support. Udin (2024) demonstrated that this style enhances workplace harmony, reinforces affective bonds, and fosters an atmosphere of psychological safety. In organizational settings that emphasize relational and participatory values—such as higher education and non-profit sectors—servant leadership has been linked to heightened employee morale and reduced turnover intentions. NZ Abiddin (2024) found that open communication and reciprocal trust were instrumental in cultivating healthy work climates and long-term employee engagement. This leadership style addresses intrinsic dimensions of job satisfaction, including recognition, belonging, and the search for meaning in one's work. Gathmyr et al. (2024) showed that servant leadership facilitates psychological empowerment by promoting self-efficacy, autonomy, and competence. These

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elements are essential to emotional engagement and job fulfillment, particularly in complex and people-centered sectors like healthcare and education. Yayha et al. (2024) further argued that servant leadership motivates through moral stewardship and personal growth rather than through external incentives, underscoring its relevance in environments driven by purpose rather than productivity metrics. The strong relational orientation of servant leaders aligns well with the expectations of modern employees who prioritize authenticity, emotional support, and inclusive collaboration. Beyond traditional metrics of satisfaction, servant leadership also supports well-being by reducing workplace stress and strengthening work-life integration. Saeed et al. (2019) explored this connection within the green economy, showing how values such as sustainability, empathy, and spiritual engagement improve job satisfaction in environmentally conscious organizations. The style's focus on intrinsic motivation and individualized care aligns with contemporary calls for more ethical, values-driven workplaces that prioritize dignity and emotional health. Research by Udin (2024) confirms that when employees feel heard and appreciated, their loyalty, commitment, and affective satisfaction increase—regardless of the financial incentives provided.

From a practical standpoint, servant leadership builds inclusive systems in which feedback, learning, and cocreation are normalized. This model fosters climates where leaders act not as controllers but as facilitators of team growth and cohesion (Yayha et al., 2024). The emphasis on ethical conduct, social justice, and community-based values resonates especially in organizations with diverse workforces and multi-generational employee compositions. In this way, servant leadership serves not only as a model for interpersonal management but also as a cultural framework that instills responsibility, humility, and empathy within the organizational ethos. Furthermore, its humanistic orientation is particularly compatible with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially those related to decent work, health, and gender equality. While empirical studies remain relatively fewer in number compared to those on transformational leadership, the findings consistently support the idea that servant leadership yields meaningful psychological outcomes. Its impact on emotional engagement and job satisfaction is well documented and is increasingly viewed as essential in human services, healthcare, and education-based institutions (NZ Abiddin, 2024; Gathmyr et al., 2024; Yayha et al., 2024). As organizations move toward more flexible, participative, and value-centered systems, servant leadership offers a promising framework for addressing both organizational performance and employee flourishing. It uniquely bridges operational effectiveness with moral leadership, making it highly relevant in future-focused leadership paradigms.

#### Theme 4: Organizational Culture and Employee Satisfaction

Organizational culture has emerged as a critical factor shaping employee job satisfaction by embedding values, norms, and behavioral expectations into the social fabric of the workplace. As a latent system of shared meanings, culture operates not only as an environmental backdrop but as an active psychological and relational force that influences employees' sense of identity, inclusion, and purpose. Ruslan et al. (2024) demonstrated that collaborative and empowering cultures foster emotional engagement and discourage deviant behavior, while Sultana (2025) found that ethical and participatory cultures in banking institutions promote performance by enhancing trust and fairness perceptions. These findings support the premise that satisfaction is not only a result of material incentives or leadership behavior, but also of culturally embedded experiences that shape day-to-day meaning-making processes within the workplace.

Affective job satisfaction is significantly enhanced when organizational culture promotes transparency, diversity, and employee recognition. Studies by Antofie et al. (2024) and Der & Korang (2025) underscore that inclusive climates activate intrinsic motivation, reduce psychological strain, and enhance professional self-worth. In healthcare environments, supportive cultures were shown to reduce emotional burnout and promote psychological safety, suggesting that culture can buffer occupational stressors and facilitate resilience (Antofie et al., 2024). This is particularly relevant in post-pandemic organizational settings, where adaptive cultures enable institutions to respond effectively to uncertainty and change. Furthermore, the symbolic power of culture—as highlighted in Roša et al. (2025) and Andrés-Reina et al. (2024)—lies in its ability to link task-related goals with shared ethical standards, thus strengthening the moral purpose of work.

The literature also affirms that culture influences employees' cognitive appraisal of job quality and interpersonal experiences. Almeida et al. (2024) emphasized that inclusive cultures increase employees' sense of belonging and emotional security, while Zafar and Abu-Hussin (2025) linked organizational culture to Islamic ethical values, demonstrating how spiritual identity reinforces loyalty, trust, and psychosocial well-being. In therapeutic and caregiving environments, Davoudi et al. (2025) showed that culture offers emotional protection by promoting compassion and dignity in service delivery. These findings expand the understanding of culture beyond functionalist paradigms, portraying it as a normative structure that governs not only performance but also meaning, morality, and

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affective connectivity within organizations. Flexible and hybrid work arrangements have further elevated the strategic importance of organizational culture. In digital and decentralized contexts, culture functions as a binding mechanism that maintains social cohesion, even in the absence of physical proximity. Nguyen and Phan (2025) highlighted the buffering role of culture in managing transitions to hybrid work systems, noting its impact on emotional stability and role adaptation. Lim and Lee (2025) also found that employee engagement mediates the relationship between culture and satisfaction, confirming the role of culture as a scaffolding system that supports performance through emotional regulation and motivation. This reinforces the view that culture is a dynamic force capable of shaping both macro-structures and micro-interactions across organizational levels.

Culturally rich environments have also been shown to influence long-term outcomes such as retention, loyalty, and institutional commitment. Salim and Wahab (2025) found that when culture reflects personal growth values and work-life balance, job satisfaction emerges as a natural outcome of organizational alignment with employees' life aspirations. Likewise, Sacuiu and Micu (2024) demonstrated that a values-driven culture reduces turnover intention by promoting existential meaning and self-determination. These findings support the notion that culture is not merely an HR instrument, but a foundational architecture for sustainable organizational health and psychological flourishing. In sum, the literature positions organizational culture as a central mediator that links leadership practices with job satisfaction. When aligned with inclusive, empowering, and ethical values, culture enhances employee well-being through social affirmation, identity coherence, and emotional engagement. As shown in studies by Almeida et al. (2024), Roša et al. (2025), and Ruslan et al. (2024), organizational culture amplifies the effects of leadership by transforming abstract managerial intentions into concrete relational experiences. Consequently, cultivating a positive culture should be viewed not as a peripheral task, but as a strategic imperative in building satisfying, sustainable, and human-centered workplaces.

The findings of this systematic review offer a multidimensional synthesis that integrates leadership theories, organizational culture frameworks, and job satisfaction constructs into a cohesive conceptual ecosystem. Transformational leadership, based on Bass and Avolio's (1994) framework, remains the most empirically robust style influencing job satisfaction through emotional, motivational, and cultural channels (Xanthopoulou et al., 2025; Cappelli et al., 2024; Dirik et al., 2025). Transactional leadership, though structurally oriented, aligns well with House's Path-Goal Theory (1996), serving as a regulatory mechanism that ensures procedural clarity and reward-based motivation (Ali et al., 2024; Alqahtani & Alshagrawi, 2025; Hassan & Malik, 2024). Servant leadership, grounded in Greenleaf's (1977) humanistic model, intersects with psychological empowerment theories and is closely tied to affective commitment, personal recognition, and meaningful work (Udin, 2024; NZ Abiddin, 2024; Gathmyr et al., 2024). Organizational culture, often implicitly framed within Schein's (2010) model, emerges as a structural and normative mediator that translates leadership behavior into everyday workplace experiences (Almeida et al., 2024; Ruslan et al., 2024; Salim & Wahab, 2025).

Despite these theoretical convergences, several empirical inconsistencies emerge across the reviewed literature. While many studies confirm the positive impact of leadership styles on satisfaction, others report only moderate or context-dependent effects. For instance, Ata and Jain (2024) and Patel and Singh (2025) observe that leadership effectiveness is contingent upon cultural fit and sectoral alignment, challenging the universality of leadership models. Moreover, contradictory findings in studies such as Cappelli et al. (2024) and Korang et al. (2025) suggest that leadership style alone may not be sufficient to influence job satisfaction unless reinforced by contextual moderators such as team dynamics, psychological safety, or organizational justice. These inconsistencies point to the limitations of isolated variable modeling and call for more integrative, context-sensitive research frameworks.

The generalizability of existing studies also remains constrained by limited geographic and sectoral representation. Much of the current literature is concentrated in Southeast Asia and the Middle East, with underrepresentation from Africa, Latin America, and creative industries (Saeed et al., 2019; Sultana, 2025; Der & Korang, 2025). Additionally, most studies utilize cross-sectional quantitative designs, which, while statistically rigorous, lack the capacity to capture longitudinal, experiential, and dynamic dimensions of leadership-satisfaction relationships (Ali et al., 2024; Salim & Wahab, 2025). Although advanced techniques such as SEM and PLS-SEM have been employed (Lim & Lee, 2025; Nguyen & Phan, 2025), the lack of triangulation and mixed-methods integration limits theoretical richness and ecological validity. Therefore, future research should focus on the construction of an integrative theoretical model that positions leadership styles, organizational culture, and job satisfaction within a multi-level, systemic framework. This includes exploring mediating variables such as psychological capital, organizational commitment, and perceived organizational support, which may explain the indirect and latent effects of leadership behavior (Eva et al., 2019; Liden et al., 2020). Additionally, expanding the analysis to incorporate generational dynamics is essential. Findings by Dirik et al. (2025) indicate that younger

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employees, particularly Gen Z, are more responsive to emotionally resonant, participatory leadership styles, suggesting a need for adaptive leadership development programs tailored to evolving workforce expectations. Methodologically, scholars are encouraged to adopt longitudinal, qualitative, and action research approaches to unpack the temporal and processual nature of leadership-culture interaction. This would enable the capture of leadership influence as it unfolds across time, mediated by events, relational dynamics, and organizational change. Future research should also engage in comparative cross-cultural studies that investigate how local norms and societal values mediate the leadership-satisfaction link, thereby reducing ethnocentric bias and enhancing global relevance (Alqahtani & Alshagrawi, 2025; NZ Abiddin, 2024). Digital transformation and remote work environments also call for the theorization of digital, agile, and e-leadership models that align with hybrid organizational realities (Nguyen & Phan, 2025). In conclusion, this review reveals that leadership styles, when aligned with organizational culture, exert significant influence on employee job satisfaction through emotional, cognitive, and normative pathways. However, capturing the full complexity of these relationships requires more than static models—it demands integrative frameworks, adaptive methods, and inclusive global perspectives that reflect the evolving nature of leadership in a dynamic, digital, and diverse world.

#### **CONCLUSION**

This systematic review comprehensively maps the influence of transformational, transactional, and servant leadership styles on job satisfaction, with organizational culture functioning as an intervening variable that strengthens these relationships. All three styles contribute to job satisfaction through distinct mechanisms, intensities, and contexts. Transformational and servant leadership emphasize affective and psychosocial dimensions, while transactional leadership proves effective in work structures reliant on reward systems. The first research question is answered through thematic synthesis, showing that transformational leadership exerts a significant influence through motivation, inspiration, and individualized consideration; transactional leadership through control and direct rewards; and servant leadership through the integration of spiritual, ethical, and emotional empowerment values.

The second research question is also substantially addressed. Inclusive, collaborative, and supportive organizational cultures serve as active mediators that enhance the influence of leadership on job satisfaction while shaping a healthy and productive emotional climate. The third research question, which highlights research gaps, is likewise addressed. This study underscores the importance of developing integrative models that incorporate leadership styles, organizational culture, and psychological variables within a simultaneous framework. Limitations in sectoral scope, methodology, and cross-cultural contexts represent key areas for future exploration.

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