

The Transformational Leadership, Company Size and Employees' Job Satisfaction

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Abstract

Background: The socio-economic development of the last 20 years in Kosovo has been associated with different models of company organizations, and, as a result, new leadership experiences are expected to be reflected in the job satisfaction of employees and, consequently, in their productivity.

Objective: This paper examines the correlation between transformational leadership, company size and employees' job satisfaction, focusing on Kosovo case corporations and businesses.

Methods: The methodology used to develop the analyses was a quantitative one. A questionnaire was delivered to 11 companies of small, medium and big size in Kosovo. A number of 338 employees participated in the research (n=338).

Results: The research shows a strong positive relation between transformational leadership and employees' job satisfaction, but the company size does not show a statistical significance in relation to transformational leadership and employees' job satisfaction as well.

Conclusion: This paper sheds light on how to strengthen the importance of leadership training and its formation according to the transformational style, to provide high levels of employees' job satisfaction, and consequently high levels of productivity. There are a few studies focused on transformational leadership, company size and job satisfaction in Kosovo. This study opens the possibility for other studies to further explore the influence of different variables on job satisfaction and transformational leadership.

Keywords: *transformational, leadership, company size, job satisfaction, employees, trainings, education, labor market, Kosovo.*

1. Introduction

The post-independence government in Kosovo, established in 2008, worked to strengthen the market economy and one of the most important steps was to privatize the state sector businesses. Passing from a traditional society to a more urbanized one, the businesses tend to grow, and their management and leadership become more complex. Changing the company way of leadership can directly affect the satisfaction of the employees, which will be further reflected in the success of that company. This paper examines the correlation between transformational leadership, company size and employees' job satisfaction, focusing on Kosovo context, thus filling a gap in the range of studies in this field.

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The findings of this paper are important because they shed light on some important elements that are related to the employees' job satisfaction, such as company size and leadership style, which have recently undergone significant changes in the context of Kosovo companies. The results of the present paper may have policy implications with the aim to increase employees' satisfaction and, as a result, to increase the company's productivity.

2. Literature Review

During the 1980s, the new terms related to leadership began to be used in an international context. The literature, which dealt with the leadership studies, was predominated by three new types: charismatic, transformational and transactional leadership. Thus, the term transformational leadership derives precisely from this new trend. Transformational leadership concept was firstly given in 1973 by James V. Downton. But, one of the most well-known contributions to transformational leadership is the 1978 publication of James MacGregor Burns entitled "Leadership." According to Burns, ethical principles should drive the leaders in their work environment, so focusing on psychological theories he confirms that personality traits play an important role in transformational leadership. Burns suggests that there is a link between human needs, expressed in human values and social change. Thus, meeting these needs through social change leads the individual to happiness, according to Burns. The people who drive social change, are the leaders, who thus indirectly contribute to the happiness of individuals (Burns, 1973/2003). Another important contribution in this field is that of Bass in 1998. This author advocates the idea that leaders perform certain behaviors in order to increase the level of commitment of their followers to the company. Transformational leadership is considered the Full Range of Leadership (FRL). Bass and his colleagues further developed a professional instrument, the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire, which was first administered to U.S. Army officers.

Similar studies were subsequently undertaken in the field of business and from the results obtained, 4 components (4 I-s) were developed (Brass & Avolio, 1990).

- (1) Idealized influence (charismatic leadership). Usually, these leaders have a clear vision and a strong sense of mission. Frequently, followers identify themselves with the leader, so the leader serves as a model for the followers.
- (2) Individually considerate. This component of transformational leadership is related to the diagnosis of followers' needs and their individual fulfilment, so the followers raise their level of confidence and the job responsibility, improving their performance.
- (3) Intellectual stimulating. This component is used when leaders use intuition, formal logic and creativity to solve problems. Using intellectual stimulating leaders help followers to use their innovative perspective to resolve problems, so followers become independent problem solvers.
- (4) Inspirational: this component of transformational leaders is based on the stimulation of the enthusiasm and energy of the followers by the leaders.

Another researcher, Collins Jim (2001), also focused on the issue of what makes a leader great. He uses the term "Level 5 Leader" to mean, as in the case of Burns' transformational leader, a leader focused on collective organisation. These leaders use personal values to empower others to change the organisation (Stewart, 2006). According to Jyoti and Sonia (2015), if a leader affects optimism among employees, their productivity can be raised, and this can raise the employees' job satisfaction.

Some studies show that transformational leadership can transform a company from a small business to a big one. For example, Matzler et.al (2008) showed that

transformational leadership might be an appropriate approach for the management of SMEs. Also Wu (2022) shows the case of New Oriental, which from a training school for studying abroad in Beijing was gradually grow into New Oriental Education Technology Group Co.,Ltd., the leader of China's private education and training industry, by using transformational leadership model.

Before giving some examples of how the company size influences job satisfaction, it is important to clarify the concept of job satisfaction also. In this paper the referring is made on concept of Weiss (2002), according to whom, job satisfaction is an expression of attitudes when people have feelings and beliefs at work.

Different studies have showed that women are more satisfied than men (Clark, 1997), but satisfaction of men and women may disappear when job preferences are taken into account since work life balance is important for women (Redmond and McGuinness, 2019). Many other studies indicate the correlation between the level of education and the job satisfaction stressing the fact that over-qualified workers are less satisfied. For this reason, firms try to hire adequately qualified workers (Verhaest and Verhofstadt, 2016). For the purpose of this present paper, it is important to mentioned that studies have shown the influence of the company size on employee job satisfaction. In a study published in 1976, Scherer, using the 1973 Quality of Employment Survey (QES), showed a relation between the company size and job satisfaction, and found out that low levels of employees' job satisfaction were related to large firms. Many other studies confirm the same result (Stafford, 1980; Idson, 1990; Clark et al., 1996; Tansel & Gazioglu, 2006; Haile, 2009; Garcia-Serrano, 2011). Differently from them, research by Marlow et al. (2004) showed that there is a negative relationship between the company size and employees' job satisfaction. In 2013 Tansel and Gazioglu presented new findings not only about the relationship between the company size and employees' job satisfaction but also about the quality of management-employee relations and job satisfaction, showing that lower level of employees' job satisfaction in large firms is related to lower satisfactory management-employee relationships. According to Tansel (2022: 13), there is greater rigidity in the working conditions of the larger firms, thus job satisfaction is lower in larger firms. Having in mind that the relationship between managers and employees is strongly related to the leadership style in the present paper, this relation is going to be explored.

Many studies shed light on the relationship between transformational leadership and job satisfaction. For example, in a study conducted by Munir et al. (2012), focused on the relationship between transformational leadership and employees' job satisfaction among the academic staff in Malaysia, the correlation of the total score's transformational leadership and employees' job satisfaction indicated a positive, linear and strong relationship ($r=.725$). Thus, it is important to understand the characteristics of leadership towards employees' job satisfaction since it will affect employees' morale and performance.

Khanzada et al. (2018) also noted that empowering employees with transformational leadership can lead to an improvement in the working atmosphere, which increases the company's chances of success. Transformational leaders are expected to have a strong influence on the employees' attitudes and behaviors (Abelha et al., 2018). Transformational leaders thus have satisfied followers, who are willing to work beyond their means, showing commitment to the company, because they feel that their needs are considered by the leaders (Li et al., 2019). In a study published in 2021, Munfaqiroh et al. (2021) showed that transformational leadership was not proven to have a significant effect on job satisfaction, but transformational leadership had a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction with organizational commitment as an intervening variable (Munfaqiroh et al., 2021). Dong et al. (2021), who explored the influence of transformational leadership on the job satisfaction of civil servants at the Nha Trang Tax Department in Vietnam, also found out that transformational leadership can be positively

liked with the job satisfaction of civil servants. Chen et al. (2022) also showed that transformational leadership was positively associated with employee job satisfaction via the mediation role of the perceived employee relations climate. To study the perceptions of individuals, specifically of employees in companies of a country that has experienced big socio-political and economical changes as Kosovo is, it seems to be very challenging. As Albanian schoolers Zenelaga and Beshku (2021: 159) claim, the current socio-political conditions shape people perceptions and attitudes, but the present is also influenced by the past, so it is important to make a short summary of the Kosovo context of the economic development during the last 15 years, in order to better understand the context that influences peoples' perceptions within the Kosovo companies.

Over the past 15 years, Kosovo has made significant strides in its economic development. As a young and transitioning nation, Kosovo faced numerous challenges in establishing a stable and prosperous economy. Privatization and market liberalization were the most important and challenging pillars of economic development in Kosovo, which embarked on an ambitious privatization program, aiming to transfer state-owned enterprises to the private sector. The process faced challenges, but gradually Kosovo has opened up its market and embraced market-oriented policies to encourage competition and attract foreign investors.

In Kosovo, family businesses make up about 85 percent of businesses, although a majority of them are small or medium-sized. Family businesses are passed on to subsequent generations, the likelihood of their survival is significantly reduced (Riinvest Institute, 2015: 8). A study cited by PICG (2008), suggests that 85% of family businesses die out completely before the fourth generation.

Despite the tendency to manage a business in a family way, some industry sectors developed after 2008. Thus, in 2016 in Kosovo, 56% of all industry was composed of the retail and wholesale sector, 12% of manufacturing and 10% of construction (British Council and Swedish Institute, 2018).

In the conditions of important economic and business changes in the Republic of Kosovo, some researchers arouse interest in studying the styles of leadership and the success the companies. Although there are a limited number of studies in the Kosovo context related to this issue, there are some contributions that support this need. Thus, in their study, Pula et al (2020) pointed out that the transformational leadership style is preferred by the workers in many companies operating in Kosovo. The correlation coefficient between motivation and leadership style is higher when transformational leadership is used. According to this study, 63.5% of motivation is described by transformational leadership and 39.3% is described by transactional leadership. However, despite the fact that the transformational leadership style is the most preferred one by the workers in public utility companies in Kosovo, the most used style is the transactional style of leadership. Authors stressed the importance of using a transformational leadership style to increase employees' motivation (Pula, Qerimi & Hajdari, 2020).

Also, Kosovo schoolers Lokaj and Sadrija (2020), in a study based on the employees' perceptions, found out that the most prevalent leadership style in private business is the transactional one. According to these authors, the issues of leadership and organizational culture in the Kosovo context have not been properly developed, so measures should be taken by private businesses to settle this issue.

Another study conducted by Rexhepi et al (2020: 78) found out that the characteristics of the firm influences the leadership style and the quality of decision making. According to them the larger the firm, the more important decisions have to be made and, in these cases, the best method to use is the analytical method.

In his article, Dërmaku (2022) explains the different styles of leadership and how they affect employee's motivation. According to the findings, the most dominant style in

Kosovo corporations is the classic style of leadership, as the largest form of organization and functioning, not only of corporations but also of other businesses in Kosovo (Ibid: 247).

Recently in a study conducted by Buja et al (2022), in Kosovo context, was found out that the leadership style has a higher effect on the service quality and consumer satisfaction. In their study the authors made a comparison between foreign and domestic capital banks in Kosovo and showed that authoritarian style has a more significant impact on the service quality in banks with foreign capital. In contrast, in banks with domestic capital, a transactional style significantly impacts service quality.

Despite the positive efforts of Kosovar researchers to recently empirically explore leadership styles in companies operating in Kosovo, considering this variable related to other variables such as: organization size, decision-making styles, customer satisfaction, etc., it is important to gather empirical results from the perspective of employees to support whether transformational leadership affects employee job satisfaction. Further studies would help companies to understand the impact of using the right leadership style in accordance with the size of the organization, in terms of increasing customer satisfaction.

Thus, the aim of this article is to analyze the relationship between the transformational leadership, company size and employees' job satisfaction within Kosovo companies. The research objectives are: (a) to examine the correlation between the company size and the transformational leadership; (b) to examine the relationship between the company size and job satisfaction; (c) to analyze the relationship between the transformational leadership and employees' job satisfaction in Kosovo companies' context.

With the aim to examine the relationship between transformational leadership, company size and job satisfaction three hypotheses have been raised:

H1. There is a relation between the size of the company and the transformational leadership.

H2. There is a relation between the size of the company and the level of employees' job satisfaction.

H3. There exists a positive relation between transformational leadership and employees' job satisfaction.

3. Methods

The instrument used in our research is a questionnaire, based on the model constructed by Munfaqiroh et al., (2021) who explored the influence of transformational leadership on employees' job satisfaction with organizational commitment as an intervening variable in Indonesia, but in the present paper, the variable of the organizational commitment was not taken into consideration. Instead, the variable of the company size was included as an independent variable. As described in the previous sections of the present paper, the main aim is to analyze the correlation between transformational leadership, company size and employees' job satisfaction in the Kosovo context, so the variables used in the questionnaire instrument are: the variable of job satisfaction (10 items), the variable of transformational leadership (10 items) and four independent variables: gender, age, education level and company size.

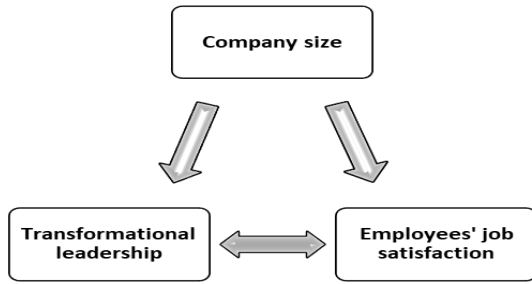


Figure 1. The research model Source: Own research.

The questionnaire has been validated and tested. According to the reliability statistics, the Cronbach’s Alpha for the variable “Job satisfaction” (10 items) is 0.96, and for the variable of “Transformational leadership,” it is (10 items) is 0.979. Looking that the Cronbach’s Alpha is > 0.7, the instrument of the research is reliable.

The questionnaire was distributed to 11 corporations and businesses (small, medium and large) in Kosovo. The table below shows a snapshot of them, their population and the sampling. The sample used to gather data was random, so everyone in the population has an equal chance of getting selected. Also, this sample is used in order to avoid every bias. In a population of N=2805 employees, with a confidence level of 95% (z score= 1.96), population portion (0.5), and margin of error of 5%, a sample of 338 respondents was selected. The random sample has been chosen according to the formula:

$$n = \frac{z^2 \times \hat{p}(1-\hat{p})}{\epsilon^2} \dots\dots\dots (3.1)$$

$$n' = \frac{n}{1 + \frac{z^2 \times \hat{p}(1-\hat{p})}{\epsilon^2 N}} \dots\dots\dots (3.2)$$

Note: z is the z score, ε is the margin of error, \hat{p} is the population proportion, N is the population size. Source: Cochran (1963)

The table below shows a list of corporations and businesses where the questionnaire has been administrated, their population, the percentage of the whole population and the sampling.

Table 1. The population and the sample

Nr.	Corporations and businesses	Population	% over the whole population	Sample
1	Devolli Corporation	500	17.8%	60
2	Dukagjini Corporation	200	7.1%	24
3	Elkos Corporation	100	3.6%	12
4	Hib-80 Corporation	80	2.8%	10
5	Kaqandolli Corporation	50	1.8%	6
6	UBT College	1000	35.65%	120
7	Familiar Business	50	1.8%	6
8	Business in partnership	500	18%	60
9	Arta Tex Corporation	160	5.7%	19
10	Delta Group Kosovo	160	5.7%	19
11	Individual Business Gashi Tekstil	5	0.2%	2

Total	2805	100%	338
Sample (according to the formula)	338		

Source: own research

The questionnaire was administrated through Google Forms during the period October-November 2021 and SPSS 23 program was used to analyse the data. A pilot phase was used to test and validate the research instrument. To test the hypothesis of the research, descriptive statistics were employed to explain the relationship between transformational leadership, company size and employees' job satisfaction.

This research was exposed to some limitations. First, there are no similar studies in the Kosovo context so the basis on a local context was very limited. Second, the relationship between transformational leadership and employees job satisfaction is not exhaustive. It is necessary to explore the impact of other variables that may affect job satisfaction such as organisational commitment in companies of Kosovo.

4. Results

As described above, the frequency of male and female respondents tends to be balanced (the % of male respondents is 48.2 and for the female ones – 51.8). The frequencies show that related to the age groups; the respondents who represent the companies in the research are mostly young (21-40 years old), constituting 69.5% of the sample. Young employees tend to be more energetic, innovative, collaborative, optimistic and focused on the future.

Regarding the level of education, the respondents have finished university studies (47.3%) and the post-graduate ones (34.9%). As it is shown in the table below, the employees who participated in this study are mostly young and there is generally a tendency for young people to have a higher level of education compared to older respondents. Generally speaking, young employees tend to be more visioner and have high expectations for the company. The graduated respondents report greater levels of job satisfaction (Pew Research Canter, 2012).

Table 2. Respondent profile

Information		Amount	%
Gender	Male	163	48.2
	Female	175	51.8
	Total	338	100.0
Age	Less than 20 years old	19	5.6
	21-30	114	33.7
	31-40	121	35.8
	41-50	47	13.9
	51-60	24	7.1
	More than 60 years old	13	3.8
	Total	338	100.0
Education	Mandatory completed	1	.3
	High school completed	42	12.4

	University studies completed	160	47.3
	Master studies completed	118	34.9
	Other (Specify)	17	5.0
	Total	338	100.0

Source: own research.

The research was focused on exploring mainly the correlation between transformational leadership and job satisfaction in medium and big companies, but it did not exclude the employees from small businesses too.

The table below presents the frequency of the employees who participated in the survey, according to the company size. For the purpose of this study, we categorised the company size using these criteria: a small size company is a business with 1-50 employees; a medium size company is a business with 51-250 employees; and a big size company is a business with more than 250 employees.

Table 3. Employees according to the company size

Company size	Frequency	%
Small	14	4.15
Medium	84	24.85
Big	240	71.0
Total	338	100.0

Source: own research.

Referring to the variables of job satisfaction and transformational leadership, according to the descriptive analyse, the total mean score seems to be above 3, which can be interpreted as significant for the job satisfaction variable and the transformational leadership variable. In order to better explore the level of job satisfaction and the level of transformational leadership, a three-level scale for each variable has been constructed and measured.

Table 4. Average score of JS and TL

Variable	Minimum	Maximum	Average score
Job satisfaction (JS)	1.00	5.00	3.82
Transformational leadership (TL)	1.00	5.00	3.64

Source: own research.

Based on the descriptive analysis the variable of Job Satisfaction has been measured using three levels: low, medium and high level. The statistical analysis showed that 57.7 per cent of the respondents show a high level of job satisfaction, 31.4 per cent show a medium level of satisfaction and 10.9 per cent of the respondents show a low level of job satisfaction.

Table 5. Levels of job satisfaction

Level of job satisfaction	Frequency	%
Low	37	10.9
Medium	106	31.4
High	195	57.7

Total	338	100.0
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Source: own research.

Using the same logic, the variable of transformational leadership has been measured based on three levels (low, medium and high). The descriptive analyses showed that 52.4 per cent of the respondents think that in their companies a high level of transformational leadership is applied, 32.5 per cent think that in the company where they work a medium level of the transformational leadership is applied and 15.1 per cent of the respondents think that in their companies a low level of the transformational leadership is applied.

Table 6. Levels of transformational leadership

Level of transformational leadership	Frequency	%
Low	51	15.1
Medium	110	32.5
High	177	52.4
Total	338	100.0

Source: own research.

The descriptive analysis shows no statistical significance among the company size and the level of transformational leadership ($P > 0.05$). In order to measure the influence on job satisfaction, another independent variable should be taken into consideration.

Table 7. The correlation between company size and the transformational leadership

		Company size	Transformational leadership
Company size	Pearson Correlation	1	.035
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.517
	N	338	338
Transformational Leadership	Pearson Correlation	.035	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.517	
	N	338	338

Source: own research.

Table 8 shows the correlation between company size and job satisfaction. According to the data, there is a weak positive correlation between job satisfaction and the company size (Pearson coefficient= 0.099, $P < 0.05$, $n = 338$).

Table 8. The correlation between company size and job satisfaction

		Company size	Job satisfaction
Company size	Pearson Correlation	1	.099
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.069
	N	338	338
Job Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	.099	1

	Sig. (2-tailed)	.069	
	N	338	338

Source: own research.

With the aim to analyse the correlation between transformational leadership and job satisfaction, the Pearson correlation has been used. According to the data, there exists a positive correlation between transformational leadership and job satisfaction (Pearson coefficient= 0.767, $P < 0.05$, $n = 338$), so it is expected that when the level of transformational leadership is high, the level of job satisfaction is high as well. Hence, in the companies where a high level of transformational leadership is applied, the employees show a higher level of job satisfaction, compared to the company where the level of application of transformational leadership is low.

Table 9. The correlation between levels of transformational leadership and job satisfaction

		Job satisfaction	Transformational leadership
Job satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	1	.767**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.022
	N	338	338
Transformational leadership	Pearson Correlation	.767**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.022	
	N	338	338

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: own research.

5. Discussion

This paper shows empirical results about 11 companies in the Republic of Kosovo, from the perspective of employee's, to support whether company size is related to the transformational leadership and the job satisfaction and whether the transformational leadership affects employee job satisfaction or not. The study shows that there is no correlation between the company size and the transformational leadership. This finding was not supported by some researchers (See: Matzler et al., 2008; Wo, 2022). The present research also showed that there is no correlation between the company size and employees' job satisfaction. These findings are not supported by some researches, for example Scherer (1976), showed a relation between the company size and job satisfaction, and found out that low levels of employees' job satisfaction were related to large firms. Also, Haile (2009) as well Garcia-Serrano (2011) showed a correlation between company size and employees' job satisfaction. But the present research found out a positive correlation between transformational leadership and employees' job satisfaction in 11 companies explored in Kosovo. This last finding was partially supported by the study conducted by Munfaqiroh et. al (2021), which found out that transformational leadership was not proven to have a significant effect directly on job satisfaction, but transformational leadership had a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction with organizational commitment as an intervening variable. Also, Chen et al. (2022) found out that transformational leadership was positively associated with employee job satisfaction via the mediation role of the perceived employee relations climate.

Despite the positive efforts made in recent years regarding this topic in the context of Kosovo, further studies should be undertaken to analyze the influence of different variables on job satisfaction and transformational leadership. As emphasized in the National Development Strategy 2016-2021 of the Ministry of Trade and Industry of Kosovo, it is important to improve links between education and the labor market and to develop professional qualification standards (Government of Kosovo, 2016). In this line, the qualification and training of the managers and leaders is a necessity in order to positively influence the employees' job satisfaction.

6. Conclusions

The purpose of this paper was to examine the correlation between transformational leadership, company size and employees' job satisfaction, focusing on Kosovo case corporations and businesses. It shows that there is no correlation between the company size and the transformational leadership, as well as between the company size and employees' job satisfaction, but it found out a positive correlation between transformational leadership and employees' job satisfaction in 11 companies explored in Kosovo.

The results of the present paper may have policy implications with the aim of increasing employees' satisfaction and, as a result, increasing the company's productivity. There is a need for companies in Kosovo to increase their leadership role and be motivators for their employees. In this manner the success of the company will be sure.

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