

## Job satisfaction as a mediator between transformational leadership and employee performance: Evidence from a developing country

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### CHRONICLE

### ABSTRACT

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The purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of transformational leadership on employee performance via job satisfaction in telecommunication sector, Jordan. Self-administered questionnaire was used to collect data from 278 employees. Structural equation modeling (SEM) via The Analysis of Moment Structures, i.e., IBM AMOS 22 was applied to test hypotheses. The findings show that transformational leadership was significantly and positively associated with both job satisfaction and employee performance. Furthermore, job satisfaction had a significant relationship with employee performance. Consequently, the results underlined a significant mediation effect of job satisfaction in the interaction between transformational leadership and employee performance. This research provides empirical evidence of the interaction between transformational leadership, job satisfaction and employee performance in a key industry in a developing country, Jordan. Finally, this study was conducted in telecommunication sector in a developing country, Jordan, therefore, the results cannot be generalized across countries.

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## 1. Introduction

Employee performance is considered as a very essential factor in telecommunication sector competitiveness, this reason has evoked the interest of researchers to identify its predictors. Most prior studies broadly determine leader approach as a great factor that can influence employees' performance, significantly. In telecommunication firms as part of service industry, the survival of a firm usually relies on the role of leaders (Thompson & Webber, 2016), as they impact followers' confidence, motivation and behaviors (Andreani & Petrik, 2016) and the way they deal with clients (Wallace et al., 2013). Leader is an individual who can be able to create perfect work environment, inspire, help individuals perform at the highest level they can (Ali et al., 2015). Firm without a leader is simply a pool of individuals performing activities without any guidance that help them understand the objectives of the firm (Yıldız et al., 2014). Great leaders need to be capable of showing good moral values and high standards of behavior (Weiß & Süß, 2016). They make the hard choice, and self-sacrifice in a bid to support the lives of followers around them (Guay, 2013). This type of leaders is called transformational leaders. Transformational leaders create futuristic vision for their subordinates and guide the change through motivation and inspiration, show respect and confidence in their subordinates, and focus to satisfy their essential wants and expectations (Ghasabeh et al., 2015). Transformational leadership known as a contemporary style that can influence, inspire, and enable subordinates to perform over their perceived capabilities (Strukan et al., 2017), is presently the most widely adopted approach in the leadership work (Iman & Lestari, 2019). Previous findings in the transformational leadership area assure the significant relationship between this type of leadership and employee performance (Nungky, 2013; Mihalcea, 2014; Shahab & Nisa, 2014). However, further research is required concerning the certain mechanisms by which these impacts happen, and along with other factors according to (Braun et al., 2013; Andreani & Petrik, 2016; Iman & Lestari, 2019). In response to these calls, this research draws on

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social exchange theory to investigate the mediating effect played by the feeling of individuals towards their firm, in respect to job satisfaction. Job satisfaction is known as the feeling state of employees towards their work (Luthans, 2006; Khan et al., 2016). Scholars and professionals have stressed the significance of this factor in the development of service firms (Inuwa, 2016; Cronley & Kim, 2017); however, latest views emphasize the necessity for additional investigation of job satisfaction influence in the telecommunication research (Al-edenat, 2017; Al Taweel, 2019). Therefore, this research investigates the mediating effect of job satisfaction in the relationship between transformational leadership and employee performance in a developing country communication sector.

## 2. Literature review and hypotheses

### 2.1 Transformational leadership

TL has gone through many definitions over the past several years. It is a contemporary approach that can bring positive firm effectiveness, encouraging individuals to exert effort to support this effectiveness via creating strong relationships, meeting individuals' essential needs, and supporting individuals achieve their objectives, contributes to valuable results for the firm (Fitzgerald & Schutte, 2010). Transformational leader can be described as someone who demonstrates clearer imagination of upcoming opportunities, motivates subordinates rationally, and understanding diversities among individuals (Du et al., 2013). According to Rao (2014), transformational leadership is a leadership style that can improve employees' skills, who in turn, support firm performance through attaining the determined objectives. Saeed et al. (2014) also refer that this type of leadership is capable of creating high performance level in the long run as it concentrates on inspiring people, motivating them, and satisfying their fundamental needs. Furthermore, the main principle of this leadership style concentrates on the significance of employing charisma as a major device to impact followers in the quest of the leader to improve followers' effectiveness (Bass, 1999). Transformational leaders assess the potential capabilities of their followers as they perform to improve those capabilities in a bid to meet preset objectives (Dvir et al., 2002). Transformational leaders also focus on enabling subordinates reliable about using their capabilities to manage the constraints and complications, so they can work beyond expectations (Winston, 2008). Thus, transformational leader should have vision and able to translate this vision into feasible actions (Rok, 2009). This visionary leader encourages and stimulates individuals to work more than the ordinary way, and enable them perform so according to the vision delivered by him/her (Fitzgerald & Schutte, 2010). Transformational leadership mainly includes the following dimensions according to Bass (1999). These dimensions are idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Idealized influence means having managers who are responsible, skilled, and example for their subordinates (Bass & Avolio, 1994); it highlights values, confidence, and morals (Sarras & Santora, 2001). Abbas et al. (2012) argue that idealized influence is the capability of leaders to increase the level of inspiration of their individuals to exert effort beyond desired targeted. According to Herrmann and Felfe (2013), inspirational motivation encourages subordinate commitment to their job, instill confidence in their capabilities to provide positive resolutions, and to imagine properly the upcoming challenges they will encounter in their work environment. Intellectual stimulation refers to managers' influence to inspire their subordinates to bear responsibilities and to reconsider conventional activates in innovative approach (Guay, 2013). It defies past suppositions, beliefs, and conventionalisms, and motivates contemporary methods of perception (Birasnav, 2014). Finally, individualized consideration is known as the ability of leaders to recognize people demands, strengths, objectives and tend to offer training to satisfy their followers (Mittal & Dhar, 2015). It deals with employees in an individual way, not just as an employee (Weiß & Süß, 2016). The best leaders are those who actually cooperate with their subordinates and maintain strong relationship with them through giving them a good care on personal basis (Andreani & Petrik, 2016; Atan & Mahmood, 2019)

### 2.2 Transformational leadership and job satisfaction

The style of leadership is considered as one of the most crucial variables influencing job satisfaction, the better style of leadership practiced by organization, the higher employees' job satisfaction (Omar & Hussin, 2013). According to Al-Swidi et al. (2012) transformational leadership was confirmed to show positive effect on job satisfaction via stimulating individuals' empowerment. Farrell et al. (2005) refer that transformational leaders may improve their followers' commitment and satisfaction by paying attention to their essential needs and feelings. Talented transformational leaders are capable to identify the fundamental needs of subordinates and commit themselves to satisfy these needs effectively (Braun et al., 2013). By doing so, transformational leaders will encourage followers to exert more effort beyond expectations (Bushra et al., 2011). Furthermore, several researchers assured the significant effect of transformational leadership in job satisfaction. For example, Bushra and Naveed (2011) found a significant association between transformational leadership and job satisfaction in banking sector in Pakistan. Mohammad et al. (2011) concluded a positive impact of transformational leadership on employees' satisfaction in private hospitals in Jordan. Yang (2012) also, carried a study at Taiwanese public relations practitioner in Taiwan and assure the positive relationship between transformational leadership and job satisfaction. In their research in Ethiopia Negussie and Demissie (2013) concluded a positive correlation between transformational leadership and Nurse Job satisfaction. Alloubani et al. (2015) refer that transformational leadership has a positive relationship with job satisfaction. Furthermore, in his study in Jordanian telecommunication sector Al-edenat (2017) also reported the same results that transformational leadership affects job satisfaction positively. Accordingly, the present work suggests the following hypothesis

H<sub>1</sub>: There is a significant relationship between transformational leadership and job satisfaction in Jordanian telecommunication sector.

### 2.3 Transformational leadership and employee performance

Transformational leadership mainly helps subordinates become more responsive to value and significance of job, making the needs at a higher level and direct the subordinates to more interest in the company (Al-edenat, 2017). Transformational leaders help individuals to be secured, committed and respected, motivated and inspired to exert more effort that meet or exceed organization-desired performance (Al-Husseini & Elbeltagi, 2016). Transformational leaders also support capabilities, trust to prepare their followers to become more responsible, and give authority in the company. Therefore, it will result in a better employee performance (Imran & Anis-ul-Haque, 2011). In essence, transformational leadership as a contemporary approach is capable to create positive employee performance (Banks et al, 2016). According to Thompson & Webber (2016), the proper transformational leadership is practiced by firms the higher employee performance can be achieved. Overall, most scholars in management field found a significant relationship of transformational leadership with employee performance. Nungky (2013) conducted a research on UPT Aneka Industri and Kerajinan Surabaya in Indonesia and found a significant effect of transformational leadership on employee performance. In their study in Indonesia health services, Shahab and Nisa (2014) assure the significant association between transformational leadership and employee performance. Mihalcea (2014) also conducted a study on managers and employees in retail business in Romania and reported a positive impact of transformational leadership on employee performance. Mittal & Dhar (2015) conducted a research in India and showed a positive effect of transformational leadership on employee creativity. Rattanaborworn (2015) also carried a research on food industry in Thailand and found a positive relationship between transformational leadership and employee performance. Accordingly, the present work suggests the following hypothesis

H<sub>2</sub>: There is a significant relationship between transformational leadership and employee performance in Jordanian telecommunication sector.

### 2.4 Job satisfaction and employee performance

Employee performance is related to job satisfaction, which means, if job satisfaction at a significant level, the employee's performance will be at a positive level (Al Taweel, 2019). Usually, individuals tend to perform better when they are happy in their workplace and dedicated to the organization (Andreani & Petrik, 2016). Happy individuals come to job with passion and comply with organization policy better than unhappy individuals, which in turn lead to support performance (Oravee, 2014; Rawashdeh, & Al-Adwan, 2012). Further, Satisfied individuals tend to perform their job effectively, assist people and do their jobs beyond the organization expectations (Thamrin, 2012). Thus, organizations having happy individuals' enjoying better performance than those who have unhappy individuals (Al-edenat, 2017). Many researchers show a significant association of job satisfaction with employee performance (e.g. Paracha et al., 2012; Atmojo, 2012; Mihalcea, 2014; Anitha, 2014; Dappa et al., 2019). In addition, Fu et al. (2013) conducted a research in China on Insurance corporations, and concluded a significant relationship between job satisfaction and employee performance. Thomas (2014) carried a research on Benue State Civil Service in Nigeria and reported a positive influence of job satisfaction on staff performance. Khan et al., (2016) also assured positive association between job satisfaction and employee performance in their research on telecom sector of Pakistan. Okechukwu (2017) conducted a study in Malaysia on STML university academic and administrative staff, and suggested the same results that job satisfaction has a significant relationship with employee performance. Accordingly, the present work suggests the following hypothesis

H<sub>3</sub>: There is a significant relationship between job satisfaction and employee performance in Jordanian telecommunication sector.

### 2.5 Job satisfaction as a mediator

Job satisfaction acts as a leading engine of employee morale, discipline and performance of individuals when appropriate leadership style is adopted (Thamrin, 2012). This means that successful leaders can stimulate employee performance through effective influence of job satisfaction (Shahab & Nisa, 2014; Avolio, 2007). Usually subordinates and their essential needs are a priority for transformational leaders (Rattanaborworn, 2015). When followers' needs and wants are satisfied, they will influence their performance, and thus, they will exert effort beyond expectations (Okechukwu, 2017). Most literature science that linked transformational leadership with employee's performance and job satisfaction has assured transformational leadership as a good predictor of employee performance (Braun et al., 2013). In the same line, some scholars asserted the significant effect of transformational leadership in supporting employees' performance through job satisfaction. Atmojo (2012) conducted a research on hospitals of Indonesia and found a partial mediation of job satisfaction in the effect of transformational leadership on employees' performance. In their research in Pakistan on private schools, Piranha et al. (2012) reported a mediating role of job satisfaction in the effect of transformational leadership on employees' performance. Furthermore, Andreani and Petrik (2016) assured the positive direct and indirect effect of job satisfaction in the relationship between transformational leadership and employee performance. Iman and Lestari (2019) also found a mediating effect of job satisfaction in the association of transformational leadership with employees' performance. Accordingly, the present work suggests the following hypothesis.

H<sub>4</sub>: There is a significant relationship between transformational leadership and employee performance via job satisfaction as a mediator in Jordanian telecommunication sector.

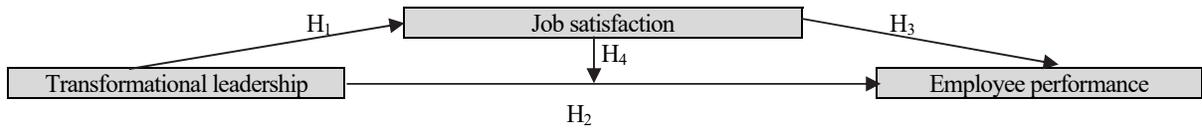


Fig. 1. Conceptual model

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The present work is a descriptive research applying structural equation modeling (SEM). The participants were employees of telecommunication industry in Jordan. Multiple items, adopted from different studies, have been used to measure the perceptual constructs, namely; transformational leadership, job satisfaction, and employee performance. These items provide a valued source for data gathering and measurement as their reliability and validity have been verified through previous research and peer reviews. Twelve items were used to measure transformational leadership (problem solving, values and believes, motivation, attitude and confidence, and moral and ethics), adapted from (Guay, 2013; Rattanaborworn, 2015) and validated by Al-edenat (2017). Job satisfaction with nine items (rewards, promotion, supervisor, co-workers, and job as part of job satisfaction) were derived from Luthans (2006), and validated by Andreani and Petrik (2016). Employee performance with nine items (behavior and results) were adapted from (Kappagoda, 2012; Amstrong, 2005) and validated by Atmojo (2012).

3.2 Sample and procedures

A self-administered questionnaire was applied to collect primary data from employees working in Jordanian telecommunication firms, which include Zain, Orange, and Ummiah. To ensure that this instrument is valid in terms of its content, a Pilot test was utilized. The participants were five head of departments in Jordanian telecommunication sector, and four professors in the University of Jordan, according to their suggestions some amendments were considered to fit the research industry. The total number of working employees in the three firms are about 3400 employees, according to their annual reports. A simple random sampling technique was applied. In filling in the questionnaire, the participants were requested to indicate their answers on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). A total of 400 questionnaires were distributed to the research population through drop off and pick up method. After collecting the questionnaires, 278 were found suitable for the final analysis process, with a response rate of 70 percent. The demographic data of the respondents are reported in Fig. 2.

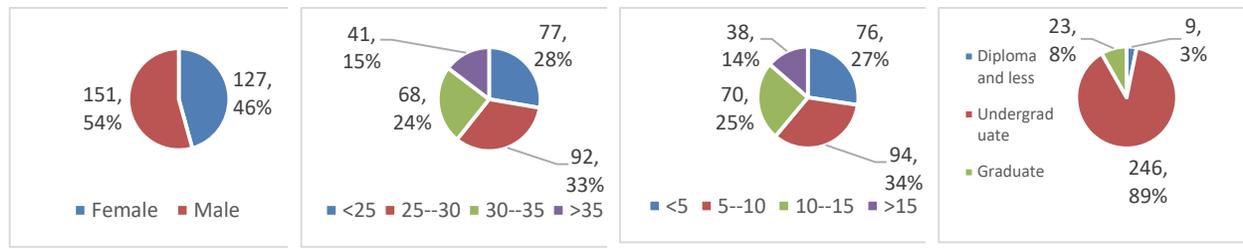


Fig. 2. Demographic data for respondents

As shown in Fig. 2, the demographic profile of the respondents for this study revealed that the sample consisted of more males, most of them experienced, 72% of them were more than 25 years old, and 88% of them were undergraduates.

4. Results

4.1 Tests of normality

The normal distribution of the data was tested based on Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk values. Table 1 shows that transformational leadership (TL), job satisfaction (JS), and employee performance (EP) data were normally distributed. i.e., values of both Kolmogorov-Smirnova and Shapiro-Wilk were non-significant (> 0.05) which consistent with (Marange & Qin, 2019) threshold value.

Table 1 Tests of data normality

Constructs	Kolmogorov-Smirnova	
	Statistic	Sig.
TL	0.155	0.200*
JS	0.197	0.200*
EP	0.223	0.200*

\* This is a lower bound of the true significance.

#### 4.2 Multicollinearity

Multicollinearity was tested based on variance inflation variance and tolerance (VIF) and tolerance. It was noted that the current predictors are free of multicollinearity since all recorded values of VIF is lower than 10 and tolerance values are higher than 0.10 (Tamura et al., 2019).

#### 4.3 Correlation matrix

TL is significantly correlated with JS ( $r = 0.462$ ,  $P < 0.01$ ), TL also significantly correlated with EP ( $r = 0.528$ ,  $P < 0.01$ ), Furthermore, JS is significantly and positively correlated with EP ( $r = 0.369$ ,  $P < 0.01$ ) according to Pearson coefficients values in Table 2.

**Table 2**  
Correlation matrix

Variables and correlations		TL	JS	EP
TL		1		
JS	Pearson correlation	0.462**	1	
EP		0.528**	0.369**	1

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

#### 4.4 Descriptive statistics

Table 3 Explains all items means and Std. deviations. It shows that employee performance has the highest mean value (3.82) with a std. dev. (0.86), followed by job satisfaction (3.76) mean value and (0.93) std. dev. And transformational leadership (3.72) mean value and (0.86) std. dev. According to the three ranges formula (i.e., 1- 2.33 low; 2.34 - 3.67 medium; and 3.68 - 5 high) the total degrees of research variables are high.

**Table 3**  
Means and standard deviations of research variables

Variables	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
TL	278	1.00	5.00	3.721	0.864
JS	278	1.00	5.00	3.763	0.935
EP	278	1.00	5.00	3.821	0.862

#### 4.5 Exploratory factor analysis

Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was conducted to examine the distribution of research constructs on their related items. Table 4 indicates that the transformational leadership was related to 12 items (SFL = 0.742 to 0.893), while job satisfaction was associated with 9 items (SFL = 0.685 to 0.811) and employee performance with 9 items (SFL = 0.761 to 0.911).

**Table 4**  
Results of exploratory factor analysis

Constructs	Items	SFL	AVE	CR	$\alpha$
Transformational leadership	TL1	0.871	0.671	0.961	0.953
	TL2	0.768			
	TL3	0.753			
	TL4	0.893			
	TL5	0.852			
	TL6	0.891			
	TL7	0.781			
	TL8	0.838			
	TL9	0.774			
	TL10	0.762			
	TL11	0.882			
	TL12	0.742			
Job satisfaction	IN1	0.852	0.589	0.928	0.919
	IN2	0.741			
	IN3	0.685			
	IN4	0.788			
	IN5	0.752			
	IN6	0.756			
	IN7	0.811			
	IN8	0.741			
	IN9	0.769			
Employee performance	OP1	0.911	0.632	0.939	0.928
	OP2	0.842			
	OP3	0.776			
	OP4	0.754			
	OP5	0.781			
	OP6	0.772			
	OP7	0.761			
	OP8	0.782			
	OP9	0.764			

SFL: standardized factor loadings, AVE: average variance extracted, CR: composite reliability,  $\alpha$ : Cronbach's alpha coefficient.

4.6 Validity and reliability

The quality and usefulness of the primary data were determined by validity and reliability measures. Validity was measured by convergent validity. As can be seen in Table 5, the average variance extracted (AVE) values are between 0.671 and 0.632, were higher than the minimum recommended that AVE, which 0.50 for each construct (Mohajan, 2017). Furthermore, composite Cronbach’s alpha was used to measure the reliability. Table 5 indicates that the values of Cronbach’s alpha are between 0.919 and 0.953, which are greater than the minimum recommended value 0.70 (Hair et al., 2010). Consequently, validity and reliability were assured.

4.7 Measurement model fit

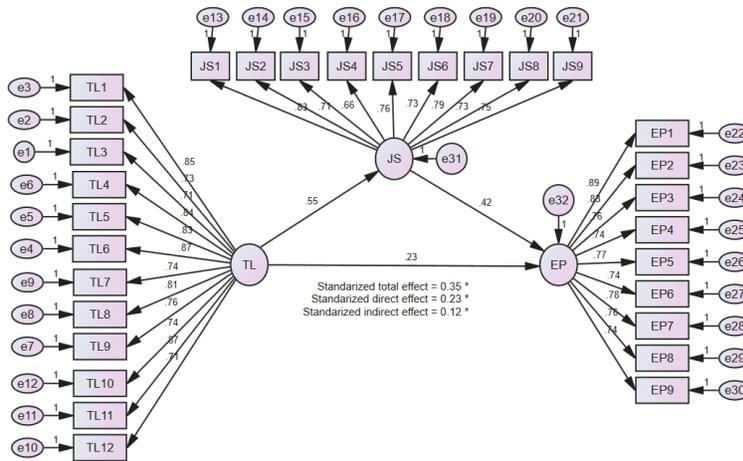
Table 5 demonstrates the measurement model goodness of fit indices. Chi-square ratio ( $\chi^2/df$ ) = 2.812 which is less than 5, Goodness of Fit Index (GFI) = 0.912, Comparative Fit Index (CFI) = 0.934, which were higher than 0.90 and Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) = 0.066, which is lower than 0.08. (Hair et al., 2010; Kline, 2010).

**Table 5**  
Measurement model fit summary

Index	Value	Criterion
Chi-square ratio	2.812	Less than 5
Goodness of Fit Index	0.912	Greater than 0.90
Comparative Fit Index	0.934	Greater than 0.90
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation	0.066	Less than 0.08

4.8 Structural model

The study structural model is portrayed in Fig. 3. This model has been constructed based on research hypotheses, i.e., transformational leadership is assumed to exert a positive impact on job satisfaction, which in turn is postulated to exert a positive impact on employee performance. Basically, transformational leadership was hypothesized to show a significant effect on employee performance. Finally, the model explains that job satisfaction is supposed to play a significant mediating effect in the association of transformational leadership with employee performance. Further, the model explains that transformational leadership exerts a significant impact on job satisfaction ( $\beta = 0.55$ ), as well as on employee performance ( $\beta = 0.23$ ). Job satisfaction shows a positive effect on employee performance ( $\beta = 0.42$ ). These three significant effects established an evidence on the mediating effect of job satisfaction in the relationship between transformational leadership and employee performance ( $\beta = 0.12$ ).



**Fig. 3.** Research structural model

Table 6 summarizes the findings of structural equation modeling (SEM) showing total, direct and indirect interactions among research constructs. The results confirm that the study hypotheses are supported. That is, transformational leadership shows a positive direct and indirect effects to employee performance.

**Table 6**  
Results of hypotheses testing

Default Paths	Total effects		Direct effects		Indirect effects	
	$\beta$ *	P **	$\beta$ *	P **	$\beta$ *	P **
TL → JS	0.55	0.000	0.55	0.000	-	-
TL → EP	0.35	0.001	0.23	0.001	0.12	0.001
JS → EP	0.42	0.004	0.42	0.004	-	-

\* standardized effects. \*\* significant at ( $\alpha$ ) = 0.05

## 5. Discussions and conclusion

The present work was aimed to examine the relationship between transformational leadership and employee performance through the mediating effect of job satisfaction in telecommunication sector in Jordan. The findings of this work illustrate, firstly, there is a significant relationship between transformational leadership and job satisfaction in Jordanian telecommunication sector. This result may be attributed to the golden rule that the better leadership style practiced by the organization, the higher employees' job satisfaction achieved (Omar & Hussin, 2013). Farrell et al. (2005) assure that transformational leaders emphasize the essential needs of their subordinates' as a priority to be met. Negussie, and Demissie (2013) concluded that transformational leaders are usually concentrate on motivating their subordinates to move to higher states of inspiration and happiness. Further, talented transformational leaders are always giving a careful consideration to their subordinates needs and commit themselves to satisfy these needs effectively. By doing so, they inspire their followers to exert more effort beyond expectations (Bushra et al., 2011). This conclusion is concur with prior research conclusions (e.g. Bushra & Naveed, 2011; Mohammad et al., 2011, 2017; Yang, 2012; Negussie & Demissie, 2013; Al-edenat, 2017) who concluded a significant relationship between transformational leadership and job satisfaction.

Secondly, the findings also suggest a significant impact of transformational leadership on employee performance in Jordanian telecommunication sector. The premise behind this result is that the individuals are genuinely interested in working for the firm, and they are ready to pay their best efforts for the success of the firm, besides, they have accomplished their work effectively and achieved it in conformity with the organization objectives. Transformational leadership mainly helps subordinates become more responsive to value and significance of job, making the needs at a higher level and direct the subordinates to more interest in the company (Al-edenat, 2017). Further, it's usually generate subordinates belief and respect for leader, as well as inspires them to pay more effort beyond his/her capabilities (Shahab and Nisa, 2014). The results are in harmony with past scholars views such as (Nungky, 2013; Mihalcea, 2014; Shahab & Nisa, 2014; Mittal & Dhar, 2015; Rattanaborworn, 2015) which confirmed the significant impact of transformational leadership on employee performance.

Thirdly, the results confirm a positive association between job satisfaction and employee performance in Jordanian telecommunication sector. This implies, when job satisfaction in telecommunication sector at a significant level the employees' performance will be at a positive level. In fact, Individuals tend to perform better when they are happy in their workplace and dedicated to the organization (Andreani & Petrik, 2016). Satisfied individuals can achieve their job effectively, assist people and exert effort beyond the organization expectations (Thamrin, 2012). The idea that job satisfaction leads to better employee performance is widely confirmed by many researchers in different fields (Atmojo, 2012; Mihalcea, 2014). The results are consistent with some prior studies (e.g. Fu et al., 2013; Thomas, 2014; Khan et al., 2016; Okechukwu, 2017).

Finally, regarding the mediating effect of job satisfaction in the relationship between transformational leadership and employee performance. The findings show a mediating effect of job satisfaction in the interaction between transformational leadership and employee performance. This implies that job satisfaction serves as significant rout to employee performance. Actually, transformational leaders can improve their followers' performance by creating a healthy workplace. Transformational leaders also may create better degree of satisfaction, when followers are inspired that they work even better (Iman and Lestari, 2019). All in all, today's organizations need to understand the importance of transformational leadership in their business as it serves as a very essential key in stimulating job satisfaction which in turn lead to support employee performance (Atmojo, 2012). This result is also consistent with some other researchers' results (Atmojo, 2012; Paracha et al., 2012; Braun et al., 2013; Andreani, and Petrik, 2016; Iman and Lestari, 2019) which confirmed the mediation role of job satisfaction in the effect of transformational leadership on employee performance.

In conclusion, the current research assures the significant relationship between transformational leadership approach and employee performance. Further, job satisfaction mediates the interaction between those constructs. Job satisfaction as a mediator in the effect of transformational leadership on employees' performance can lead to a positive and significant employee performance. Findings of this study have confirmed that. This explains that transformational leadership has already direct and indirect effect in employ performance, and before the mediation of job satisfaction, which was also significant. The study conducted in telecommunication sector in Jordan using structural equation modeling (SEM) approach.

## 6. Research implications

The present research has some theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, it responds to some scholars' calls for further investigation on the mechanisms by which transformational leadership impacts employee performance, and along with other factors, as it employs job satisfaction as a mediator between these variables. So, it supports the literature by providing strong evidence on the mediating effect of job satisfaction in the interaction between transformational leadership with employee performance in telecommunication sector in a developing country. also, this study contrasting previous studies with regard to not restricting the research to a single level of management such as middle management (Atmojo, 2012), managers (Andreani & Petrik, 2016), and permanent employees (Iman and Lestari, 2019). Regarding the practical implications, as a result of specifying transformational leadership as a need and useful type to increase employee performance, it may support the firm for additional practice of action plans that intend to help the implementation of this approach by their managers. This

may be achieved by helping managers in Jordanian telecommunication sector recognize the significance of transformational leadership behaviors practices. Also, better focus on the proper connections in the work environment should be practiced through dealing with employees on friendly basis, as well as satisfy their personal needs and wants, and help them to improve their performance. As individuals feel happy, they will exert effort beyond expectations.

## 7. Limitations, and suggestions for future research

No research is perfect, and no study is without limitations, some limitations of this research are: first, regarding context, the current work was conducted in telecommunication sector in a developing country, Jordan. In essence, there are some differences in business practices, cultures and environments across countries. Therefore, the results cannot be generalized around the world because of those differences. Second, this research has investigated only one type of leadership, but in reality, there are other types of leadership, such as, transactional and laissez-faire leadership. Upcoming work may try another type of leadership at the same sector or another sector. Finally, in terms of methodology, this research has used “drop-off”/“pick-up” questionnaire survey distribution process for the data collection. However, using various data gathering processes such as, email-surveys questionnaires may increase the volume of data gathering. Besides, utilizing of mutable processes for gathering the data by questionnaire survey provides the ability to recover the weaknesses of other process.

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