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The Impact of Situational Leadership on Employees Performance with Mediating Role of Job Satisfaction in the Health Sector of Afghanistan

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Abstract

This study explores the connection between situational leadership, job satisfaction, and employee performance in Afghanistan's health sector. The study explains how situational leadership is managed to the need of the organization and their employees, which can improve their performance, specifically in the health sector. The health sector in Afghanistan is the most emerging sector in the economy, providing quality support to fill the gap in health requirements in society. Various NGOs support improving the health conditions and bringing skilful personnel and infrastructure to this sector. Although there is still a gap for improvement, abrupt changes, investments, the latest technology and skilled personnel have increased the capacity of this sector. The current study is quantitative and is carried out on empirical rational principles. The questionnaire is used for data collection, and SPSS is used for analysis. The results show that situational leadership positively and significantly influences employee performance. Furthermore, the study also reveals an indirect relationship between situational leadership and employee performance. This research found that employees with high job satisfaction are always motivated and focus on their goals with productive and critical thinking, leading to better performance and organizational success. Job satisfaction plays a role in boosting employee performance. More satisfied employees become more dedicated, motivated, and productive and participate in the organization's success. In Afghanistan's health sector, where the environment is more challenging and the resources are limited, supportive leadership shows that job satisfaction can provide better results for the work environment. The positive relationship between job satisfaction and employee performance indicates that NGOs should focus on a creative work environment that helps meet their employees' professional and personal needs. Future research should focus on expanding the scope by including diverse sectors and regions to enhance the findings' generalizability and investigate additional mediating variables, such as organizational culture and external environmental factors. Qualitative studies could complement quantitative findings by exploring employee's experiences and perceptions of leadership in the health sector.

Keywords: Situational Leadership, Employee Satisfaction, Job Satisfaction, Health Sector, NGOs

1. Introduction

Leadership has been defined as concerning behaviours, traits, perspectives of influence, role relationships, interaction patterns, and the situation of a management position

(Mintzberg, 1973; Yukl, 2012). However, leadership is frequently used in research without a vivid definition (Winston & Patterson, 2006). Accordingly, it supports enormous connotations that exhibit an indistinctness of definition and meaning (Winston & Patterson, 2006).

The changing nature of leadership and its effects on the organisation's performance has become the focus in both academic and practical areas. This mostly happens in health sectors, where NGOs operating in delicate and troubled regions like Afghanistan bear unique challenges, so adaptive and situational leadership is required there. There are limited resources available to Afghanistan's health sector, especially NGOs. The issue is not confined to this; these organisations face security threats and unstable employee morale, which restricts operational effectiveness. Due to such a situation, leadership becomes crucial in maintaining employee engagement, productivity, and satisfaction toward their role. Situational leadership focuses on leaders adjusting their approach based on their employees' competence and commitment, which offers a suitable framework for tackling these challenges. Strong leadership improves employee performance and boosts job satisfaction, a critical factor for organisational success. Situational leadership, which focuses on leaders managing their perspective founded on the competence and commitment of their employees, provides an ideal framework for handling these challenges. Strong leadership enhances employee performance and boosts job satisfaction, an important factor in organisational success.

The current study concentrates on Afghanistan's health sector employees' performance and situational leadership's significance in their performance and productivity. This is the most discussed topic in academics in recent years, considering the effect of the situational leadership style on the subordinates' and employee's performance for achieving organisational goals (Amstrong & Michael, 2006; Rahadiyan et al., 2019; Ridlwan et al., 2021; Thompson & Glasø, 5). Furthermore, the scholar aims to analyse the influence of the situational leadership style on the employees' satisfaction as a mediator.

Effective leaders conduct those leadership tasks that increase their efficiency and productivity and that of their followers (Desjardins, 2012; Yukl, 2012). Hence, researchers often assess the leadership advantages and efficiencies by assessing the outcomes for stakeholders of organisations and followers, through which the choice of indicators of advantages and effectiveness differs significantly (Yukl, 2012). Leadership effectiveness indicators illustrate whether objective or subjective measures are applied and how they decrease their scope (Felfe, 2006). The most common leadership effectiveness indicator indicates that leaders are evaluated according to the range of actual performance of their organisational unit or team, which is increased, and accomplishing objectives is facilitated (Gottfredson & Aguinis, 2017; Washburn et al., 2008). Therefore, by considering the effectiveness of leadership, Hersey and Blanchard (2001) stated that efficient and good leadership will influence the team, particularly employees' positivity and will allow or motivate them to work hard to ascertain organisational goals. Moreover, according to Bass (1985), leadership is valuable and effective in pursuing employee actions to assist organisational goals and mission accomplishment.

Situational leadership is one of the most useful in enhancing subordinates' performance. Hence, according to Hersey and Blanchard's (1988) model, situational leadership theory has been influenced by creating a leadership style model that observes lesser situations by categorising leadership style into four major aspects: telling, selling, participating, and delegation. According to Suriyadi et al. (2020), the second factor is work motivation since

employee motivation is important in an organisation's development and will influence employees' productivity. Moreover, Armstrong and Michael (2006) stated that the performance and productivity of employees are determined by motivation. The combination of all internal and external elements that motivate a person to get involved in job tasks is called motivation.

Moreover, Armstrong and Michael (2006) stated that motivation includes work, accomplished achievements, opportunities for progress, other people's acknowledgement, and responsibility. Cohesiveness within the group is the third factor. There can be a cohesive situation in an organisation where employees and groups of employees have reasonably tight links and interactions. At the same time, there can also be a non-cohesive environment without close interaction between group members. Job satisfaction is the fourth factor; employee performance and satisfaction are related; the concrete term is that if employees are satisfied, they will be more motivated to execute their responsibilities and complete their work without being burdened since it is done sincerely. Flora (2019) stated that employing skilled employees with the right style of leadership can assist an organisation in operating efficiently and fostering harmony among its leaders and employees.

The NGOs providing health services in Afghanistan are characterised by many organisations facing many healthcare challenges. Therefore, many NGOs face financial restrictions and limitations, which reduce the provision of proper aid and cuts in funding, which impact operational activities and capabilities. As a result, they are struggling to maintain staff, provide essential services, and focus on job satisfaction's importance to increase the workforce.

The security situation in Afghanistan has a clear picture of significant risks to healthcare service providers. The improper and unstable situation against health service providers creates an environment of fear and uncertainty, which leads to decreased employee satisfaction and increased employee turnover. Therefore, by considering the role of employee performance in an organisation, paying attention to employee work satisfaction is one of the measures an organisation adopts to maintain and preserve its human resources through an efficient leadership style.

1.1 Problem Statement

Leaders who can adjust their leadership style – from directive to supportive – based on employee needs are more likely to enhance performance levels (Thompson & Glasø, 2022). Employee performance is a critical factor in the success of any organisation. High-performing employees contribute to increased productivity, better customer service, and higher profitability. Effective performance management ensures that employees' activities and outcomes align with the organisation's goals, leading to enhanced organisational performance and competitive advantage (Aguinis, 2019)

Job satisfaction is crucial in the workplace as it directly impacts employee performance, retention, and overall organisational success. High levels of job satisfaction are associated with increased productivity, reduced turnover, and enhanced employee morale (Judge & Klinger, 2008).

The crucial approach can be defined as a situational leadership style developed by Blanchard (1993). Psychologists presume that no leader has an optimal profile, and no leader has the same features as another. Hence, various situations should be managed in

various ways since every situation has its features (Ghazzawi et al., 2017). Further, the situational leadership model incorporates supportive and directive aspects, which are to be implemented wisely and correctly in a particular situation (Ghazzawi et al., 2017; Ridlwan et al., 2021). To accomplish a specific task, leaders under the situational leadership model must evaluate their employees' dedication to task accomplishment (Blancard, 1993; Thompson and Glasø, 2015).

Ghazzawi et al. (2017) state that situational leadership indicates that leaders have to switch their level of directness and supportiveness toward their employees by considering their subordinates' specific situations and degree of motivation. This kind of leadership requires that leaders modify their leadership style and behavior according to their employees' commitment. Moreover, Kindle (2009) emphasised situational leadership as the mixture of worker commitment, task behavior, and relation behavior. Various studies revealed that the success of this leadership style is associated with the combination of the above components; furthermore, it promotes openness among leaders and members, as well as competence and independence in employees' decisions (Ghazzawi et al., 2017). A situational leader aims to determine the characteristics or features of his or her followers to understand which leadership style is appropriate and functional to accomplish the goals (Farmer, 2012). Therefore, Farmer (2012) indicated that situational leaders are familiar with providing appropriate and efficient guidance and task assistance for their employees to ascertain the desired aims successfully. Leaders in this leadership style must also manage and handle issues innovatively and promptly to solve and overcome them, which is highly associated with employees' performance and productivity (Cnaff & Wright, 2013; Ghazzawi et al., 2017).

However, while existing research sheds light on the impact of situational leadership in specific organisational settings, there remains a critical gap in understanding its implications in alternative contexts, particularly within the health industry in Afghanistan. Despite the wealth of literature on leadership theories and practices, limited attention has been given to examining the effectiveness of situational leadership within Afghan healthcare organisations. This gap in the literature signifies a crucial need for further exploration to elucidate the role and significance of situational leadership style in enhancing employee performance and organisational outcomes within the unique dynamics of the healthcare sector in Afghanistan.

This study focuses on how a situational leadership style impacts employee performance. Multiple studies conducted by Rahadiyan et al. (2019), Ridlwan et al. (2021), and Thompson and Glasø (2015) to indicate the relationship between those factors discovered that situational leadership had a significant and positive impact on employee performance through job satisfaction in North Jakarta and development Companies in East Java Province, Indonesia.

Therefore, this study seeks to address the gap mentioned above by investigating the relevance and impact of situational leadership style in the health industry in Afghanistan. By examining the specific challenges and dynamics faced by healthcare organisations in Afghanistan, this research provides comprehensive insights into the effectiveness of situational leadership in this context. Through empirical investigation and analysis, this study aims to contribute valuable knowledge to the existing literature on leadership theories and practices, offering practical implications for healthcare leaders and policymakers striving to improve organisational performance and employee outcomes in Afghanistan's healthcare sector.

The focus on health sector NGOs in Afghanistan faces challenges, such as instability, resource limitations, and more critical situations for effective leadership. These challengeable factors clearly show how situational leadership influences job satisfaction and employee performance. Health sector NGOs are important in providing health services for social and economic adversity. Therefore, adaptive leadership is more important in influencing employee outcomes.

1.2 Literature Gap

Initially introduced by Hersey and Blanchard (1969), situational leadership theory has been extensively applied and studied in various organisational settings, primarily within for-profit organisations (Ghazzawi et al., 2017). Further, this adaptive leadership style describes the essence of leaders adjusting their behaviour according to situational variables like the capabilities and motivation of subordinates, the nature of tasks, and the overall environment to achieve organisational goals (Hersey et al., 2008). Academics have demonstrated the effectiveness of situational leadership styles in increasing organisational efficiency and employee performance in profit-oriented industries (Blanchard, 1993; Ghazzawi et al., 2017; Thompson & Glasø, 2015).

However, there remains a significant gap in the literature concerning the adaptation and applications of situational leadership styles within non-profit and health sector organisations (Belrhiti et al., 2018; Bull, 2010; Ghiasipour et al., 2017). Moreover, according to Drucker (2018), unlike their for-profit counterparts, non-profit organisations, including those in the health sector, face unique challenges such as resource constraints, diverse stakeholder expectations, and reliance on volunteer workforces. These organisations focus on mission-driven objectives rather than financial profitability, which may affect the applicability and efficacy of traditional situational leadership approaches (Bryson & Crosby, 2019; Drucker, 2018; Ghiasipour et al., 2017).

Furthermore, while much of the research has focused on the efficacy of situational leadership in profit-driven contexts, there is a limited exploration of how this leadership style can be adapted to address the specific needs and constraints of non-profit and health-sector organisations (Bull, 2010; Ghazzawi et al., 2017; Ridlwan et al., 2021). Hence, this gap highlights the essence of further investigation into how situational leadership can effectively enhance employee performance through satisfaction in these sectors.

Therefore, this study addresses this gap by analysing the relationship between situational leadership styles and employee performance and satisfaction within health organisations in Afghanistan. By examining how situational leadership can be adapted to fit the unique context of non-profit health organisations, this research seeks to provide valuable insights and strategies that support mission-driven outcomes and organisational sustainability.

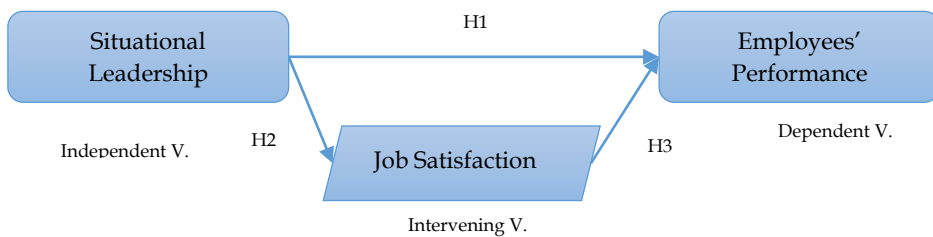
1.3 Significance of the Study

The current study will add to the literature in various domains. It will assist the decision-makers and managers in the health sector organisations and other governmental and non-governmental organisations in Afghanistan in considering the role of situational leadership style in employees' performance. Organisations should not undermine the importance and impact of leadership styles and non-monetary incentives on employees' performance.

Moreover, by exploring the role of this leadership style on employees' performance and satisfaction, this study aims to provide effective and actionable insights for improving organisational efficiency and effectiveness. Importantly, this becomes crucial in Afghanistan's unique economic and social-political context to apprehend how situational leadership styles such as directive, participative, supportive, and delegate influence employees' performance. As a result, this can significantly and positively contribute to the overall sustainability and resilience of the health sector organisations operating in Afghanistan, whose mission and goals are essential for the well-being of Afghan societies.

2. Conceptual Framework

Situational leadership is selected as an independent variable, 'job satisfaction' is determined as an intervening variable and employees' performance as a dependent variable.



2.1 Theoretical Background

2.1.1 Vroom's Expectancy Theory

Vroom's expectancy theory was formulated in 1964. This theoretical framework, linking Situational leadership theory with Vroom's Expectancy Theory, sets the stage for empirical research to further validate and explore these relationships, providing a comprehensive understanding of how adaptive leadership styles can drive organisational success. (Victor Vroom 1964) introduced his Expectancy Theory in 1964 to understand how people make decisions based on what they expect to achieve from their actions. At its core are three main ideas: Expectancy, Instrumentality, and Valence.

Expectancy is believing that effort will lead to achieving desired performance levels, influenced by self-confidence and clear goals. Instrumentality involves believing that good performance will result in valued outcomes shaped by trust in management and the transparency of the reward system. Valence reflects the personal value one places on the expected rewards, influenced by individual preferences and how relevant the rewards are to personal goals and values (Vroom, 1964). This theory is crucial in understanding both employee performance and job satisfaction. According to Vroom, motivation thrives when employees see a clear link between their efforts, the outcomes they achieve, and the rewards they receive. Employees with high expectancy, instrumentality, and valence are more motivated to perform well and feel satisfied. Practical applications of this theory include setting clear goals that employees believe they can achieve, establishing fair reward systems that link performance to meaningful rewards, and ensuring these rewards align with employees' values and goals (Isaac, Zerbe, & Pitt, 2001; Scholl, 2002).

Focusing on these aspects, organisations can create an environment where employees feel motivated to excel and are satisfied with their work (Vroom, 1964; Isaac, Zerbe, & Pitt, 2001; Scholl, 2002). Ultimately, Vroom's Expectancy Theory provides valuable insights into enhancing performance and job satisfaction within a workplace setting (Vroom, 1964; Isaac, Zerbe, & Pitt, 2001; Scholl, 2002). In this research study, using Vroom's expectancy theory to investigate the relationship between the dependent and independent variables with mediating roles is significant.

2.2 Situational Leadership and Employee Performance

Literature depicts the impact of situational leadership on Employee performance and productivity, which was significantly important for achieving organisational goals. In this regard, Rahadiyan et al. (2019) declared that situational leadership style plays a strong positive role in employees' performance. The presence of efficient and precise direction and comprehension can positively affect employees' performance (Ferdianto et al., 2019).

Rahadiyan et al. (2019) examined and found that situational leadership had a significant and positive effect on performance; hence, the study revealed that good leadership can increase and develop employees' performance. Moreover, Thompson and Glasø (2015) tested situational leadership theory on three prospects and revealed that performance had a positive and very significant relationship with the support of a leader. Therefore, according to Rahadiyan et al. (2019), workers with appropriate work experience and in line with the leader's direction can perform more effectively on the job compared to those who have the same level of experience but are not by the leader's direction. Hence, efficient and appropriate leadership will enhance employees' performance.

The concept of situational leadership, which posits that successful leaders modify their approach according to their employees' skill and commitment levels, has been extensively researched concerning employee performance. According to Hersey and Blanchard, those leaders who are capable of managing their leadership style with the environment and adjusting themselves from directing to supporting their organisational situation and the challenges the organisation facing, these leaders are always supporting their employees to motivating them properly and enhancing their performance levels (Thomson & Glaso, 2022). Recent studies show that situational leadership enhances employee performance through their leadership style with the situation for their needs and motivation (Nguyen & Tran, 2024).

Most of the researchers pointed out that Situational leadership enhances employee performance. According to Chen et al. (2023), leaders who can adapt to the situation and adapt leadership style for their employees' developmental stages also improve employees' skills and enable them to make decisions where needed to solve critical problems. Their adaptability style can help their employee's performance and support them with better organisational outcomes (Liu et al., 2022).

Additionally, situational leadership supports employees by guiding them and giving them the right direction for better performance (Zhao, 2023). This approach can motivate employees to make better decisions in completing tasks properly and support them in their responsibilities, improving their performance. This leadership style does not allow employees to leave the track and direction, and it always supports their decisions and core competency with better performance (Kim & Choi, 2023).

The literature consistently emphasises that the flexibility inherent in situational leadership is crucial for enhancing employee performance across different organisational contexts. Leaders who successfully adapt their style to the specific demands of varying situations can effectively manage their teams, leading to better performance metrics, including productivity, quality of work, and overall job effectiveness (Miller & Smith, 2022). This adaptability addresses employees' immediate needs and fosters a long-term culture of performance excellence within organisations.

H₁: Situational leadership has a significant positive impact on employee performance in the case of health-sector organisations.

2.3 Situational Leadership and Job Satisfaction

The effect and role of a leader are imminent and essential in obtaining an organisational goal by enhancing the performance of employees and ensuring their job satisfaction (Ridlwani et al., 2021). In this regard, the level of employee job satisfaction may differ from individual to individual, job to job, place to place, and organisation to organisation (Ridlwani et al., 2021). A recent study by Santhiyavalli and Shyji (2014) found that situational leadership style significantly and positively impacted job satisfaction. Consequently, in another study, Setyorini et al. (2018) demonstrated that situational leadership positively impacts job satisfaction by encouraging exemplary employees.

Literature shows that situational leadership positively and significantly impacts job satisfaction. Their positive relationship is based on the results of Tariq and Parveen (2014); according to them, situational leadership has a positive and significant impact on job satisfaction. The leader's presence for subordinates and followers enhances employee job satisfaction (Ridlwani et al., 2021).

Situational leadership focuses on leader style and adaptability for organisational needs and development stages for the situational environment and employees, positively impacting job satisfaction. According to Harshey and Blanchard (2023), those leaders who can adjust their leadership approach are always more directive and supportive of their employees based on their situational performance and readiness for their employees as well as their employee readiness can significantly enhance job satisfaction (Thompson and Glaso, 2022). Recent studies show that situational leadership can enhance job satisfaction and also bring positive changes in the organisation, and make employee work valued, supportive and motivates employees (Nguyen & Tran, 2024)

Empirical studies suggest that when leaders tailor their behaviour to match their employees' needs, it improves job satisfaction by aligning leadership support with employee expectations. For instance, Zhao (2023) found that employees who perceive their leaders as adaptable and responsive to their individual needs report significantly higher job satisfaction. This is attributed to situational leadership promoting a more personalised approach, where employees receive the appropriate guidance and autonomy depending on their readiness and confidence levels, resulting in a more satisfying work experience (Liu et al., 2022).

According to the situation, the leader's adaptive nature always allows the leader to meet the needs of the employees in the organisation, and it can engage their employees to maintain and give their best to the organisation and always feel supported. This adaptive nature of the leader is constantly maintaining job satisfaction; it also decreases the amount of disengagement and frustration, which can arise from misunderstanding and

mismatching of leadership style (Kim & Choi, 2023). When employees feel supported and understand their leader's leadership style, it maintains their job satisfaction and motivation and improves their working skills.

Most of the literature indicates that situational leadership influences and positively impacts job satisfaction by providing a unique working environment, which can improve the employee's work capability and fulfilling the needs of their employees. Leaders who adopt leadership styles according to the situation always have a positive and supportive work environment, which not only increases job satisfaction but also provides a better work environment and contributes to organisational success (Chen et al., 2023)

H₂: Situational leadership has a positive impact on job satisfaction in the case of Health-Sector Organizations.

2.4 Job Satisfaction and Employee Performance

Job satisfaction is where employees feel supported, which is a key factor in enhancing employee performance. Various studies indicate a positive relationship between Job satisfaction and employee performance. When employees feel high Job satisfaction, they find themselves more supportive, experienced, and well-organised, which helps them work better and succeed in every situation (Judge & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2023). Most studies indicate that employees always do their best for their careers and have better outcomes for the organisation in fulfilling their tasks, which helps them in productivity, creativity, and maintaining a positive work environment. Therefore, this overall situation provides better performance (Liu et al., 2022).

Recent studies have explored the significance of job satisfaction on employee performance. Zhao (2023) highlights that job satisfaction influences mental stability and reduces work stress, allowing employees to focus on their organisational goals and effectively do their tasks. This improvement in psychological well-being directly enhances productivity and creativity in work. Employee satisfaction involves engaging employees in their working environment, motivating them for better performance, and positively forming relationships with other employees (Nguyen & Tran, 2024).

Job satisfaction is linked with lower turnover intentions, a crucial performance aspect. Employees who are satisfied with their jobs always perform better, resulting in stability and engaging themselves with their teams (Miller & Smith, 2022). This stability is a long-term thought of the team with helping nature among them and for their better performance. High job satisfaction directly impacts employee loyalty to organisational activities and a stronger commitment to organisational goals, which leads to long-term achievements and improved performance (Kim & Choi, 2023).

The consistent findings across the literature emphasise that job satisfaction is not just a desirable outcome but a key driver of employee performance. Organisations that prioritise enhancing job satisfaction through supportive leadership, fair compensation, and a positive work environment are likely to see significant improvements in employee performance, which can translate into better overall organisational effectiveness (Chen et al., 2023). Ismail Hajiali et al. (2022) examined how a leader's decision improves a person's core competency, boosts their skills to bring change, and shows better results in their basic duties and responsibilities to realise job satisfaction. These competencies improve employee performance, having positive and significant results.

Based on their research, Jahn Rodrigo et al. (2022) stated that job satisfaction positively and significantly impacts employee performance. Further, Dugguh and Dennis (2019) argue that Vroom (1974) had previously discovered that employee performance directly results from meeting the needs of employees within the organisation. Companies that can ensure the happiness of their employees tend to have a more productive workforce. The theory that a content worker is a more efficient employee remains inconclusive due to conflicting perspectives from various empirical studies on the correlation between job satisfaction and employee performance (Strauss C 1968). Furthermore, numerous scholars such as (Zoughaib A, El Achi S, El Dirani A, and Hejase HJ 2021) have emphasised that employees with high levels of psychological well-being and job satisfaction tend to perform better and are less likely to quit their jobs.

According to Ismail Hajiali et al. (2022), Donald's competence window theory is the most relevant to apply, as it ensures a positive and substantial impact of competence on the workforce. Key elements of competence, such as knowledge, skills, experience, and mastery attitudes, are essential for every employee. Employees can effectively fulfil their roles with these elements, leading to job satisfaction. This satisfaction encompasses the pursuit of engaging work, enjoyment of challenges, pride in performance, appropriate compensation, and opportunities for advancement.

H₃: Job satisfaction has a positive significant impact on employees' performance in the case of Health-Sector Organizations.

2.5 Job Satisfaction as a Mediating Variable

Mediation involves a process where a third variable, called a mediator, explains the connection between an independent variable (IV) and a dependent variable (DV). The mediator serves as an intervening variable that reveals how or why the independent variable impacts the dependent variable. Mediation helps elucidate the mechanism through which one variable affects another. For example, in a study examining leadership and employee performance, job satisfaction might mediate if leadership style influences job satisfaction, affecting employee performance. Researchers can better understand the underlying dynamics between the investigated variables by identifying the mediator's role.

2.6 Preacher and Andrew F. Hayes' Approach

Building on the work of Baron and Kenny, Kristopher Preacher and Andrew F. Hayes refined mediation analysis, presenting more advanced statistical techniques. They introduced the basic concept of bootstrapping to give estimates of mediation effects with more accuracy, especially in small samples where traditional methods are not very beneficial. Hayes also described the PROCESS macro, a famous tool used in statistical software like SPSS, and how it allows researchers to frame more complex relationships. SPSS enables the analysis of multiple mediators simultaneously (multiple mediation) or examines whether the strength of the mediation effect is influenced by another variable (moderated mediation).

Recent studies indicate that job satisfaction is a key mediator and that situational leadership can significantly enhance employee performance. According to Chen and Silverthorne (2022), employees who find that their leaders are adapting leadership style according to the situation are developing their job satisfaction, which results in better

performance and increased organisational positive behaviour. Job satisfaction increases employee productivity and organisational effectiveness (Liu et al., 2022).

Andrew F. Hayes model is applied, generally known for its mediation and moderation analysis approach. Andrew Hayes model provides a framework for how variables interact when one variable indirectly affects another. This model is helpful for studies detailing how job satisfaction mediates the relationship between situational leadership and employee performance. By this model, the researcher is investigating the result of the variables relationship in health sector NGOs in Afghanistan.

H₄: Job satisfaction mediates the relationship between situational leadership and employee performance.

3. Research Methodology

The research methodology for this study employs a quantitative approach with a deductive methodological and theoretical framework. Data is collected through structured surveys administered to employees working in the health industry in Afghanistan. The survey instrument measures situational leadership styles, employee performance, and job satisfaction variables. A representative sample of participants is selected, and data analysis involves statistical techniques such as correlation analysis and regression analysis to examine the relationships between different leadership styles and dimensions of employee performance. Overall, this methodology aims to provide empirical evidence on the impact of situational leadership on employee performance in the healthcare sector, informing evidence-based practices and organisational strategies. The primary data is collected based on the pre-designed questionnaires. As a result, the questionnaires are distributed to the non-profit and non-government organisations in the Health Sector. Their responses are put in the SPSS program to analyse their responses free of biases.

3.1 Unit of Analysis

The cross-sectional research design aims to collect data at a specific time to examine relationships between variables. A quantitative survey method is employed to gather numerical data regarding situational leadership styles and their impact on employee performance and job satisfaction in the health sector of non-profit and non-government organisations in Afghanistan. The unit of analysis is the employees of the non-profit and non-government organisations. Thus, the questionnaires are distributed to the relevant organisations.

3.2 Population and Sample of the Study

The population in this study encompasses five organisations for their significant and diverse contribution to public health sector humanitarian and development efforts in Afghanistan: Organization for Health Promotion and Management (OHPM). The population of interest includes all individuals affiliated with OHPM, totalling 5400 members. Agency for Assistance and Development of Afghanistan (ADAA) comprises 3201 individuals actively engaged in assistance and development initiatives. Afghan Family Guidance Association (AFGA), The study includes 402 members associated with AFGA, focusing on family guidance and support services. The Aga Khan Foundation (AKF), with a membership of 8023 individuals, is pivotal in promoting sustainable development and social welfare. Relief Humanitarian and Development Organization

(RHDO), The population under consideration consists of 487 individuals contributing to relief efforts and humanitarian projects.

Following the Sample size Calculator sampling method and aiming for a 5% Confident interval to ensure statistical reliability, the sample sizes for the organisations are taken from the Table from 17,513 population, and the sample size is 376. Hence, 376 respondents were taken from the population for this study.

3.3 Sampling Method

For this study, the author used convenience sampling to recruit participants from various non-profit and non-government organisations in the health sector. This approach allowed us to gather data from employees who are easily accessible and willing to participate.

Moreover, each organisation received a list of the population from which data is selected and collected based on the convenience form from those more relevant to the research. In addition, the responses of these participants are measured using the most widely known scaling approach, the Likert scale, for this research study.

3.4 Instrumentation and Operationalisation of the Study

This study utilises a Likert scaling questionnaire derived from previous literature to maintain study reliability and validity (Blancard, 1993; Faisal & Nugroho, 2022; Ghazzawi et al., 2017; Northouse, 2018; Thompson & Glasø, 2015; Rahadiyan et al., 2019; Yukl, 2012). Furthermore, the questionnaire aims to measure and operationalise variables, concentrating on analysing the impact of situational leadership styles on both job performance and job satisfaction, focusing on how job satisfaction mediates the relationship between leadership and performance. Table 1. demonstrates the variables' instrumentation and operationalisation.

Table 1

Variables Instrumentation and Operationalisation

Variable	Variable Nature	Measure	Indicator	Category of Data
Situational Leadership Styles	Independent Variable	5 Likert Scale (Blancard, 1993; Ghazzawi et al., 2017; Thompson & Glasø, 2015)	Supervisor's leadership style during a recent project	Behavioural, Ordinal
Job Performance	Dependent Variable	5 Likert Scale (Blancard, 1993; Faisal & Nugroho, 2022; Ghazzawi et al., 2017)	Employee's self-rating of performance in the projects	Behavioural, Ordinal
Job Satisfaction	Mediating Variable	5 Likert Scale (Ghazzawi et al., 2017; Northouse, 2018; Yukl, 2012)	Employee's satisfaction with current role and work environment	Attitudinal, Ordinal

Source: Created by the authors

Moreover, the questionnaire was formulated and designed to analyse perceptions of leadership adaptability, supportiveness, and clarity of communication among employees. By operationalising these aspects, the study aims to discover how situational

leadership influences employees' productivity and satisfaction, ultimately contributing to organisational well-being and effectiveness in the health sector.

3.5 Data Collection Procedure

This study used the structured questionnaire from the previous literature review to analyse the impact of situational leadership styles through job satisfaction on job performance. Further, a Likert scaling questionnaire was administered via Google Forms, and responses were collected from the organisations mentioned above in the health sector. Participants in the survey have rated their perceptions of leadership adaptability in projects and satisfaction with their current job roles and assess themselves on a scale from 1 (Agree), 2 (Strongly Agree), 3 (Neither agree nor disagree), 4 (Disagree), to 5 (Strongly disagree).

3.6 Reliability and Validity of the Study

This study ensured the reliability and validity of its findings by utilising rigorous statistical analysis utilising SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). The reliability analysis examines the internal consistency of the Likert scale factors, designed to measure situational leadership adaptability, job satisfaction, and job performance. Further, in the case of validity, the validity analysis is carried out by analysing correlations between these constructs to ensure the questionnaire's ability to analyse the mentioned variables accurately.

The study upholds methodological robustness by utilising SPSS 25 software for data analysis. It improves the credibility and efficiency of its conclusion concerning the impact of situational leadership impact on employees' performance through satisfaction.

3.7 Data Analysis Method

Andrew Haize (2008) highlights the crucial role of employing strong analytical methods and staying objective to ensure that research findings are reliable and valid. He also stresses the importance of being critical and reflective during the analysis process to question assumptions and improve the overall quality of the research.

This study utilised regression analysis to measure the relationships between situational leadership and job satisfaction and job performance based on gathered data, which was administrated via Google Forms. Moreover, regression models are used to explore and measure how variations in situational leadership adaptability (independent variable) predict levels of job satisfaction (intervening variable) and subsequently influence self-reported job performance (dependent variable).

4. Findings and Analysis

4.1 Responses Rate

For the current study, the selected sample is 376 respondents, calculated through a sample size calculator from the population of the selected NGOs. The scholar received these responses from 376 respondents physically and online through Google Forms.

4.2 Gender

As shown in Table 2 below, there are 376 female and male respondents. However, the percentage of females is smaller compared to males, but still, nowadays, women in the

economy of Afghanistan have a significant contribution. For instance, in this survey, their contribution is very much sensible. In this survey, we have 307 responses from males, which comprise 81.6% of the total respondents, and 69 responses are from females, which is 18.4%.

Table 2

Gender of the Respondents Statistics

		Frequency	Per cent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	307	81.6	81.6	81.6.0
	Female	69	18.4	18.4	100.0
	Total	376	100.0	100.0	

Source: Created by the author

4.3 Age of the respondents

As shown below in Table 3, of the 376 respondents, the majority are between the ages of 21 and 30, which is 49.7%. There are 42.6% of respondents between the ages of 31 to 40 and above, which is the least respondents, having a percentage of 7.7%.

Table 3

Age of the Respondents

		Frequency	Per cent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	21-30	187	49.7	49.7	49.7
	31-40	160	42.6	42.6	92.3
	41 and above	29	7.7	7.7	100.0
	Total	376	100.0	100.0	

Source: Created by the authors

It indicates that we have more of the young generation graduating with a high level of education, which shows a better result for the upcoming future of an organisation and better future of a nation.

4.4 Education level of the respondents

As shown in Table 4, most of the respondents graduated and have bachelor's degrees, consisting of 318 or 84.6% of valid frequency, and the remaining respondents graduated in Master's with a smaller number of frequency and consisted of 58 respondents with the percentage of 15.4% from the total respondents.

Table 4

Education level of the respondents

		Frequency	Per cent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Bachelor's	318	84.6	84.6	84.6
	Master's	58	15.4	15.4	100.0
	Total	376	100.0	100.0	

Source: Created by the authors

This indicates that, overall, respondents are graduates, with the graduated respondents having more frequency of bachelor's respondents than masters. An organisation needs highly educated employees for a better future and outcomes.

4.5. Data Reliability

Data reliability shows the strength or consistency of a measure (National Academy of Sciences, 2015). Hence, a test is considered reliable if we get the same result frequently.

According to Table 5, Cronbach's Alpha shows the internal consistency of the equipment used to measure the components of situational leadership, employee performance, and job satisfaction. Cronbach's Alpha is a statistical tool indicating the components' reliability as a group. The Cronbach's Alpha of Situational Leadership is 57.6%, which shows a moderate level of internal consistency among the components in this scale. The Cronbach's Alpha is slightly higher than 63.9%, which shows a better result but still moderate internal consistency. Job Satisfaction shows a Cronbach's Alpha of 56%, which is most similar to Situational Leadership and shows moderate internal consistency. When all 15 questions from these three components are combined, the total Cronbach's Alpha is increased to 76.9%, which shows better internal consistency for the overall components and is considered acceptable. These findings show that each individual shows moderate reliability, while the combined components show better and stronger reliability.

Table 5
Data Reliability

Variable	Questions	Cronbach's Alpha Level
Situational Leadership	5	57.6%
Employee Performance	5	63.9%
Job Satisfaction	5	56.0%
Total	15	76.9%

Source: Created by the authors

4.6 Descriptive statistics

Descriptive Statistics is a summary statistic that quantitatively explains or sums up the characteristics of gathered information meaningfully (Mann & Prem S,1995). Hence, we have analysed descriptive statistics for our data for the following variables (Situational Leadership, Employee Performance, Job Satisfaction). For a better understanding, we have found their range, means, std. Deviation, skewness and kurtosis data which are described in the following Table:

Table 6
Descriptive Statistics

	N	Range	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev	Variance	Skewness	Kurtosis
Situational Leadership	376	1.40	3.60	5.00	4.575	0.3336	0.111	-0.792	-0.048
Employee Performance	376	1.20	3.80	5.00	4.529	0.3518	0.124	-0.378	-1.073
Job Satisfaction	376	2.00	3.00	5.00	4.594	0.3242	0.105	-1.330	3.722

Source: Created by the authors

Table 6 shows the descriptive statistics for Situational Leadership, Employee Performance and Job Satisfaction based on a sample size of 376 respondents. For these three variables, the range is relatively small, which shows that the responses are clustered toward the higher end of the scales. All the minimum values of the three components are around 3.00, and the maximum value for all components is 5.00.

The mean value for Situational Leadership is 4.575, Employee Performance is 4.529, and Job Satisfaction is 4.594, which shows that all respondents have high average responses, indicating that respondents rated these variables positively. The standard deviations are relatively small, which indicates that most of the responses were close to the mean; it shows little variation in the data.

The skewness values are negative for all components, which shows that the distribution is skewed to the left; it indicates that more respondents gave higher ratings. Specifically, Job Satisfaction has the highest skewness (-1.330), which suggests the stronger left skew, with most respondents rated towards the high end. The kurtosis for Job Satisfaction is 3.722, which indicates a peaked distribution. More values are collected around the mean than a normal distribution.

The overall results show that these respondents normally rated Situational Leadership, Employee Performance, and Job Satisfaction, showing little variation in their responses. This data is slightly skewed on higher ratings; most respondents responded positively.

4.7 Correlation Analysis

The validity test shows how well a tool is created for measuring the concept deliberated to measure. Also, according to Umma Sekaran and Bougie (2016, P.220), “*validity is concerned with whether we measure the right concept*”. Hence, according to our study, we have used the construct validity type, which shows the dependency of a measure or a variable of existing theory and knowledge for a particular concept or problem under study. The SPSS software generates our data validity (Person correlation coefficient) in the following Table:

Table 7
Correlation Analysis

Correlation Analysis				
		SL	EP	JS
SL	Pearson Correlation	1	.413**	.395**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
	N	376	376	376
EP	Pearson Correlation	.413**	1	.483**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
	N	376	376	376
JS	Pearson Correlation	.395**	.483**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	376	376	376

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

Source: Created by the authors

According to the above Table, the correlation of Situational Leadership (SL) with itself is (1), showing there is a perfect positive linear relationship and Situational Leadership (SL) with Employee Satisfaction (ES) shows a correlation value of (.413) that show a moderate positive relationship and significant value of (.000) less than (0.05) which is significant. Situational Leadership (SL) with Job Satisfaction (JS) has a correlation value of (.395), which shows a moderate positive relationship and a significant value of (.000) less than (0.05), which is significant.

Employee Performance (EP) has a correlation value of (1) that shows a perfect positive relationship. Employee Performance (EP) with Situational Leadership (SL) shows a correlation value of (.413), which shows a moderate positive relationship and a significant value of (.000) less than (0.05), which is significant. Employee Performance (EP) with Job Satisfaction (JS) has a significant value of (.483), shows a moderate positive relationship, and a significant value of (.000) less than (0.05), which is significant.

Job Satisfaction (JS) with itself has a correlation value of (1), shows a perfect positive linear relationship, and Job Satisfaction (JS) with Situational Leadership (SL) has a correlation value of (.395), shows a moderate positive relationship and significant value of (.000) which is less than (0.05) it is statistically significant. Job Satisfaction (JS) with Employee Performance (EP) has a correlation value of (.483), which shows a moderate positive relationship and a significant value of (.000) less than (0.05), which is significant.

4.8. Mediating Analysis

4.8.1 Total, Direct, and Indirect Effects of X on Y

According to Andrew F. Hayes (2008), the indirect effect of X on Y should be checked to check whether a mediation relationship exists among variables. Here, X is Situational Leadership, the independent variable, and Y is Employee Performance, the dependent variable. In the Table, the Indirect effect(s) of X on Y, the value of the Lower Limit Confidence Interval (BootLLCI) is .0987, and the value of the Upper Limit Confidence Interval (BootULCI) is .2223 since there is no zero, it indicates that there is a mediating relationship among variables.

Model: 4

X (Independent Variable): Situational Leadership (SL)

M (Mediator): Job Satisfaction (JS)

Y (Dependent Variable): Employee Performance (EP)

Sample: Size: 376

Total effect of X on Y

Effect	se	T	p	LLCI	ULCI
.4355	.0497	8.7675	.0000	.3378	.8226

Direct effect of X on Y

Effect	se	T	p	LLCI	ULCI
.2775	.0500	5.5474	.0000	.1791	.3758

Indirect effect(s) of X on Y:

	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
Job Satisfaction	.1580	.0320	.0987	.2223

Source: Created by the authors

4.8.2 OUTCOME VARIABLE: Job Satisfaction (JS)

Table 9
Model Summary

R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
0.395	0.156	0.089	69.1347	1	374	0
Model						
	Coeff	Se	T	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	2.8371	0.2118	13.3941	0	2.2406	3.2536
SL	0.3839	0.0462	8.3147	0	0.2931	0.4747

Source: Created by the authors

Table 9 shows the relationship between Situational Leadership (SL) and Job Satisfaction (JS). The model summary shows a 15.60% variance in job satisfaction; its R-squared value is 0.1560. This model is statistically significant. Its p-value is less than 0.001, which shows that Situational Leadership significantly influences Job Satisfaction.

The above results show that the coefficient value for Situational Leadership is 0.3839, with a standard error of 0.0462, and it is statistically significant ($p < 0.001$). This shows that for every one-unit of situational leadership increase, the average base of 0.3839 units of job satisfaction. The Lower Limit Confident Interval is 0.2931, and the Upper Limit Confident Interval is 0.4747; zero is not included in both.

This analysis shows a better connection between situational leadership and higher employee job satisfaction; this relationship is strong and statistically significant.

4.8.3 OUTCOME VARIABLE: Employee Performance (EP)

Table 10
Model Summary

R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
.5403	.2919	.0881	76.8827	2.0000	373.0000	.0000
Model						
	Coeff	se	T	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	1.3689	.2564	5.3391	.0000	.8648	1.8731
SL	.2775	.0500	5.5474	.0000	.1791	.3758
JS	.4115	.0515	7.9973	.0000	.3103	.5127

Source: Created by the authors

Table 10 indicates the combined effects of Situational Leadership and Job Satisfaction on Employee Performance. This model shows 29.19% of the variance in Employee Performance, which comes from the R-squared values of 0.2919, which is statistically significant, with a Significant value (p-value) of less than 0.001, which points out both components, Situational Leadership and Job Satisfaction together significantly influence Employee Performance.

The coefficient value of Situational Leadership is 0.2775, which shows that if there is an increase in one unit of Situational Leadership, Employee Performance will increase by 0.2775 units. Its significant value (p-value) is less than 0.001, showing that it is statistically significant.

Job satisfaction has a coefficient value of 0.4115, which indicates that if there is an increase in one-unit of Job Satisfaction result, Employee Performance will increase by 0.4115 units

with holding Situational Leadership constant and having a significant value less than 0.001, which shows a strong and significant impact of Job Satisfaction on Employee Performance.

The constant value of this model is 1.3689, which shows that the baseline level of Employee Satisfaction with both components Situational Leadership and Job Satisfaction are at zero.

This model provides results about all components and shows that both Situational Leadership and Job Satisfaction are essential components or predictors of Employee Performance, with Job Satisfaction having a slightly stronger influence. Bringing improvement in leadership according to the situation and enhancing job satisfaction leads to better employee performance.

TOTAL EFFECT MODEL

4.8.4 OUTCOME VARIABLE: Employee Performance (EP)

Table 11

Model Summary

R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
.4129	.1705	.1029	76.8697	1.0000	374.0000	.0000
Model						
	Coeff	se	T	p	LLCI	ULCI
constant	2.5364	.2278	11.1328	.0000	2.0884	2.9844
SL	.4355	.0497	8.7675	.0000	.3378	.5331

Source: Created by the authors

Table 11 focuses on the direct relationship between Situational Leadership and Employee Performance, which shows a 17.05% variance in Employee Satisfaction, where the value of R-square is 0.1705, and its significant value (p-value) is less than 0.001, which indicates that Situational Leadership is a significant predictor of Employee Performance.

The constant value in the given model is 2.5364, which shows the baseline level of Employee Performance when Situational Leadership is at zero.

The coefficient value of Situational Leadership is 0.4355, which means that for every unit, an increase in Situational Leadership will increase Employee Performance by approximately 0.44 units. The significant value (p-value) of the direct impact of Situational Leadership on Employee Satisfaction is less than 0.001, which means that it is statistically significant, and the confident interval value is between 0.3378 and 0.5331, which confirms the reliability of this finding.

This analysis shows that Situational Leadership has a strong and significant positive impact on Employee Satisfaction. It shows that improvement in leadership is leading to better performance among employees.

4.9 Hypothesis Testing

Table No. 12 shows that all the significant values are less than 0.05, which shows that all of them are significant. The analysis shows that all the current research hypotheses are accepted, which means that the relationship between variables exists as stated in the hypothesis.

Table 12

S.N	Hypothesis	Status
1	H1: Situational leadership has a positive significant impact on employee performance. (P = .000) => (P < .005)	Accepted
2	H2: Situational leadership has a positive impact on job satisfaction. (P = .000) => (P < .005)	Accepted
3	H3: Job satisfaction has a positive significant impact on employees' performance. (P = .000) => (P < .005)	Accepted
4	H4: Job Satisfaction as Mediator between Situational Leadership and Employee Performance	Accepted

Source: Created by the authors

The above Table shows that the P = .000 for Situational Leadership is positively associated with the Employee Performance hypothesis, which means that the P value is less than 0.005. It is accepted by many studies that have shown a positive relationship between these two variables because if there were no situational leadership, then there would be no better employee performance in an organisation.

The second hypothesis shows that the P value of .000 for Situational leadership has a positive relationship with Job Satisfaction, which is also less than .005, which shows the acceptance of the hypothesis. This means that situational leadership significantly and positively impacts job satisfaction.

The third hypothesis shows that the P value of .000 for Job Satisfaction and Employee Performance have a positive relationship where the P value is less than .005, which also shows that this hypothesis has been accepted. This means that job satisfaction is a part of the motivation of an organisation. Whenever there is motivation and job satisfaction for employees of an organisation, it will also improve the Employee performance.

The fourth hypothesis, in which Job Satisfaction plays a mediating role between Situational leadership and Employee performance, is also accepted because the BootLLCI=.0987 and BootULCI=.2223 and both values are greater than zero, according to the Preacher and Hayes method of 2008, it indicates that Job satisfaction plays as a mediating role between the Situational Leadership and Employee Performance in an organisation.

(BootLLCI = .0987 and BootULCI = .2223) => (BootLLCI > 0) and (BootULCI > 0). This means the Lower Limit Confidence Interval (BootLLCI) and Upper Limit Confidence Interval (BootULCI) are greater than zero.

5. Conclusion and Recommendation

5.1 Conclusion

Situational Leadership positively impacts Employee Performance directly and indirectly through Job Satisfaction. Job Satisfaction mediates the relationship between Situational Leadership and Employee Performance, meaning that part of the influence of Situational Leadership on Employee Performance operates through its effect on Job Satisfaction. The direct effect of Situational Leadership on Employee Performance is reduced when Job Satisfaction is included in the model, indicating partial mediation. This suggests that improving Job Satisfaction is a key mechanism through which Situational Leadership enhances Employee Performance. Therefore, leaders should focus on leadership strategies and enhancing job satisfaction to maximise employee performance.

The current study found that situational leadership, where leaders adjust themselves according to the situation for their employees' needs and capabilities, can boost employee job satisfaction and performance. Employees who are satisfied with their jobs are mostly motivated and productive, improving their core competency and management skills to handle the challenging environment. This study indicates how job satisfaction mediates the relationship between situational leadership and employee performance, which shows the value and benefits of adaptive leadership, which is applied when there is a critical situation to handle and boost employee satisfaction and productivity with their better performance in Afghanistan health sector NGOs, where leaders and employees are playing a key role with providing health services.

This research found that employees with high job satisfaction are always motivated and focusing on their goals with productive and critical thinking, which leads them to better performance and achieving organisational success according to the situation and leaders' adaptive leadership styles to maintain a positive atmosphere, especially in Afghanistan health sector NGOs.

5.2 Discussion

The study describes the relationship between situational leadership, employee performance, and job satisfaction in Afghanistan health sector NGOs. These organisations are facing a critical and challengeable situation, where strong leadership is desirable and maintains the employee's better performance and job satisfaction. This research shows that situational leadership, where adaptive leadership styles are maintained to adjust according to employees' needs and support them in critical situations, plays a key role in improving employee performance and job satisfaction. This flexibility supports leaders in maintaining the environment positively and making decisions in critical situations, which plays a pivotal role in Afghanistan's unstable and demanding atmosphere.

This study further points out job satisfaction's role in boosting employee performance. More satisfied employees become more dedicated, motivated, and productive and participate in the organisation's success. In Afghanistan's health sector, where the environment is more challenging, and the resources are limited, supportive leadership shows that job satisfaction can provide better results for the work environment and population. The positive relationship between Job satisfaction and employee performance indicates that NGOs should focus on a creative work environment, which helps with their employees' professional and personal needs.

This research also reveals that job satisfaction is key to situational leadership and employee performance. This critical research points out that effective, challengeable leadership is required when job satisfaction is high. NGOs in Afghanistan's health sector should not only focus on leadership styles but also need to improve job satisfaction. These steps are beneficial in making a flexible and productive health service provision in Afghanistan NGOs.

The influence and the effectiveness of situational leadership in the health sector of Afghanistan play a vital role because of the continuous fluctuations due to changes in government setups and policies. The cultural aspect and the individual aspects of the society support the improvement in the health sector because the availability and improvement will provide easy and smooth access to the people regarding the health facilities. However, health benefits are the most expensive, primary, and essential

resources for Afghanistan's community's health requirements. Most people go to different neighbouring countries for better health facilities, which makes its cost unbearable and other hurdles they face during this process. The impact of situational leadership, its importance, and the actual benefits will provide support, confidence, and mental satisfaction when working with managers who will bring enormous changes because of these skilful leadership styles. If provided with support and job satisfaction, the personnel will increase the input of further skilful doctors and technicians from within and outside the country. This will further improve working conditions and have a lasting effect on the country's health sector.

The implications of bridging the gap between theory and practice are well understood because there is a need to conduct extensive research on the overall health sectors from scratch to the end. It is the age of continuous improvement, and Afghanistan's health sector is emerging, where various models and ideas are being studied to make it the best fit for the people and overall economy. Research and development are the means, not the end, to fill the gaps in the sector. Universities are the central hub of research and development in society. The policy recommendations provide quality input for policymakers. The overall effort of the current study is to narrow this gap and provide policy recommendations regarding situational leadership and employee satisfaction, which will further improve the health sector in the country. Although this is a small effort and extensive research is needed to bring further areas under study, the current study also significantly contributes to society.

This study indicates that both Situational leadership and job satisfaction are helping to improve employee performance in Afghanistan health sector NGOs. These findings show that organisations with growing employees and leaders with an adaptive nature can create a supportive work environment and achieve their organisational goals by providing better health services to Afghan residents. These NGOs have always been in a critical and challenging environment, and to address these situations, they play a pivotal role in maintaining their impact and improving the atmosphere for their employees and the communities they serve.

5.3 Recommendations

Several recommendations can be made to boost organisational effectiveness and employee health based on the study's findings related to the effects of Situational Leadership on employee performance and job satisfaction in Afghanistan health sector NGOs. Leaders of the NGOs should adopt a Situational Leadership approach. Employee performance can be significantly improved by adjusting leadership style to fulfil the employee's unique needs and level of commitment and improve their skills. Considering the challenging environment in Afghanistan where staff face many economic, social and security problems, leadership adaptability is compulsory. Arranging leadership training focusing on situational awareness and flexibility can equip leaders with the abilities or skills necessary to assess and fulfil their team's needs effectively and efficiently.

Another critical focus area is improving job satisfaction. NGOs should maintain a supportive work environment that meets employees' professional and personal needs. It includes offering mental well-being services, promoting an atmosphere that aids a healthy work-life balance and introducing programs that recognise and reward employee contributions. Taking feedback daily where employees can independently express their needs, concerns and give suggestions can increase their confidence of ownership and

satisfaction with the organisation. NGOs should invest in the continuous professional development of their staff members. Organisations can increase personal growth by providing opportunities to their employees to develop technical and leadership skills that increase job satisfaction and better performance. Introducing a reward system that formally acknowledges employees' efforts, motivates staff, and boosts their positive behaviours.

Moreover, leadership accountability and transparency should be the priority. Leaders should explain the organisational goals briefly and align them with employees' roles and responsibilities. This brief explanation helps employees understand how their work is essential for completing the organisation's goals and increasing job satisfaction and performance. Daily performance reviews that offer supportive feedback can help employees improve while supporting the adaptive leadership techniques highlighted by Situational Leadership.

For employee health, NGOs should arrange comprehensive mental well-being programs. Considering the stressful nature of working in Afghanistan's health sector, offering services like counselling can prevent burnout and enhance job satisfaction. Flexible work arrangements can address diverse employee needs, improve job satisfaction, reduce stress, and boost performance.

Due to dire needs in the health sector, the government and policymakers should launch the Research and Development sector. The Research and Development department should closely work with all major stakeholders and policymakers, bring measurable changes, and specify its indicators. The department should also work to make strong connections between academia and all the departments or organisations working in this sector. The recommendations that come from various stakeholders should be closely monitored and rectified. There is a need to make public private partnerships because this model is mostly applicable in various developing countries and is successful. This model will reduce the government expenditure burden and bring more talent and utilisation of infrastructure and resources. Furthermore, private investors and FDIs should be given the opportunity to bring new avenues to health competition and make this sector more standardised for the community and the country overall.

In the end, analysing the importance of job satisfaction as a mediator between performance and leadership is essential. The priority should be to increase job satisfaction as much as possible because it directly influences overall performance. Cultivating an environment that promotes job satisfaction should be focused instead of just on adaptability.

By targeting these areas, Afghanistan's health sector NGOs can build a more adaptive, supportive and high-performance workforce, eventually leading to better consequences for the communities they serve.

5.4 Limitations

This study has limitations in that this research is focused on health sector NGOs in Afghanistan, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other sectors or geographical contexts. Afghanistan's unique socio-political and economic conditions may influence the relationship between situational leadership, job satisfaction, and employee performance differently than in more stable environments.

5.5 Future Directions

Future research should focus on expanding the scope by including diverse sectors and regions to enhance the generalizability of the findings. Investigating additional mediating variables, such as organisational culture and external environmental factors. Further qualitative studies could complement quantitative findings by exploring employees' lived experiences and perceptions of leadership in the health sector.

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