

Analyzing the Mediating role of Cultural Intelligence between Transformational Leadership and Job Performance in Private Health Care Sector

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ABSTRACT

Keywords:

Transformational Leadership, Job Performance, Cultural Intelligence, Health Care Professionals, Structural Equation Modelling.

Work environment is rapidly changing. Due to this job performance is becoming the major concern for the various institutions, especially health care sector. Employees job performance is the main reason for the growth of the organization. Job performance is very essential in the health care sector as directly connected with the human lives and patients. Motivated health workers can contribute significantly towards the success of the organization. To influence and motivate the employee's transformational leadership can play a substantial role in the workplace. Transformational leadership is becoming necessary to adopt in the healthcare sector, to increase the job performance of the health care workers. Transformational leaders with the high cultural intelligence can help the health care sector to enhance the job performance. To fulfil this objective, the study measured the role of transformational leadership on job performance through cultural intelligence. Cultural intelligence act as a mediator between transformational leadership and job performance in this study. Health care centers located in Islamabad and Rawalpindi are included in this study. Total sample of 530 responses was included in the final measurement. Convenience sampling technique was used. SmartPLS 4.0 was used to measure the results. Structural; equation modeling was used to measure the path analysis. The results confirm that transformational leadership has a significant and positive impact on job performance. The mediating role of cultural intelligence is fully supported. This study contributed by measuring this new area of study by measuring cultural intelligence between transformational leadership and job performance. This study helps the healthcare sector by adopting these variables.

INTRODUCTION

The healthcare sector is facing significant challenges, but the vital challenge is improving the job performance of healthcare professionals (Kwak & Kim, 2022). The ability to perform activities or technical jobs that enhance a company's "technical core" is called job performance (Jain et al., 2019). It is a fundamental concept and an essential component of an

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organization's effectiveness (Afsar et al., 2020). Leaders provide a shared vision to generate effective job performance ((Ahmad, 2018; Jiatong et al., 2022; Zhao & Zhou, 2019). Healthcare needs influential leaders due to its dynamic working environment (F.-Y. Lai et al., 2020; J. Lai et al., 2020). In Pakistan, the healthcare sector needs more trained healthcare leaders, which could improve the job performance of healthcare professionals (Asif et al., 2019). Influencing leaders allow employees to think independently and creatively (Asiri et al., 2016). On the other hand, poor leadership practices make healthcare professionals unhappy, unmotivated and eventually uninterested, which negatively influences their job performance (Mahmood Aziz et al., 2021). The healthcare sector in Pakistan has undergone significant transformations, with the government placing more emphasis on improving the quality of healthcare delivery (Zaman et al., 2021). Many studies have been conducted on the importance of leadership philosophies in the healthcare industry (Ahmad, 2018). Transformational leadership is more prevalent among leaders than transactional or authoritarian leadership (Al-Thawabiya et al., 2023). According to a recent in-depth assessment, transformational leaders develop a supportive environment, understand their followers' needs, and involve them in activities that boost their confidence (Hoxha, 2019). Further, more research is needed on the role of transformational leadership in the healthcare sector of Pakistan. Therefore, leadership styles, particularly transformational leadership, should be explored in different ethnicities like Pakistan (Al-Thawabiya et al., 2023). In the healthcare system, transformational leadership fosters a sense of accountability and autonomy in followers, which can increase dedication and efficacy (Hoxha, 2019). A transformational leader also encourages growth and puts research into practice to accomplish organizational goals (Alilyyani et al., 2022). As a result, transformational leadership is frequently applied in the healthcare industry, inspiring and encouraging a substantial organizational culture and structure shift (Guan et al., 2020). In today's globalized society, when people from different cultural backgrounds engage with others and organizations, Cultural Intelligence is crucial (Norte-Muñoz et al., 2022). Cultural Intelligence has been found to improve job performance and increase intercultural sensitivity in industries such as information technology and manufacturing (Khosravi et al., 2020). In healthcare, cultural Intelligence is essential in delivering quality patient care. Healthcare professionals with cultural intelligence skills can effectively communicate, understand cultural differences, and adapt to cultural contexts, ultimately improving job performance (Figuroa et al., 2019; Sternberg & Kaufman, 2011). Cultural intelligence skills, such as empathy, open-mindedness, and adaptability, have been

linked to better patient satisfaction, increased patient adherence to treatment, and improved job performance (Freeman et al., 2018). Cultural Intelligence also plays a vital role in addressing healthcare disparities through understanding and adapting to patients' culturally diverse needs (Majda et al., 2021). Further, (Al-Thawabiya et al., 2023) highlighted that transformational leadership should be explored further in the healthcare sector in different ethnicities, like Pakistan. A lack of leadership led to a decline in job performance (Zaman et al., 2021). According to the report, 58% of workers in Pakistan's health sector are unsatisfied with their jobs, which leads to decreased job performance (Organization, 2018). This is mainly due to the lack of leadership roles in the healthcare sector of Pakistan, as mostly employees feel that their leaders need to understand their needs adequately (Asim et al., 2022). Even though the role of transformational leadership has been examined from various perspectives, including how it changes and how it affects organizational job performance, little research has been conducted on the cultural intelligence on job performance, particularly in the healthcare industry (Alwali & Alwali, 2022; Wong & Law, 2002). Little empirical and theoretical evidence is available on the role of cultural intelligence in improving employees' job performance (Abebe & Singh, 2023). Overall, declining job performance in the healthcare sector of Pakistan has become a growing concern that needs to be addressed through policy changes and increased investment in the sector. Pakistan has only 1.1 doctors per 1,000 people, significantly lower than the global average of 1.5 doctors per 1,000 people (Organization, 2018). This lack of healthcare professionals leads to an increased workload, lower job satisfaction, and, eventually, a decline in job performance (Afsar et al., 2020). This results in high stress, anxiety, and burnout among healthcare professionals, further contributing to declining job performance (Soleman et al., 2023).

Research Objectives

- The study aims to investigate the relationship between transformational leadership and job performance.
- The study aims to investigate the relationship between transformational leadership and cultural intelligence.
- The aim of the study is to measure the relationship between cultural intelligence and job performance.
- The study determines the mediating role of cultural intelligence between transformational leadership and job performance.

Research Questions

- What is the relationship between transformational leadership and job performance?
- What is the relationship between transformational leadership and cultural intelligence?
- What is the relationship between cultural intelligence and job performance?
- What is the mediating role of cultural intelligence between transformational leadership and job performance?

Literature Review

The study integrated the most appropriate theories to determine the relationship among variables. The framework of this study is based on the Theory of (Campbell, 1990), and the Theory of Transformational leadership. Campbell's theory of job performance, developed in 1990, provides a helpful framework for understanding the factors contributing to and influencing job performance. The theory posits that job performance comprises three main factors: declarative knowledge, procedural knowledge, and motivation. Declarative knowledge refers to an individual's understanding of facts and principles pertinent to their job. In contrast, procedural knowledge is their ability to perform tasks or specific skills required for their job. Lastly, motivation refers to the drive or desire that an individual has to carry out their job to the best of their ability (Hai & Park, 2021). Transformational leadership focuses on inspiring and motivating followers to achieve their full potential. According to (Bass & Avolio, 1994) transformational leaders are characterized by their ability to provide vision and direction to their followers and to empower them through individualized consideration and intellectual stimulation. Research has shown that transformational leadership is associated with many positive outcomes, including job satisfaction, commitment, and performance (Asif et al., 2019).

Transformational Leadership and Job Performance

Transformational leadership has been extensively studied in job performance (Aprileani & Abadi, 2022). This posits that transformational leaders inspire and motivate employees to transcend their self-interests and work towards achieving shared organizational goals. Recent studies have shown a significant positive relationship between transformational leadership and job performance (Cheung & Wong, 2011). One recent reference that supports the effectiveness of transformational leadership in the health sector is the study by (Alanazi et al., 2023) which examined the impact of transformational leadership on job performance. The study found that transformational leadership positively influenced job performance. This

suggests that transformational leadership is critical in improving performance and quality of care in healthcare settings (Alanazi et al., 2023). According to (Jena et al., 2018) and (Khan et al., 2021) transformational leadership is a leadership style that persuades followers to look beyond their interests by influencing their confidence and motivation to provide above-par results. For businesses willing to foresee fundamental transformations, transformational leadership is essential in providing the right conditions for positive or adaptive changes to occur through the right process (Hai & Park, 2021; Hameed et al., 2020). The culture of affective organizational commitment is almost directly correlated with leaders' actions as transformative acting as learning support (Mwesigwa et al., 2020). Transformational leadership encourages individuals to persevere and show compassion while performing their jobs to improve job performance (Schwarz, 2017). Employee job performance is improved by transformational leaders' ability to keep employees happy and psychologically satisfied at work (F.-Y. Lai et al., 2020). Based on the above discussed literature, the following hypothesis has been developed:

H1: *Transformational leadership has a positive impact on job performance.*

Transformational Leadership and Cultural Intelligence

According to Ang and Van Dyne (2008), cultural intelligence refers to a person's ability to function effectively and efficiently in an international setting and make decisions in response to a different cultural context. Certain people perform better in a cross-cultural workplace than others (Brancu et al., 2016). They can communicate in various cultural contexts and easily adjust to shifting cultural settings. These folks have higher cultural intelligence, which is the main explanation behind this. Investigating cultural intelligence may be crucial to learning how leaders overcome obstacles and prosper in the organization's environment (Barakat et al., 2015). Several studies have developed and explored the cultural intelligence in Past. Earley and Ang (2003) state that cultural intelligence is "a person's ability to adapt successfully to unfamiliar and new cultural environments related to the cultural context." According to Norte-Muñoz et al. (2022) cultural intelligence is the capacity to use knowledge and abilities in a cross-cultural context. Goleman (2020) claimed that the propensity to put off making decisions and to consider your actions before acting is a crucial component shared by both cultural intelligence and emotional intelligence. For someone with a high level of cultural intelligence, the suspension may take hours or days, whereas, for someone with a low level of cultural intelligence, the suspension may take weeks or months (Earley & Ang, 2003). Studies relating cultural intelligence to workers' job performance have been covered in

great detail in the literature. Prior research mainly utilized the cultural intelligence model and assessment created by (Earley & Ang, 2003). According to the paradigm, cultural intelligence has four components: metacognitive, cognitive, motivational, and behavioral. The majority of earlier studies have demonstrated that these four factors have a considerable impact on employees' ability to do their jobs. However, a closer examination of these studies showed that most respondents were expatriates or staff members of international corporations (Yousaf et al., 2021). In the cultural intelligence literature, numerous studies involve college students, international managers, and expatriates. According to Wakeman (2009) emotional intelligence and cultural intelligence are indicators of the success of international adaptation. Brancu et al. (2016) looked into which dimensions were more or less prevalent among college students in their study of the cultural intelligence dimensions. According to Thompson (2018) research, cultural intelligence and emotional intelligence are very helpful in assisting international students with social integration and adaptation. A few empirical research findings in the business field are listed below. Emotional intelligence, cultural intelligence, and employee performance were positively correlated by (Gorji & Ghareseflo, 2011). The moderating function of cultural intelligence among emotional labor and emotional weariness was the main topic of (Rafiq et al., 2020) study. The findings show that cultural intelligence is a valuable tool for staff members to successfully manage their emotions in culturally varied work settings (Rafiq et al., 2020). Based on the above discussion following hypothesis has been developed:

H2: *Transformational leadership has a positive impact on job performance.*

Cultural Intelligence and Job Performance

Job performance is the capacity of an individual to carry out their duties in a way that advances the organization's goals. Further, it can also be defined as a person's productivity compared to their coworkers on various job-related behaviors and outcomes (Alonazi, 2020). The outcomes of a company, both financial and non-financial, are directly impacted by job performance. Therefore, for companies to attain their corporate objectives, vision, and mission and obtain a competitive edge, they require high-performing personnel (F.-Y. Lai et al., 2020). However, Job performance and satisfaction are two significant constructs influencing employee well-being and organizational outcomes (Kishen et al., 2020). While these constructs are related, they represent distinct aspects of an employee's work experience. Job performance refers to an individual's effectiveness in carrying out their tasks, while job satisfaction relates to employees' subjective feelings towards their work (Jnaneswar & Ranjit,

2020). Further, job performance is the degree to which employees effectively accomplish their tasks, responsibilities, and goals. It encompasses both task performance (the core duties of the job) and contextual performance (extra-role behaviors benefiting the organization). Various models, such as the Three-Dimensional Model of Performance, have been proposed to differentiate between different dimensions of job performance, including task performance, adaptive performance, and counterproductive work behavior (Alonazi, 2020). Consequently, job satisfaction pertains to the positive or negative emotional responses employees have towards their work. It encompasses an employee's overall subjective evaluation of their job and various factors contributing to their satisfaction, such as pay, working conditions, relationships with colleagues, and opportunities for advancement (Abebe & Singh, 2023). Emotional and cognitive components, as well as the discrepancy between expectations and reality, influence job satisfaction. While job performance and satisfaction may seem interconnected, they possess contrasting characteristics. Job performance is an objective measure of an employee's job-related effectiveness, while job satisfaction is a subjective measure of their feelings towards work. Job performance focuses on the outcomes an employee achieves, whereas job satisfaction reflects the employee's subjective experiences, perceptions, and emotions (Bal & Kökalan, 2022). Increasing employee job performance is a primary concern for businesses because working in healthcare facilities is demanding and draining. As a result, people who work in these demanding conditions must prioritize their mental and physical health (Abebe & Singh, 2023). Emotions can be employed in medicine thanks to emotional intelligence, which can mediate this. According to a meta-analysis of numerous research, workers with high emotional intelligence do better in tasks that demand significant emotional labor. Emotional intelligence affects patient outcomes, professionalism, and satisfaction on both sides (between patient and healthcare practitioner), as well as the health and happiness of the healthcare professionals (Alonazi, 2020). Healthcare professionals must possess medical knowledge and skill but must also have developed emotional intelligence. Further, emotional intelligence is currently viewed as a non-cognitive function due to its new focus in the medical community. The medical and healthcare system education must adapt to meet the community's increasing expectations and demands for the caliber of healthcare services being supplied to them. A few talents modern healthcare professionals require are empathy, compassion, efficient communication and intelligence to make decisions (Pekaar et al., 2017). Several studies have demonstrated a positive association between cultural intelligence and job performance. For

example, a study by Porkodi et al. (2022) found that employees with high cultural intelligence performed better than those with low cultural intelligence in private hospitals. Similarly, Ang and Van Dyne (2008) meta-analysis found that cultural intelligence predicted job performance in diverse work settings. Study by Unnikrishnan et al. (2019) measured the association between cultural intelligence and job performance among healthcare professionals. The study found that cultural intelligence positively influenced job performance, including service delivery and communication with patients and their families. Moreover, a study by Iqbal et al. (2021) investigated the impact of cultural intelligence on the healthcare experience of patients from diverse cultural. The study found that healthcare professionals with higher levels of cultural intelligence were better equipped to address the needs of culturally diverse patients, resulting in a more positive patient experience. Cultural intelligence enables health professionals and clinicians to move beyond awareness and into the strategic use of culturally aware and bias-free leadership practices (Hassan Helaly et al., 2022). Based on the above discussion following hypothesis has been developed:

H3: *Cultural intelligence has a positive impact on job performance*

Cultural Intelligence as a Mediator between Transformational Leadership and Job Performance

Healthcare is a complex and diverse industry with individuals from different cultures and backgrounds working together. A culturally intelligent leader in the healthcare sector must facilitate effective communication and collaboration among a diverse team that can enhance job performance. An individual's capacity to adjust to and function well in culturally heterogeneous surroundings is known as cultural intelligence (Earley & Ang, 2003). Leaders in the healthcare industry must possess cultural intelligence and the ability to understand and appreciate cultural differences to work effectively in multicultural environments (Porkodi et al., 2022). Cultural intelligence has three key components: cognitive, physical, and emotional abilities and skills required to work effectively in multicultural settings (Luquis, 2021). These abilities and skills include cross-cultural sensitivity, adaptability, and perception. Culturally intelligent leaders are expected to create an inclusive and supportive environment that leads to job satisfaction and higher job performance among team members (Rahimaghaee & Mozdbar, 2017). Empirical evidence suggests that a significant and positive connection exists between cultural intelligence, leadership, and job performance in the healthcare industry. A study by (Solomon & Steyn, 2017) found that cultural intelligence was a reliable predictor of transformational leadership effectiveness in healthcare. The study showed that cultural

intelligence positively predicted transformational leadership among health professionals. Transformational leaders in the healthcare industry are expected to positively influence their teams' attitudes, motivation, and job performance. Similarly, a study by (Betancourt et al., 2014) provided evidence of a significant and positive correlation between cultural intelligence and job performance among hospital's employees. The study found that cultural intelligence positively affects staff productivity, job performance. Health professionals with higher cultural intelligence were found to provide patient-centered care, demonstrating a positive relationship between cultural intelligence and job performance. Another study by (Hassan Helaly et al., 2022) showed a significant relationship between cultural intelligence, transformational leadership, and job performance among health care providers. The study found that cultural intelligence positively predicted transformational leadership and transformational leadership positively predicted nurses job performance. Nurses with higher cultural intelligence exhibited higher job performance, indicating the influence of cultural intelligence on transformational leadership and job performance in healthcare. Several theoretical models have explored the influence of cultural intelligence on leadership effectiveness and job performance. The theoretical model by (Alonazi, 2020) showed that cultural intelligence enhances emotional intelligence, leading to better leadership and job performance. Enhancing a leader's cultural intelligence can lead to increased emotional intelligence, influencing leadership style and performance. Moreover, cultural intelligence influences job performance by impacting employees' engagement and perception of the work environment and teamwork. As shown in a study conducted by (Alwali & Alwali, 2022), cultural intelligence positively influences employee engagement, job satisfaction, and perceived teamwork, which leads to higher job performance. Based on the above discussion following hypothesis has been developed:

H4: *Cultural intelligence positively mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and job performance.*

Conceptual Framework

Based on the above discussed literature, the following conceptual framework has been proposed:

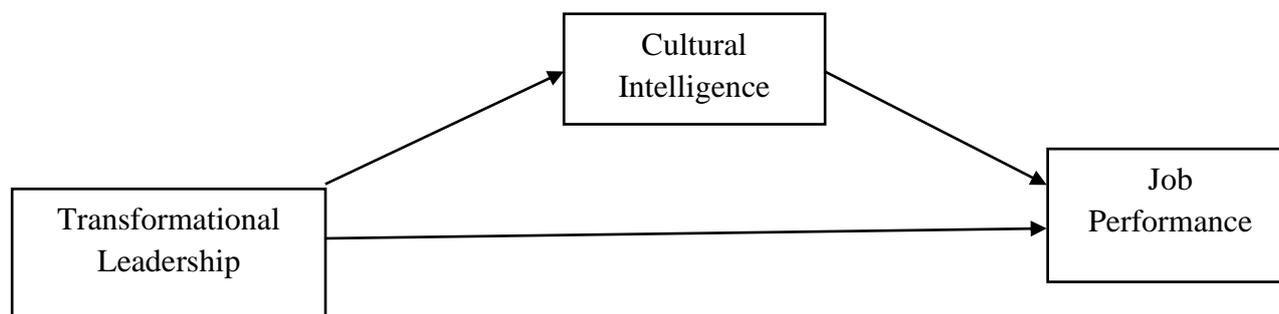


Figure 01 Conceptual Framework

Research Methodology

The responses were gathered from the private hospitals of the twin cities i.e Islamabad and Rawalpindi of Pakistan. Convenience sampling technique was used. To collect the data closed-ended questionnaires were used. Cross-sectional method was applied. Cross sectional approach was used to collect the data. The study focuses in positivism approach. Doctors from the private hospitals such as Rawal Institute of Health Sciences, HBS General Hospital, Islamabad Medical and Dental College and Shifa International Hospital, Islamabad are the population of this study. As per (Tribune, 2019) total of 64,320 registered doctors working in Islamabad and Rawalpindi. 600 questionnaires were distributed and 530 were chosen for the final measurement. The final Responses were analyzing through Smartpls 4.0. This study adopted deductive research approach as the objective of the study is to test the hypotheses.

Table 01: Instruments Details

Sr. no.	Indicator	Number of Items	Scale	Reference
1	Transformational Leadership	10 Items	Five-Point Likert Scale	(Cicero et al., 2010)
2	Cultural Intelligence	19 Items	Five-Point Likert Scale	(Schutte et al., 1998)
3	Job Performance	15 Items	Five Point Likert Scale	(Goodman, 1990)

ANALYSIS

Total of 530 respondents were included in the final measurement. Doctors of the private hospitals of Islamabad and Rawalpindi are the respondents of this study. Out of these 298 were males and 232 were female doctors.

Measurement Model Assessment

The assessment begins by measuring the internal consistency and reliability. Cronbach's Alpha and Composite reliability test were used to measure these. Table 02 demonstrate the values of Cronbach's Alpha ranging from 0.950 to 0.957, which meets criteria suggested by (Sarstedt et al., 2021; Zhao et al., 2021; Zhao et al., 2020; Hafeez et al., 2023). Due to the deficiency of Cronbach's Alpha test, it is suggested by (McNeish, 2018) tests a substitute reliability test, which is composite reliability. The value of the composite reliability should be higher than 0.70 to show the acceptable internal consistency (Sarstedt et al., 2021; Jahangir et al., 2024). Table 02 shows the composite reliability values, which are greater than the threshold of 0.70. This indicates that the instruments do not have any internal consistency reliability issues. The results can be generalized with full confidence. After analyzing and confirming the internal consistency reliability, the indicator's reliability is measured. As shown in the table 02, all the indicators have acceptable reliability (ranging from 0.565 to 0.709), which meets the threshold of 0.5 or higher AVE values (Sarstedt et al., 2021; Manzoor & Jahangir, 2023). So, all of the items were kept. Table 02 demonstrate that all the loadings fall between 0.7 to 0.8, which meets the threshold of 0.60.

Table 02 Convergent Validity

Constructs	Items	Indicator Reliability	Convergent Validity	Internal Reliability	Consistency
		Outer Loading	AVE	Composite Reliability	Cronbach's Alpha
		>0.60	>0.50	>0.70	>0.70
Cultural Intelligence	CQ1	0.749	0.565	0.961	0.957
	CQ10	0.733			
	CQ11	0.762			
	CQ12	0.749			
	CQ13	0.745			
	CQ14	0.753			
	CQ15	0.762			
	CQ16	0.746			
	CQ17	0.744			
	CQ18	0.769			
	CQ19	0.757			
	CQ2	0.760			
	CQ3	0.740			

	CQ4	0.734			
	CQ5	0.735			
	CQ6	0.753			
	CQ7	0.779			
	CQ8	0.748			
	CQ9	0.762			
	CQ1	0.749			
Job	J1	0.769	0.606	0.956	0.950
Performance	J10	0.784			
	J11	0.750			
	J12	0.790			
	J13	0.784			
	J14	0.778			
	J2	0.767			
	J3	0.787			
	J4	0.772			
	J5	0.794			
	J6	0.785			
	J7	0.788			
	J8	0.787			
	J9	0.765			
Leadership	TL10	0.844	0.709	0.961	0.954
	TL2	0.852			
	TL3	0.845			
	TL4	0.850			
	TL5	0.845			
	TL6	0.844			
	TL7	0.831			
	TL8	0.838			
	TL9	0.840			
	TL10	0.833			

Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity is determined by using the following method;

Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)

(Kline, 2011) suggest the cut-off value for the HTMT is 0.85. Table 03 and figure 02 demonstrate that all the values are less than the threshold of 0.85, which suggest that discriminate validity is not an issue in this study.

Table 03: HTMT

	Cultural Intelligence	Job Performance
Job Performance	0.831	
Transformational Leadership	0.768	0.675

Structural Model

The initial step of the structural model is to measure the collinearity problems. To determine the collinearity, VIF value is used. According to (Sarstedt et al., 2021) 5 and (Diamantopoulos & Siguaw, 2006), 3.3 is the cutoff value for the assessment. Table 04

shows, all the inner model values for the instruments are between 1 to 2.178, which are lower than five as suggested by (Sarstedt et al., 2021; Jahangir et al., 2022) and 3.3 by (Diamantopoulos & Siguaaw, 2006). Thus, this study does not have any collinearity issues. The findings of every path relationship in the study are gained using the bootstrapping technique to test the hypotheses as shown in table 04. Findings are presented in table 04, which demonstrate that the path coefficient values have a standardized value ranging from 0.131 to 0.696. Further, all the t-values are ranging from 2.623 to 32.109, at significant level of 0.000 to 0.009. So, all the relationships between the variables are accepted and positive. Table 04 shows the relationship among variables.

Table 04 Structural Model Assessment

Relationship	Path Coefficient (β)	Std. Error	t-value	p-value	Decision	R ²	F ²	Effect Size	VIF
Cultural Intelligence -> Job Performance	0.696	0.044	15.860	0.000	Accepted	0.612	2	Moderate	2.178
Transformational Leadership -> Cultural Intelligence	0.735	0.023	32.109	0.000	Accepted	0.541	1.178	Substantial	1.000
Transformational Leadership -> Job Performance	0.131	0.050	2.623	0.009	Accepted	0.637	0.022	Small	2.178
Transformational Leadership -> Cultural Intelligence -> Job Performance	0.512	0.038	13.450	0.000	Accepted	0.586	2.11	Substantial	1.58

Table 04, presents that cultural intelligence has a positive and significant relationship between transformational leadership and job performance. It shows that transformational leadership affects cultural intelligence, which in turns affects job performance. The impact through indirect effect, which displays a considerable influence at a 5% p-value, can also be seen. T value is more significant than 1.96. The table 04 depicts all the relationship and linkages between transformational leadership and job performance with the mediating role of cultural intelligence. So, it is confident to note that cultural intelligence fully mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and job performance.

DISCUSSION

To study the mediating role of cultural intelligence between transformational leadership and job performance in the private health sector is a relatively new area of study. The objective of this discussion is to highlight the findings regarding the role of cultural intelligence as mediator between transformational leadership and job performance in the private health care sector of Pakistan. Various studies (Asim et al., 2022; Dubey et al., 2023; Fakhri et al., 2020; Hassan Helaly et al., 2022; Hoxha, 2019; Jiatong et al., 2022; Jnaneswar & Ranjit, 2020) have determine a positive relationship between leadership and job performance. Effective transformational leadership helps to inspire and motivate employees, identifying goals, deliver support and motivates the employee development. Results suggested by (Abebe & Singh, 2023; Bass & Avolio, 1994) demonstrate the transformational leadership influences employees job performance. The private healthcare sector in Pakistan is rapidly growing, and effective leadership is essential for achieving high job performance in this dynamic and culturally diverse industry(Abebe & Singh, 2023). Transformational leadership has been acknowledged as a significant factor in enhancing job performance, while cultural intelligence has emerged as a vital skill to navigate the complexities of cultural diversity(Afsar et al., 2020). Transformational leadership is characterized by inspiring and motivating employees to exceed their own expectations and achieve exceptional performance(Alanazi et al., 2023). This leadership style promotes employee satisfaction, creativity, and commitment to organizational goals. Transformational leaders stimulate their followers intellectually, provide individualized attention, and serve as role models of high moral and ethical standards, fostering an organizational culture that values innovation, collaboration, and continuous improvement (Alilyyani et al., 2022). Previous studies have confirmed the positive relationship between transformational leadership and job performance in various industries. Cultural intelligence is the ability to understand, appreciate, and adapt to diverse cultural contexts (Asif et al., 2019). It involves an individual's knowledge, motivation, and metacognitive processes to effectively interact with people from different cultural backgrounds (Asim et al., 2022). Employees who possess high cultural intelligence can navigate the challenges and complexities stemming from cultural diversity, leading to improved job performance (Burky, 2023). Cultural intelligence enables individuals to effectively communicate, collaborate, and demonstrate appropriate behavior within multicultural work environments (Ha et al., 2021). Studies have found a positive association between cultural intelligence and job performance in various organizational settings (Jiatong

et al., 2022). This study finds that cultural intelligence mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and job performance in the private healthcare sector of Pakistan. Transformational leaders, with their ability to inspire and motivate followers, can enhance employees' cultural intelligence (Kwak & Kim, 2022). Through mentorship, encouragement of learning, and promotion of diverse perspectives, these leaders can foster employees' awareness and understanding of different cultural contexts (F.-Y. Lai et al., 2020). Building cultural intelligence enables healthcare professionals to better adapt their behaviors, decision-making processes, and problem-solving approaches to the specific cultural needs of patients, colleagues, and other stakeholders. Consequently, higher levels of cultural intelligence facilitate improved job performance (F.-Y. Lai et al., 2020). Understanding the mediating role of cultural intelligence between transformational leadership and job performance in Pakistan's private healthcare sector has several practical implications. Firstly, it highlights the importance of training programs and leadership development initiatives that focus on developing cultural intelligence among healthcare professionals. Secondly, it emphasizes the need for organizations to select and nurture transformational leaders who possess high cultural intelligence themselves (Majda et al., 2021). Thirdly, it underscores the importance of fostering a culturally inclusive organizational culture that values diversity and promotes cultural intelligence. This study sheds light on the importance of nurturing transformational leadership qualities and cultural intelligence to address the challenges posed by cultural diversity. By leveraging these insights, healthcare organizations can promote a positive work environment, improve patient satisfaction, and create a more effective healthcare system overall.

Conclusion

Analyzing the mediating role of cultural intelligence between transformational leadership and job performance in Pakistan's private healthcare sector can contribute to enhancing job performance and ensuring better healthcare outcomes. This study sheds light on the importance of nurturing transformational leadership qualities and cultural intelligence to address the challenges posed by cultural diversity. By leveraging these insights, healthcare organizations can promote a positive work environment, improve patient satisfaction, and create a more effective healthcare system overall.

Implications of the Study

The study highlights the need for training and development programs that focus on enhancing cultural intelligence among healthcare professionals in the private healthcare sector of

Pakistan. The findings emphasize the importance of selecting and nurturing transformational leaders who possess high levels of cultural intelligence. Organizations should identify and promote individuals who exemplify a deep understanding and adaptability to diverse cultural contexts, as these leaders can positively influence their followers' cultural intelligence and subsequently enhance job performance. By creating an environment that appreciates and respects different cultural backgrounds, organizations can enhance employees' cultural intelligence, leading to improved job performance. Culturally intelligent healthcare professionals are better equipped to understand and cater to the specific cultural needs and expectations of patients. Cultural intelligence enables healthcare professionals to communicate effectively across cultural boundaries, minimizing misunderstandings and promoting effective collaboration. By developing cultural intelligence, healthcare organizations can improve communication among employees from different cultural backgrounds, leading to smoother workflows, increased teamwork, and higher job performance. Healthcare professionals with high cultural intelligence possess the skills to approach problems and make decisions that are in alignment with different cultural perspectives. By promoting cultural intelligence, organizations can enhance employees' problem-solving and decision-making abilities, leading to improved job performance and patient outcomes. Overall, this study's implications emphasize the importance of cultural intelligence as a mediating factor between transformational leadership and job performance in the private healthcare sector of Pakistan. By recognizing and investing in cultural intelligence development, organizations can foster a more inclusive and productive work environment that benefits patients, staff, and the overall healthcare system.

Limitations and guidance for future research

The role of cultural intelligence between transformational leadership and job performance are very limited across health care sector. Therefore, the future investigations should consider the factors that may impact the existing relationship such as; gender role, size of the organization, or any other leadership style. Future research should aim to have a larger sample size to ensure the generalizability of the findings beyond the specific healthcare sector of Pakistan. The majority of existing studies on this topic have utilized cross-sectional designs, limiting the ability to establish causality. Future research should consider employing longitudinal or experimental designs to better understand the causal relationships. The findings of the study may not be fully generalizable to other countries or cultures. Future research should consider conducting similar studies in different cultural contexts to enhance the understanding of the

cultural intelligence's mediating role. Future research can benefit from incorporating qualitative methods, such as interviews or focus groups, to gain deeper insights into the experiences and perceptions of healthcare professionals regarding the mediating role of cultural intelligence. While this research focuses on cultural intelligence as a mediator, future studies could explore other potential mediating variables, such as organizational support to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between transformational leadership, cultural intelligence, and job performance. Comparing the healthcare sector of Pakistan with other countries' healthcare sectors can provide valuable insights into the cultural factors that influence the mediating role of cultural intelligence. Comparative studies can highlight cultural nuances and help develop a more comprehensive understanding of the topic. By addressing these limitations and following the suggested guidance, future research can advance the knowledge on the mediating role of cultural intelligence between transformational leadership and job performance in the healthcare sector of Pakistan, as well as contribute to the broader field of organizational behavior and cross-cultural management.

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