How Transformational Leadership Affects Employee Wellbeing? Investigating the Sequential Mediating Effect of Psychological Empowerment and Job Crafting

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ABSTRACT

Transformational leaders are those who intend to encourage their subordinates to take greater responsibility for their jobs, allowing them to assign tasks that will improve their performance and wellbeing. Whenever employees adjust their jobs to make them more in line with their own preferences, they are doing job crafting. This study aims to explore the sequential mediating role of psychological empowerment and job crafting between transformational leadership and employee wellbeing. Using a structured questionnaire, the data were collected from a random sample of frontline employees working in Egyptian airlines. A total of 416 questionnaires were analyzed through structural equation modeling using PLS-Smart. The empirical investigations of the study supported the propositions that transformational leadership was positively associated with psychological empowerment, job crafting and employee wellbeing. Further, this study showed that psychological empowerment and job crafting were determined to be sequential mediating factors between transformational leadership and employee wellbeing. Building on these results, the study provided implications and areas for future research.

1-Introduction

The success of any company is partially derived from the employee's experience of well-being (Bryson et al., 2017). Employee well-being (EW) is a source of power that motivates employees to stay with their company and contribute to its objectives (Luu, 2021). One of the myriad variables that can foster EW is the use of appropriate

leadership (Tummers & Bakker, 2021). The current research proposes transformational leadership (TL) to be the suitable leadership to promote EW. TL gives employees the ability to change their job and relationship environments to improve their performance and wellbeing (McMurray et al., 2010; Wang et al., 2017). Therefore, the aim of this study is to investigate this topic in detail and shed light on the association between TL and EW. In doing so, the study proposed that job crafting (JC) and psychological empowerment (PE) can act as mechanisms linking TL to EW.

Currently, organizations are working in a rapidly changing business world in which their top-down change initiatives are insufficient to fulfill the growing needs of their work (Naeem et al., 2020). Further, as a result of this dynamic business environment, jobs are getting more complex and flexible with constantly changing tasks and responsibilities (Maden-Eyiusta & Alten, 2021). Front-line employees (FLEs) are the ones who usually deal with a wide range of unusual customer requests and deliver exceptional customer service with a 'smile' (Yadav & Dhar, 2021). In service businesses like tourism, the job nature of FLEs is described by some characteristics such as excessive workloads, rigorous adherence to time, prolonged working hours, role stress, high work demand, and disturbed work–life balance (Srivastava & Pathak, 2020; Pradhan, 2022). Owing to these working circumstances and stressors, employees find that their jobs are constantly changing, thus the traditional authority of a leader to design a job has been diminished (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017).

The new approach is that employees take charge of their job design and become the designers of their jobs. Thus, due to the increase in clients' demands and complaints, as well as FLEs' need to self-design their jobs, the topic of JC has recently gained attention in the tourism business (Yadav & Dhar, 2021). JC refers to actions taken by employees to reshape the jobs' tasks, relationships, or cognitive boundaries in order to maintain a challenging, motivating, and healthy work environment (Demerouti, 2015). According to Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001), providing employees with the ability to adjust their job requirements and resources will improve their well-being and performance.

Furthermore, until now, the underlying psychological mechanisms that underpin the association between leadership style and JC are less well understood (Naeem et al., 2020). Since previous research has demonstrated that TL affects employees' behaviors by modifying their psychological states (Naeem et al., 2020), PE has been proposed as another attitudinal variable by which transformational leaders may influence the job outcomes of their subordinates (Bass, 1999).

During the last decade, research on JC has expanded. Nevertheless, the literature is still in its infancy and has not fully examined how leadership practices affect subordinates' JC (Hetland et al., 2018; Kim & Beehr, 2018; Afsar et al., 2019). Additionally, some previous studies revealed that TL was linked to employee wellbeing (McMurray et al., 2010; Samad et al., 2021). However, to the authors' knowledge, none of them examined the sequential mediating effects of PE and JC. Thus, to overcome the related deficiencies in the literature, this study aims to explore the sequential mediation through which PE and JC function as the underlying

mechanisms through which TL influences EW. The present study proposes that TL can lead to the PE of employees. This may be due to TL as positive leadership provides employees with job autonomy and support (Kim et al., 2018; Ding et al., 2020). These psychologically empowered employees who are in charge of their decision making would engage in JC behavior (Coehoorn, 2017). Subsequently, this leads to a higher level of job performance and improved well-being (Rudolph et al., 2017; Zhang & Parker, 2019). This study adds to the existing literature in a variety of ways. First, it examines the role of JC in mediating the relationship between TL and EW. Second, it investigates whether PE and JC sequentially mediate the association between TL and EW. Finally, the study adds to the limited empirical evidence on the link between TL and EW.

2-Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

JC has been formally presented by Wrzesniewski and Dutton in 2001. The philosophy of JC focuses on the active role of employees in the design of their jobs (Mirahmadiet al., 2021). JC is defined as "the physical and cognitive changes individuals make in the task or relational boundaries of their work" (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001:179). Based on this definition, Srivastava and Pathak (2020) reported that JC has three main domains. Firstly, altering job boundaries, which means the modifications that employees do in the shape and amount of their job activities. Secondly, altering cognitive boundaries refers to changing the individual's perception about his work. It focuses on the psychological reinterpretations of job characteristics without realistic changing the job. Thirdly, relational boundaries mean an employee's ability to form and change his co -workers relationships. Briefly, JC refers to the method by which employees can alter the number, form, and scope of duties, as well as their workplace relationships to be compatible with their interests, wishes, and capabilities (Mirahmadi et al., 2021). Through JC, employees are motivated to present new ways to do their tasks more efficiently or to extend their job by taking more duties (Afsar et al., 2019).

Later, researchers developed measurement tools to identify the JC dimensions (i.e., physical, cognitive, and relational) which offered by Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001). The most widely used approach to JC in the literature was provided by Tims and Bakker (2010) and Tims et al. (2012). Based on Tims and Bakker (2010), JC is a type of proactive behavior by which employees initiate adjustments to their job demands and job resources to improve the fit between their job characteristics and their personal abilities and requirements. This conceptualization of JC is situated in terms of the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) theory (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). According to this theory, scholars suggest that there are three groups of JC: (a) increasing challenging job demands (e.g., claiming more duties and volunteering involvement in new projects); (b) reducing job demands (e.g., avoiding communicating with unpleasant customers, decreasing workload and work-family conflict); and (c) increasing structural and social job resources (e.g., increasing job autonomy, asking supervisors and colleagues for support and advice) (Tims & Bakker, 2010; Tims et al., 2012).

Recently, scholars added JC orientation (i.e. approach-oriented and avoidance-oriented). Approach JC- oriented is concerned with actions to fulfill positive aspects of the job, whereas avoidance JC is concerned with actions to avoid and keep away from negative aspects of the job (Bruning & Campion, 2018; Zhang & Parker, 2019).

Indeed, employees' crafting behaviors achieve several positive outcomes, such as maintaining EW (Rudolph et al., 2017; Lichtenthaler & Fischbach, 2018), organizational commitment (Leana et al., 2009), organizational citizenship behavior (Bavik et al., 2017), creativity (Rizwan et al., 2016), job satisfaction (de Beer et al., 2016; Chenga & O-Yang, 2018), increased person-job fit (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017), job performance (Tuan, 2020; Maden-Eyiusta & Alten, 2021) and work engagement (Bruning & Campion, 2018).

Despite the importance of JC, the majority of previous studies have focused on examining the consequences of crafting behaviors and a limited number of researches have examined the predictors (Kiliç et al., 2020). Recently, Park and Park (2021) divided contextual antecedents of JC into four categories: organizational characteristics, leadership, group and job characteristics. According to earlier studies leaders may have a considerable impact on the opportunity for subordinates to engage in JC behaviors (Park & Park, 2021). Particularly, leaders encourage subordinates JC by offering personal resources and social support to employees, as well as constructing resourceful jobs with a sense of urgency to craft (wang et al., 2020). Therefore, this study expects that transformational leaders will inspire employees to craft their jobs.

The concept of TL was first elaborated by Bass in 1985, who described TL as a leadership method where the leader converts the norms and values of subordinates and encourages them to perform beyond their own anticipations (Bass, 1985). Accordingly, TL is a leadership method in which a leader changes the standards and values of followers and pushes them to perform above their own expectations (Bass, 1985; Park & Park, 2021). Likewise, Jha (2014) added that TL has been identified as a leadership style that helps the growth of followers' competencies, awareness, and individuality, thus assisting the development of both the leader and the organization.

Wang et al. (2017) identified six behaviors related to transformational leadership. These behaviors include articulating a vision (i.e., inspiring subordinates with a future vision), providing an appropriate model (i.e., putting an example for followers that is consistent with the leader's values), promoting group goals (i.e., encouraging employee cooperation and making them work together to achieve the same goal), communicating high performance expectations (i.e., getting the best results from followers), providing individualized support (i.e., showing respect for followers and paying attention to their feelings and personal needs), and intellectual stimulation (i.e., challenging employees about how they see their work and how they do it).

According to Bass and Riggio (2006), TL is highly helpful during times of organizational change because transformational leaders may reframe employees' perspectives of change to see it as an opportunity rather than a risk. In today's uncertain and competitive business world, top-down organizational change is

insufficient to handle emergent requirements and opportunities at work; instead, organizational leaders must depend on employees to take the initiative and drive change from the bottom-up. Employees are expected to be more proactive in improving the status quo in addition to performing the primary tasks outlined in the job description (Griffin et al., 2007; Hetland et al., 2018).

Because TL focuses on change (Bass, 1985), it could be a useful antecedent to JC (Wang et al., 2017). Based on the previous arguments, TL gives employees the ability to change their job and relationship environments to improve their performance and wellbeing (McMurray et al., 2010; Wang et al., 2017). To better understand the impact of TL on EW, this study proposed PE and JC as mediating factors.

PE refers to an intrinsic task motivation that demonstrates whether employees feel they are in control when working for the company (Spreitzer, 2008). Being in control motivates employees to perform their tasks efficiently and leads to many positive outcomes in organizations (Khan et al., 2021). Intrinsic task motivation consists of four cognitions: meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact (Spreitzer, 1995). The collection of these cognitions constitutes the inclusive construct of PE, which gives employees the ability to mold or design their job role and context (Kiliç et al., 2020). Meaning refers to the employees' self-assessment of the value of their work (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990), while competence, or self-efficacy, is a belief in an individual's ability to do job-related tasks efficiently (Bandura, 1989). Self-determination relates to employees' perceptions of autonomy for deciding how to begin and carry out tasks (Deci et al., 1989). Finally, the "impact" refers to the employees' perception that their job is effective in making a difference in work consequences (Spreitzer, 1995). In short, these four dimensions reflect a feeling of control and an active orientation toward JC (Kooij et al., 2021).

Based on the previous discussion, this study developed and empirically tested a mediation model that explains how TL relates to EW via PE and JC. It was believed that FLEs' JC is influenced by their perceptions of leadership. The more independence and flexibility they perceive, the more likely they are to start crafting jobs (Esteves & Lopes, 2017). So, in order to fully understand how leaders can trigger the initiation of JC, it was supposed that TL enhances the psychological resources of employees, which could motivate them to reshape their job.

2.1 Transformational leadership and Employee Wellbeing
Occupational wellbeing is described as the total quality of an employee's job experience and performance at work (Marin-Garcia & Bonavia, 2021). Leadership is a fundamental factor for fostering EW and performance (Luu, 2021; Tummers & Bakker, 2021). Due to the powerful position of managers and supervisors in the organization, they can influence EW in many ways. For example, negative management behaviors can contribute to employment stress, poor work performance, illness, job dissatisfaction, rotation, anxiety, and depression (Samad et al., 2021).

Based on the research of Bass and colleagues, TL is characterized by four elements: individualized consideration, idealized influence, intellectual stimulation, and finally inspirational motivation (Bass, 1997; Avolio & Gardner, 2005; Bass & Riggio, 2006).

Through individualized consideration, the leader cares about the needs of each subordinate and provides training and guidance (Samad et al., 2021). Via idealized influence, a leader serves as a role model for others, reduces feelings of isolation, enhances a sense of belonging, and creates a feeling of common purpose among his followers (Bass, 1997; Avolio & Gardner, 2005). While, through intellectual stimulation, leaders assist their subordinates challenging traditional assumptions and thoughts and motivating them to review problems in an innovative way (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Skakon et al., 2010). Finally, via inspirational motivation, leaders encourage their subordinates by presenting a compelling vision that creates a feeling of common purpose and, as a result, boosts their self-esteem (Cheng et al., 2016).

Therefore, TL is often viewed as a positive and effective leadership style (Cheng et al., 2016). Eriksson et al. (2008) also reported that effective leadership styles are positively associated with workplace wellbeing. Employees who expressed greater levels of wellbeing also showed that their supervisor had a more dynamic and supportive leadership behavior (McMurray et al., 2010). Further, through intrinsically focused motivational constructs, TL is positively associated with employee well-being (Park, & Rainey, 2008). Furthermore, transformational leaders have an impact on their followers by extending and elevating their aims and giving them the confidence to perform better than expected (Krishnan, 2012). Notably, a leader who appeals to this vision, pushes and supports followers in the direction of their shared ideals, is likely to increase the feeling of wellbeing in employees (McMurray et al., 2010). Additionally, when employees saw their managers as transformational, work stress was seen to be minimal (Krishnan, 2012). Besides the aforementioned reasons, some empirical studies revealed that TL positively affects employee well-being (McMurray et al., 2010; Samad et al., 2021). Given the previous discussion, and the fact that these findings were unrelated to the airlines' FLEs, the following hypothesis was generated.

H1: Transformational leadership is positively related to employee well-being.

2.2 Transformational leadership and Psychological Empowerment
PE is expressed through four sub-dimensions: meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact (Spreitzer, 1995). Transformational leaders affirm the independence and proactivity of subordinates and prefer strategies of empowerment instead of control (Conger, 1999). By providing employees with a vision of the future (through visioning) and by focusing on a higher purpose or worthy reason, transformational leaders can be able to supply subordinates successfully with "meaning" and challenge (Menon, 2001). Further, TL-as an empowering leadership style- can improve the competence of employees through encouragement and rewarding, especially for those who are mastering new skills (Amundsen & Martinsen, 2014). Moreover, TL raises the self-efficacy of employees (as followers), making it easier for them to organize and complete tasks to achieve organizational strategies from time to time (Pradhan et al., 2017).

Additionally, transformational leaders share the responsibility and decision-making with their followers, which allows subordinates to be more empowered and augments

the motivation they need to develop themselves (Süer, 2017). Besides participating in decision-making, TL enables followers to feel that they have an "impact" on the work of the organization (Amundsen & Martinsen, 2014). Furthermore, intellectual stimulation may be one method in which leaders demonstrate to their subordinates that they appreciate their contribution, which can motivate the sense of "competence" and "impact" (Rafferty & Griffin, 2004). Moreover, followers' sense of choice or "self-determination" could be the source of such intellectual stimulation (Bass, 1999; Rafferty & Griffin, 2004). From this point of view, prior empirical studies revealed that TL positively affects PE of followers (Jha, 2014; Pradhan et al., 2017; Süer, 2017). Based on the theoretical basis discussed above, and the existence of empirical studies, the following hypothesis was formulated:

H2: Transformational leadership is positively related to psychological empowerment.

2.3 Transformational leadership and Job Crafting

JC refers to changes that staff members launch in the level of job demands and job resources to make their own jobs more meaningful, engaging, and satisfying (Afsar et al., 2019). As such, previous studies have demonstrated that leaders' behaviors indicating appreciation for change are considered an important factor in motivating subordinates' JC (Park & Park, 2021). As TL focuses on change (Bass, 1985), it could be a useful antecedent to JC (Wang et al., 2017). Under TL, subordinates are more willing to make adjustments to broaden their job and relationship contexts (Wang et al., 2017). Based on the TL six behaviors, transformational leaders inspire followers to think beyond their own immediate interests by stressing long-term goals, building a vision, and stimulating personnel to follow that vision. Accordingly, subordinates are encouraged to create long-term goals and make changes to their work environment in order to attain those goals (Griffin et al., 2010). Broadly speaking, transformational leaders are supposed to help followers think independently and creatively, as well as directly support proactive behaviour through employee development, empowerment, and intellectual stimulation (Hetland et al., 2018). Moreover, transformational leaders convey high expectations and confidence in their followers, which enhances employees' positive self-image (Hetland et al., 2018). This demonstration of confidence motivates employees to craft their jobs to preserve a positive self-image. Similarly, Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001) suggest that the need for a positive self-image is an essential motivator for employees to participate in JC behavior.

Furthermore, the Demands-Resources (JD-R) perspective enables us to establish a clear association between TL and JC. The conceptualization of JC according to JD-R theory demonstrated that employees can craft their jobs in three ways (Tims & Bakker, 2010). In this regard, employees who work with a transformative leader are more likely to participate in resource-seeking behaviors. Because leaders have numerous valuable resources, such as assistance with employee career development (e.g., training chances), as well as job-related information, knowledge, and expertise (Afsar et al., 2019), transformational leaders are assumed to be open and eager to participate in those resources with their followers, which is likely to motivate the employees to seek behavioral resources (Naeem et al., 2020).

Furthermore, transformational leaders are supposed to motivate employees to rethink the ways in which they do their tasks and promote them to challenge the status quo, which prompts staff to find job challenges that are more aligned with their personal capabilities (Park & Park, 2021). Moreover, the vision of leaders can motivate their subordinates to face new challenges and exceed expectations, which, accordingly, can drive followers to seek challenges such as JC (Hetland et al., 2018). Transformational leaders also have a tendency to delegate greater power to their subordinates, thus allowing employees to decrease their job demands (Naeem et al., 2020). Previous empirical studies proved that TL enhances employees' JC (seeking resources, seeking challenges, and reducing demands) (Wang et al., 2017; Hetland et al., 2018; Naeem et al., 2020). Based on the above theoretical discussion and empirical evidence, the following hypothesis was proposed:

H3: Transformational leadership is positively related to subordinates' job crafting.

2.4 Psychological Empowerment and Job Crafting

The collection of PE four dimensions reflects a feeling of control and an active orientation toward the job (Kooij et al., 2021), and gives employees the ability to mold or design their job role and context (Kiliç et al., 2020). Psychologically empowered employees consider themselves qualified for and able to affect their jobs and work environments in ways that motivate proactive behavior (Spreitzer, 1995; Coehoorn, 2017). In the same context, previous studies referred that empowerment cognitions such as self-efficacy and control are positively related to JC (Rudolph et al., 2017; Zhang & Parker, 2019). When employees perceive that their supervisor promotes their self-determination, self-efficacy, and flexibility, they will enact in JC behaviors (Kiliç et al., 2020). Likewise, Khan et al. (2021) reported that employees are more likely to engage in proactive work behaviors like JC when they realize that their needs for self-efficacy, relatedness, and autonomy are met. Therefore, PE is expected to act as a substantial motivation to do self-initiated tasks like JC (Coehoorn, 2017; Kiliç et al., 2020). In brief, psychologically empowered individuals are more likely to perform JC as they believe that they have the competence and autonomy to have a meaningful effect (Coehoorn, 2017). However, a limited number of researches have investigated the relationship between employees' PE and JC (Kiliç et al., 2020). Thus, to address this research gap and based on the previous discussion, the following hypothesis was formulated:

H4: Psychological empowerment is positively related to job crafting.

2.5 Job Crafting and Employee Wellbeing

A healthy staff is a key to maintaining an efficient and innovative company (Plomp et al., 2016). As demonstrated by prior studies, employee occupational well-being commonly includes job satisfaction, work engagement, burnout, and job strain (Rudolph et al., 2017; Toyama et al., 2021; Mehta & Sharma, 2021). According to Tims et al. (2013), JC has been linked to work engagement and burnout, which are considered the main aspects of EW. As argued by Toyama et al. (2021), JC is considered one method to overcome increasing job stress and the threat of burnout.

Further, based on the JD-R theory, JC has been positively associated with several beneficial work outcomes, such as EW (Tims et al., 2013).

In line with the JD-R theory, access to adequate job resources safeguards employees from high work demands as well as stress and burnout, and at the same time enhances work engagement (Bakker et al., 2016). Accordingly, it is believed that by crafting jobs, employees seek and expand their work resources, and in turn, these obtained functional resources constitute a barrier against higher work demands and are associated with greater levels of well-being (Plomp et al., 2016). Moreover, according to the person–job fit theory, employee ill-being results from a mismatch between the requirements, skills, and capabilities of the individual and the characteristics of his job (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005).

Generally, JC gives good chances to enhance the fit between the employee and the job, and thus employees are less likely to be affected by the strains caused by the mismatch between them. By crafting their work characteristics and environments, employees encounter less depression and physical health problems, which in turn, promotes their well-being (Kim & Beehr, 2018). Similarly, Wang et al. (2020) mentioned that through JC, employees can effectively deal with threats and strain and thus obtain and keep a higher level of positive attitudes and job-related well-being. According to Toyama et al. (2021), individuals are more likely to feel satisfied and less likely to experience frustration when they craft their job resources and challenges. Similarly, Rudolph et al. (2017) proved that JC is positively correlated with job satisfaction and work engagement, while JC is negatively correlated with job strain. Previous empirical researches have revealed that JC is positively linked to EW (Slemp & Vella-Brodrick, 2014; Wang et al., 2020; Toyama et al., 2021). Therefore, based on the previous arguments, the following hypothesis was formulated:

H5: Job crafting is positively related to employee wellbeing.

2.6 The mediating Role of Job Crafting

TL has been proven to boost many aspects of organizational life and is positively correlated with employee well-being (Tummers & Bakker, 2021). Nevertheless, the process by which such relations are formed is not well understood (Krishnan, 2012). Wang (2020) suggested that some favorable leadership styles, like empowering and servant leadership, can significantly improve employee job performance and well-being via JC. This could be due to the fact that good leadership provides employees with additional job resources such as autonomy and support (Kim et al., 2018; Ding et al., 2020). Transformational leader behaviors such as increasing autonomy and development support reinforce followers' JC behaviors (Amundsen & Martinsen, 2014). In the same context, employees are encouraged to craft their job when they have more job autonomy and support, resulting in higher task performance and positive affect at work (Rudolph et al., 2017; Zhang & Parker, 2019). Likewise, Zito et al. (2019) demonstrated that job autonomy and job satisfaction are positively correlated through JC. This idea is confirmed by the study of Skakon et al. (2010), which reported that employee-oriented leadership is positively associated with employee health and performance. Thus, it is anticipated that JC will be an efficient

mediation method through which TL is successfully converted into improved EW. Thus, the following hypothesis was suggested:

H6. Job Crafting mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and employee well-being.

2.7 Sequential Mediation of Psychological Empowerment and Job Crafting behavior

TL has many attributes, including enhancing the potential of subordinates, demonstrating individualized consideration for performance improvement, and sharing significant duties with followers to give them a deeper feeling of belonging (Huang et al., 2006). Besides, transformational leaders value followers' independence and proactivity, preferring empowerment tactics over control (Conger, 1999). Bass (1999) identified PE as a possible enhancer of TL effects, concluding that TL influences work outcomes through empowerment. Psychologically empowered employees perceive themselves as competent and able to affect their jobs and workplace surroundings in significant ways, which encourages proactive behaviour (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990; Spreitzer, 1995). Individuals who are psychologically empowered perform more effectively in areas such as "initiative," "acting autonomously," and "flexibility" (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990). Moreover, when followers are directed through service, they feel in command (Khan et al., 2021). Therefore, employees who have vested decision-making authority are more likely to engage in proactive work behavior (Luo & Zheng, 2018).

JC is one of the proactive actions which aims at ensuring EW and promoting positive emotions (Costantini & Sartori, 2018). Through psychologically empowering FLEs, leaders excite employees and expand their thinking and action repertoire. In the same context, the study by Kooij et al. (2021) proposed that when employees feel more psychologically empowered and encounter more personal meaning, competence, autonomy, and impact, they are more likely to adjust their jobs. Based on theoretical arguments so far, it is expected that TL can effectively enhance EW through the sequential mediating effects of PE and JC. This may be due to positive leadership provides employees with job autonomy and support (Kim et al., 2018; Ding et al., 2020). When increasing self-determination and support, employees are encouraged to craft their job, which, in turn, leads to a greater level of job performance and improved occupational wellbeing (Rudolph et al., 2017; Zhang & Parker, 2019). Currently, there is no empirical data indicating that PE and JC play a sequential mediation function between TL and EW. Therefore, based on the previous arguments, the following hypothesis was formulated:

H7. Transformational leadership is linked to employee well-being via the sequential mediating impacts of psychological empowerment and job crafting.
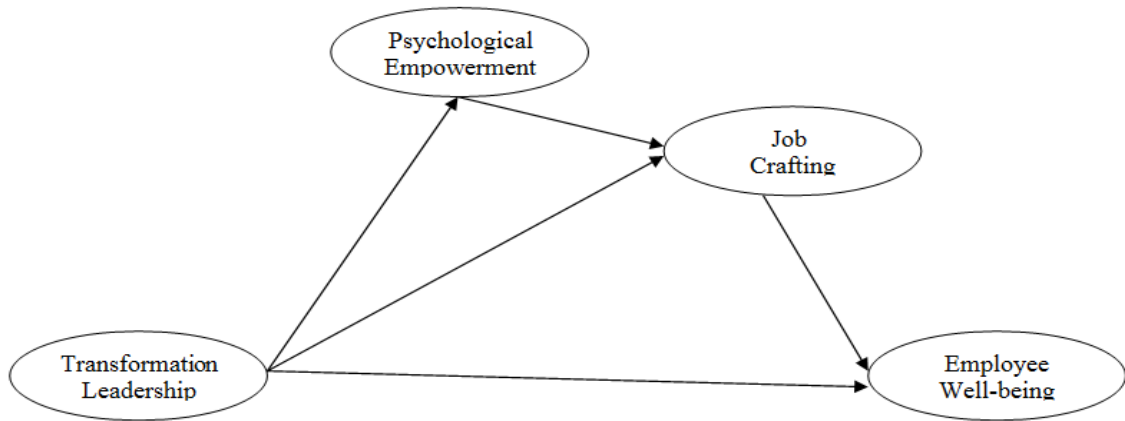
Fig.1. conceptual framework

3. Methodology
3.1 Sample and Respondents Profile
Data for this study were collected via a questionnaire from a random sample of frontline employees (e.g. flight attendants, baggage handlers, and customer service employees) working in both public and private Egyptian airlines (Egypt Air, Nile Air, fly Egypt, and Air Arabia). The data were gathered from January to February 2022. A total of 482 employees were contacted. Only 416 of the 482 questionnaires were considered sufficiently complete, with a response rate of 86.3%. Table 1 shows the respondents' demographic profiles. According to the table, the majority of the responses were from females, which accounted for 67.5% of the sample, while 32.5% of the respondents were males .Table 1 also shows that 40.6% of respondents are aged 40-49 years old, followed by those aged 30-39 years with 40.1%, then those aged under 30 years with 9.9%, and finally, those aged 50 years and more account for 9.4%. The results also clarify that more than two thirds of the sample (87%) hold a bachelor's degree, 6.9% of the respondents had masters, while 3.1% have a diploma, and 3% had a PhD. As for experience, the results illustrate that 37% of respondents have years of experience ranging from 5 to 9 years, followed by those who have years of experience ranging from 10 to 14 years, with a percentage of 31%, while 18.5% of respondents have years of experience less than 5 years, and finally, 13.5% of respondents have 15 years of experience or more.

Table 1
Respondents demographic profile

Characteristics		Frequencies	Percentage
Gender	Male	135	32.5%
	Female	281	67.5%
Age	Less than 30 years	41	9.9%
	From 30 to 39 years	167	40.1%
	From 40 to 49 years	169	40.6%
	50 years and above	39	9.4%
Educational level	Bachelor	362	87%
	Diploma	13	3.1%
	Master	29	6.9%
	PhD	12	3%
Job experience	Less than 5 years	77	18.5%
	From 5 to 9 years	154	37%
	From 10 to 14 years	129	31%
	15 years and above	56	13.5%

3.2 Measures

TL: To assess TL, a twenty-item scale developed by Afsar et al. (2019) was used, which was originally from Podsakoff et al. (1990). Undoubtedly, this is the most extensively utilized model in this field. This scale examined the six components of TL, including: articulates vision, provides appropriate model, promotes the acceptance of goals, high performance expectations, provides individualized support, and intellectual stimulation. One of the scale's representative items is "My leader displays a sense of power and confidence." The scale items were measured on a five-point Likert scale (1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree).

PE: To assess the PE, the study used the 12-items empowerment scale which was originally developed by Spreitzer (1995). This scale is composed of four dimensions: meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact. The items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale. An example item is (e.g., "The work I do is meaningful to me.").

JC: To measure JC, employees were asked to rate their JC behavior with 15 items adopted from Tims et al.'s (2012). The scale captures three dimensions of JC behaviors including: increasing structural resources, increasing social job resources, and increasing challenge job demands. Each dimension was measured by five items: A sample item of increasing structural job resources is (e.g., "I try to develop myself professionally"), while an example item of increasing social job resources is (e.g., "I ask colleagues for advice"), and one of the representative items of increasing challenging job demands is (e.g., "I regularly take on extra tasks even though I do not receive extra salary for them."). All of the scale items were measured on a five-point scale where (1) represented "never" and (5) was employed to indicate "most frequent".

EW: For measuring EW, the Mehta and Sharma (2021) scale was used. This scale was composed of three dimensions: work engagement, job satisfaction, and burnout. One of the items of the variable is (e.g., "My job inspires me to do well in a job"). Responses were taken for this scale on a five-point Likert scale.

4-Findings

The measurement model and the structural model are two components of every model. Though the structural model is ultimately desired, the structural model's quality can only be believed if it is supported by a reliable and accurate measurement model. The present study, which used PLS-smart, used both of them, which are discussed in detail below.

4.1 Measurement Model

To determine the model's adequacy, all of the variables involved in the measurement model were tested for reliability and validity. Cronabach's alpha (Alpha) and composite reliability (CR) were used to assess reliability as evaluated by inter-item consistency. All of the variables have Alpha and CR values greater than 0.7, indicating that they are reliable (Panayides, 2013) (see table 2). Item loadings were also acquired to assess the variables' convergent validity at the item level. Item loadings for all variables were more than 0.7 (Shrestha, 2021). To determine convergent validity at the variable level, average variance extracted (AVE) was measured, which was greater than the minimum permissible value of 0.5 for all variables (Zaiţ & Bertea, 2011).

Table 2

Reliability and validity

Constructs	Factor loading	Cronabch's alpha	composite reliability	AVE
TL	.834	.871	.889	.737
PE	.792	.824	.869	.709
JC	.757	.832	.888	.762
EW	.814	.795	.901	.722

The heterotrait–monotrait (HTMT) ratios were calculated to determine discriminant validity. As demonstrated in table 3, all of the pairs have ratios smaller than 0.85 (Franke & Sarstedt, 2019).

Table 3

Heterotrait–Monotrait (HTMT)

	TL	PE	JC
TL			
PE	.714		
JC	.752	.788	
EW	.729	.756	.844

4.2 Descriptive Analysis

Table (4) shows that there is a relatively high level for the four study variables, as the mean was 3.52 for TL (SD= .862), 3.71 for PE (SD= .743), 3.62 for JC (SD= .925), and 3.59 for EW (SD= .902). Table (5) also reveals that there is a strong significant and positive correlation between the four study variables.

Table 4
Descriptive analysis

	TL	PE	JC	EW
Mean	3.52	3.71	3.62	3.59
SD	.862	.743	.925	.902

Table 5
correlation between constructs

	TL	PE	JC	EW
TL	1			
PE	.744**	1		
JC	.659**	.722**	1	
EW	.703**	.691**	.676**	1

4.3 Structural Model

The structural model examined both direct and indirect correlation among study variables. The first hypothesis is accepted because TL has a significant and positive impact on EW (β = .553, t= 10.635, p= .000). The second hypothesis, TL affects significantly and positively PE (β = 593, t = 14.463, p =.000). So, H2 is supported. As proposed in the third hypothesis, the results indicate that TL had a significant and positive influence on JC (β =.639, t = 16.385, p =000), so H3 is supported. Similarly, the fourth hypothesis is supported because PE has a significant and positive effect on JC (β =.455, t = 16.852, p =.000). Additionally, the relationship between JC and well-being was also found to be significant and positive (β = .701, t= 21.242, p= .000). Therefore, H5 is supported. Additionally, the sixth hypothesis which suggested that JC mediates the relationship between TL and EW is supported as (β =.541, t = 22.542, and p =.000). Finally, the seventh hypothesis that suggests TL is linked to EW via the sequential mediating impacts of PE and JC was found to be significant as (β =.586, t = 18.903, and p =.000). Thus, H7 is supported. (see Tables 5 & 6) and (Figures 1 & 2).

Table 6
Structural model

Path	Estimate (β)	SE	t-test	p-value
(TL) → (EW)	.553	.052	10.635	.000
(TL) → (PE)	.593	.041	14.463	.000
(TL) → (JC)	.639	.039	16.385	.000
(PE) → (JC)	.455	.027	16.852	.000
(JC) → (EW)	.701	.033	21.242	.000
(TL) → (JC) → (EW)	.541	.024	22.542	.000
(TL) → (PE) → (JC) → (EW)	.586	.031	18.903	.000
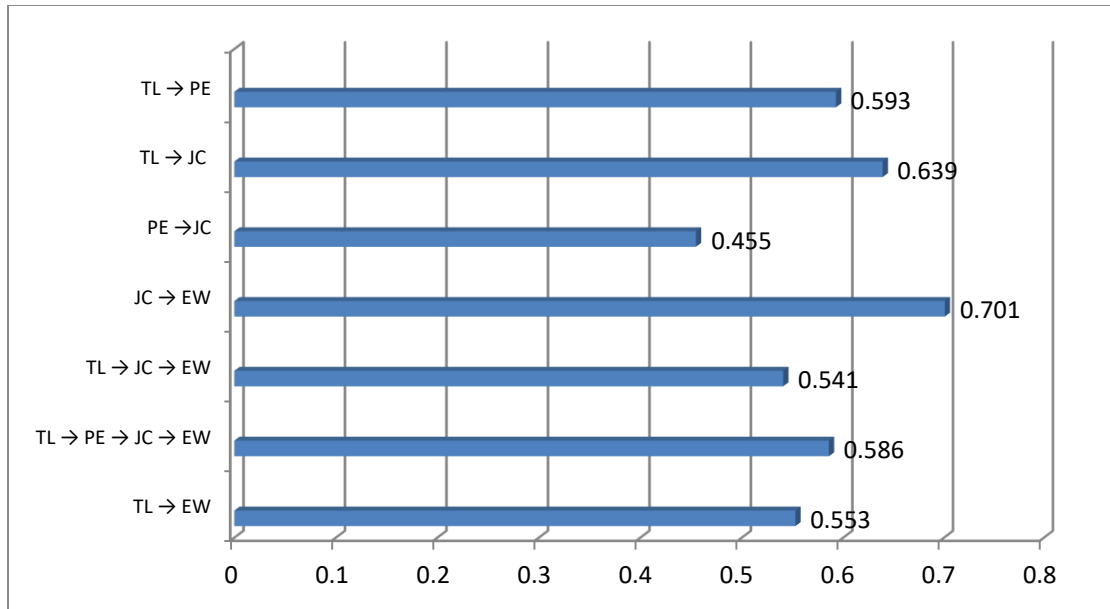
Fig.2. Path coefficients

5- Discussion and Conclusion

The main aim of the current research was to investigate the sequential mediating role of PE and JC between TL and EW. To achieve this aim the present study developed and investigated an integrative model and used the PLS technique for examining the relationships between study variables. First of all, the study found that TL is positively correlated with EW. Transformational leaders have an impact on their followers' feelings of wellbeing through idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. The finding of the study was in line with the previous studies which found a positive impact of TL on EW (McMurray et al., 2010; Samad et al., 2021).

Second, the results confirmed that TL positively affects the PE of employees. Transformational leaders empower their followers, which enhances their feelings of competence, self-determination, meaning and impact. This result was also consistent with previous studies which found that TL positively affects the PE of followers (Jha, 2014; Pradhan et al., 2017; Süer, 2017).

Third, the results also found a positive correlation between TL and JC behavior in the form of increasing structural and social resources as well as increasing challenging demands. This result came to agree with the findings of previous studies depicting a relationship between TL and JC (Wang et al., 2017; Hetland et al., 2018; Naeem et al., 2020). TL empowers employees and provides them with confidence to take action and seek out social contacts and feedback to improve their daily work environment (Hetland et al., 2018). Transformational leaders can also generate an effective learning environment (Wang et al., 2017), and by providing their employees with autonomy and the opportunity to develop themselves, leaders demonstrate that followers can use JC to make their jobs more interesting (Afsar et al., 2019).

Fourth, the study also proved that PE is positively related to the JC behavior of airlines' FLEs. Psychologically empowered employees believe they are qualified for and capable of influencing their jobs and work environments in ways that encourage proactive behavior (Spreitzer, 1995; Coehoorn, 2017). This result is consistent with earlier findings revealing a positive relationship between PE and JC (Coehoorn, 2017; Khan et al., 2021). Fifth, the research discovered evidence of a link between JC and EW. The result for the same link was also found by previous studies (Slemp & Vella-Brodrick, 2014; Toyama et al., 2021). Through JC, employees can effectively deal with threats and stress, and thus resulting in a higher level of positive attitudes and job related well-being (Wang et al., 2020).

Fifth, in addition to the direct links argued above, the study also attempted to evaluate the mediating effect played firstly by JC and secondly by PE and JC sequentially on the relationship between TL and EW. The findings supported the hypothesis that the effect of TL on wellbeing is mediated by JC. It is supposed that favorable leadership styles can significantly improve employee job performance and well-being via JC (Wang, 2020).

Finally, the study explored how the PE of employees, as well as their subsequent JC behavior, mediate the association between TL and EW. This may be due to positive leadership providing employees with job autonomy and support (Kim et al., 2018; Ding et al., 2020). When transformational leaders increase the employees' self-determination and support, they are encouraged to craft their job which, in turn, leads to a greater level of job performance, and occupational wellbeing (Rudolph et al., 2017; Zhang & Parker, 2019). For the authors' knowledge, there is no research linking TL with wellbeing through job crafting, as well as, until now, there have been no empirical studies indicating that PE and JC play a sequential mediation function between TL and EW. Therefore, the results of the current study would suggest that PE and JC can be seen as facilitating conditions and important keys that managers can use to enhance the wellbeing of their employees.

5.1 Theoretical Implications
Due to the accumulating evidence pointing to a relationship between TL and EW, the need to understand the linking mechanism has become more pressing. Theoretically, the current study helps in three ways. Firstly, by collecting data from FLEs in Egyptian airlines, this study makes a significant contribution to the leadership literature by demonstrating the usefulness of TL to promote wellbeing and adds to the actual empirical evidence regarding the relationship between TL and EW. Secondly, the study includes two mediating path tests.

First, the study revealed the mediating role of JC between TL and EW. Second, uniquely, this study is one of the first to investigate the sequential mediation of PE and JC relating to TL and EW. The first mediating approach, on the other hand, looked at the overall effect of TL on JC, which led to EW. The second way of mediation focused on the psychologically empowering process of TL, which was employed to induce JC behavior. TL succeeds in fostering PE among employees through its employee empowerment method, which includes providing autonomy to employees, including them in decision-making, and sharing job related information

with employees (Coehoorn, 2017; Kim et al., 2018; Ding et al., 2020). Employees who are psychologically empowered are more likely to engage in JC.

Finally, based on the arguments of Naeem et al. (2020), the psychological mechanisms that underpin the relationship between leadership and JC are less well understood. The current study adds to the body of knowledge demonstrating the effectiveness of PE in encouraging JC among FLEs.

5.2 Practical Implications

The findings of the current study have many significant practical implications. First, this study confirmed the results of previous studies which found that TL is effective in enhancing EW. Through instilling confidence in their employees' abilities, transformational leaders in airlines can encourage FLEs to believe more strongly in their own capabilities, thereby increasing their feeling of self-efficacy, which, in turn, affects their sense of satisfaction and well-being (Samad et al., 2021). Thus, to improve EW, service organizations should either elevate employees with a high level of transformational characteristics to be leaders or provide training projects for current leaders to learn more about TL. Further, due to the characteristics of FLEs' jobs in the service sector like tourism, prolonged working hours, disturbed work–life balance, role stress, and excessive workloads, the EW has become more demanded. Such transformational leaders will be able to manage the FLE's rapid change and motivate their subordinates to tackle the challenges and other uncertainties and risks that FLEs face.

The study's second significant practical implication is the indirect impact of TL on EW through the mediating role of JC. Therefore, service organizations should establish situations that encourage people to enhance their JC. For example, organizations can give employees more autonomy to create an environment that encourages job crafting (Amundsen & Martinsen, 2014; Zhang & Parker, 2019). Finally, the present study found that PE and JC play a substantial sequential mediating role in the relationship between TL and EW, which implies that promoting PE of FLEs is critical for improving their wellbeing. As a result, it is recommended that organizations should provide their employees with self-determination, self-efficacy, and flexibility in order to encourage them to enact JC behaviors (Kiliç et al., 2020). When employees feel more psychologically empowered and encounter more personal meaning, competence, autonomy, and impact, they are more likely to adjust their jobs (Kooij et al., 2021).

5.3 Limitations and Areas for Future Research

Despite the contributions mentioned above, there are some limitations to this study that should be addressed. Since the current study was conducted on airlines, the present model should be retested in other tourism businesses like hotels and travel agencies for better generalization. Another limitation of this study is the focus on TL only. Therefore, other future research might compare the efficacy of TL to other leadership styles like paternalistic and authentic leadership, to see how effective they are. Finally, for future research, it is necessary to include a variety of moderators in order to determine the contextual aspects that influence TL and EW. Scholars can investigate the role of demographic characteristics in influencing the relationship between TL and EW.

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كيف تؤثر القيادة التحويلية على رفاهية العاملين؟ استكشاف الدور الوسيط التسلسلي لتأثير التمكين النفسي وصياغة الوظيفة

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معلومات المقالة	الملخص
الكلمات المفتاحية	يهدف القادة التحويليون إلى تشجيع مرؤوسيهم على تحمل مسؤولية أكبر في وظائفهم، مما يسمح لهم بتحديد المهام التي من شأنها تحسين أدائهم ورفاهيتهم. عندما يقوم الموظفون بتعديل وظائفهم لجعلها أكثر انسجامًا مع تفضيلاتهم الخاصة، فإنهم يقومون بصياغة الوظائف. تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى استكشاف الدور الوسيط التسلسلي للتمكين النفسي وصياغة الوظائف بين القيادة التحويلية ورفاهية الموظف في شركات الطيران المصرية. باستخدام الاستبيان، تم جمع البيانات من عينة عشوائية من موظفي الخطوط الأمامية العاملين في شركات الطيران. تم تحليل ما مجموعه 416 استبيانا صالحاً من خلال استخدام نمذجة المعادلة الهيكلية باستخدام Smart–PLS. أبرزت نتائج الدراسة أن القيادة التحويلية ترتبط بشكل معنوي وإيجابي بكل من التمكين النفسي وصياغة الوظائف ورفاهية الموظفين بالخطوط الأمامية في شركات الطيران. علاوة على ذلك، أظهرت نتائج هذه الدراسة أن التمكين النفسي وصياغة الوظائف يلعبون دورا وسيطاً متسلسلاً بين القيادة التحويلية ورفاهية الموظف في شركات الطيران. بناءً على هذه النتائج، قدمت الدراسة بعض التوصيات ومجالات للبحث في المستقبل.
القيادة التحويلية؛ التمكين النفسي، صياغة الوظيفة، رفاهية الموظف، موظفي الخطوط الأمامية، شركات الطيران المصرية.	
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