

Leadership Behaviors and Employee Motivation as Predictive Indicators of Performance in the Palestinian Education Sector

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to analyse the extent to which leadership behaviours and employees' work motivation contribute as predictive indicators of job performance in the Palestinian education sector, by applying the study to administrative and academic staff in Palestinian public universities. The study adopted a quantitative descriptive-analytical approach and used a questionnaire as the main tool for data collection from a population of 1,547 employees, from which a stratified random sample of 308 participants was selected. The statistical analysis revealed that the dimensions of leadership behaviours (participation in decision-making, empowerment and improvement of the work environment, inspirational motivation and professional development) and work motivation (positive incentives and reward systems, recognition of effort and career promotion, commitment to work spirit and quality of performance) contribute significantly to predicting job performance in its various dimensions, and that the joint predictive model explains a substantial proportion of the variance in job performance among the sample members. The results also highlighted the importance of integrating the role of motivational leadership with a fair professional incentive system to build high levels of efficiency, commitment, and job satisfaction. The study concluded with several recommendations, most notably strengthening participatory and empowering leadership, developing a fair and transparent incentive system, investing in leadership development programs, and activating regular feedback channels that enhance employee performance and improve the quality of work in Palestinian public universities.

Keywords: Leadership behaviours, Work Motivation, Job Performance, Education sector.

INTRODUCTION

Improving job performance in the education sector is considered one of the most important priorities of educational development in countries that seek to enhance the quality of their educational outcomes. This is achieved by focusing on organizational factors that influence employees' professional behavior, most notably leadership behaviors and job motivation. Studies have shown that effective administrative leadership contributes to enhancing employees' capabilities and improving their performance in a way that serves institutional objectives and promotes excellence in the work environment (Al-Sayyid, 2025). Modern educational literature has also demonstrated that value-based leadership plays a pivotal role in improving teachers' performance and developing their professional capacities within educational institutions (Al-Rasbi, 2025). Other studies have confirmed that effective leadership in schools is a key element in achieving quality job performance and improving the level of administrative efficiency (Al-Arimi, 2024).

In the same context, the literature indicates that job motivation represents one of the most prominent predictive variables influencing performance by encouraging employees to exert greater efforts and improve their productivity, whether through material, moral, or social incentives (Al-Badhali, 2025). Applied research in various economic sectors has also revealed that the absence of effective motivational systems weakens the level of commitment and negatively affects productivity and performance (Al-Naeem, 2024). In the educational

context, contemporary literature has shown that Islamic thought preceded many modern theories in emphasizing the importance of motivation and strengthening the positive spirit among employees, which directly reflects on the quality of educational performance (Al-Salem, 2024).

Foreign studies have supported this direction by highlighting the positive relationship between transformational leadership and job performance, as this leadership style contributes to raising morale and achieving commitment and creativity at work (Nugraha, 2025). Recent research findings have also shown that leadership styles that support employees are associated with higher levels of job satisfaction, which leads to the development of institutional performance in a tangible way (Putri et al., 2025). Other international studies have confirmed that job motivation is a fundamental variable in explaining performance and improving its outcomes, as it contributes to empowering employees and increasing their ability to accomplish tasks and achieve organizational goals (Rony et al., 2024).

Based on the importance of the Palestinian education sector, which represents a fundamental pillar in building human capital, there is an urgent need to study leadership and motivation variables as predictive indicators of performance, especially in light of the operational and organizational challenges facing Palestinian educational institutions. Accordingly, this study seeks to analyze the impact of leadership behaviors and job motivation on performance in the Palestinian education environment, with the aim of reaching a predictive model that contributes to enhancing performance quality and developing administrative practices in a way that supports the achievement of sustainable educational development.

The Palestinian education sector suffers from a clear variation in the levels of job performance among employees within schools. This indicates that current leadership practices have not yet succeeded in motivating employees to achieve professional performance levels that meet the aspirations of educational development and quality. In addition, weaknesses in school leadership in directing efforts and achieving professional empowerment contribute to limiting the effectiveness of human resources within the educational institution (Al-Sayyid, 2025). This deficiency appears as a result of organizational and environmental pressures that affect professional interaction and job commitment, making performance more dependent on individual effort rather than on supportive administrative systems (Al-Rasbi, 2025).

The literature indicates that leadership patterns based on professional cohesion, trust, and empowerment contribute to developing performance and enhancing the quality of educational tasks (Al-Arimi, 2024), while job motivation in its various forms plays an important role in increasing satisfaction and motivation toward achievement (Al-Badhali, 2025). In contrast, the weakness of incentive programs leads to a decline in the level of commitment and productivity in institutions that rely primarily on the human element (Al-Naeem, 2024). The value dimension also represents a supportive factor for work behaviors and their improvement within the educational environment (Al-Salem, 2024). Applied models outside the educational sector have shown that motivation and discipline together significantly influence performance development (Da et al., 2025), and that human resource efficiency and motivation enhance employees' productivity in different professional environments (Rony et al., 2024). Leadership that supports employees and meets their needs also contributes to raising the level of organizational achievement (Putri et al., 2025).

Other studies have confirmed that transformational leadership represents an effective approach to improving performance and enhancing commitment within institutions (Nugraha, 2025), and that employee satisfaction represents an important channel through which leadership influences employee performance (Firdaus et al., 2025). Research findings have also shown that the values of transformational leadership contribute to increasing employees' productivity and developing their professional capabilities, which is reflected in the development of institutional performance and its indicators (Perdana, 2025). The application of this leadership style in educational institutions also contributes to improving their outcomes and the interaction of their employees in ways that support innovation and continuous improvement (Da et al., 2025). However, all of this scientific evidence has not yet been tested in the context of Palestinian school education, which possesses professional and organizational particularities that require a precise understanding of the determinants of performance within it.

The problem of this study lies in the absence of a clear scientific framework explaining how leadership behaviors and professional motivation can interact together to predict job performance within Palestinian schools.

Understanding this relationship therefore represents a scientific necessity to fill an existing knowledge gap in educational literature, as well as a professional need to provide educational leaders with accurate data on the best methods for enhancing employee effectiveness. It is also linked to a developmental orientation that supports improving the quality of education as a fundamental pillar in building human capital capable of facing future challenges in Palestine. Within this framework, the study aims to analyze the extent to which leadership behaviors and employee job motivation serve as predictive indicators of job performance in the Palestinian education sector. This is achieved by determining the effect of leadership behaviors with their various dimensions on job performance, identifying the effect of job motivation with its various dimensions on job performance, and revealing the joint predictive ability of these two variables in improving employees' performance in Palestinian schools.

Theoretical Framework

Administrative leadership is regarded as one of the main determinants that establish the level of institutional performance and capabilities to achieve its strategic goals because the organization success is connected with the capacity of the leadership to control the behavior of employees and encourage them to perform their duties in an effective and professional manner (Al-Sayyid, 2025). In educational literature, leadership is as well highlighted as a powerful attribute in the establishment of a positive work culture that will lead to the enhancement of commitment and discipline and the quality of performance, directing the direct effect of the leaders in developing performance-motivating settings in schools (Al-Rasbi, 2025).

The work of an effective leader, which is not supervisory but empowering, wherein the employee is sustained in the role and has constant support, will minimize role conflict, increase adherence to professional advice, and collaboration among work teams (Al-Arimi, 2024). The findings of the applied research in the institutional context have proved that the leadership behaviors grounded in the effective communication and involvement in the decision-making affect the quality of the work and the level of engagement of the employees to the job positively, which contributes to the formation of the overall performance of the organization (Putri et al., 2025).

Transformational leadership becomes one of the most powerful contemporary leadership styles in enhancing performance due to the dependability on inspirational factors and inciting internal motivation in employees and promoting innovation and creative thinking. This will help employees to rise above work hurdles and realize exemplary levels of professional performance (Nugraha, 2025). The transformational leadership style also helps to create the supportive organizational climate that helps employees and encourages them to advance their professional skills that are manifested in the quality of organizational products (Da et al., 2025).

The leadership practices also play a role in guiding the employees in the best utilization of their resources and high efficiency. Research has indicated that the enhancement of skills in the leaders helps to empower the individuals and encourage them to follow the quality standards and deliver the best performance (Perdana, 2025). Hence, good administrative leadership is a significant predictive variable of performance within the educational sector because of its contribution in the development of positive professional practices that are reflected in productivity, performance, and quality.

According to the literature, also, motivation is one of the primary forces that influence the behavior of employees in institutions because the level of performance is linked to the extent to which the organization can meet the professional, material, and social needs of people in a manner that promotes the need to achieve (Al-Badhali, 2025). It has also been found that non-financial rewards, like recognition and promotions, are not less significant than financial ones in enhancing performance and increasing the level of institutional loyalty among employees (Al-Naeem, 2024). This points out the significance of pursuing an equal motivational strategy that combines the necessity of professional acknowledgment and economic safety.

As a source of knowledge in the Arab context, Islamic administrative thought focuses on the need to encourage hard work and honesty in performing duties as pretexts to enhance performance. This is done as it helps in fostering cooperation, teamwork and recognition of exemplary performance, which helps in enhancing commitment, and boosting productivity levels in educational institutions (Al-Salem, 2024). The positive motivational policies have also been proven by empirical evidence in service institutions to increase job

satisfaction and work engagement, which is translated into more stable and notable performance levels (Da et al., 2025).

Statistical research has demonstrated that job motivation, among other things, helps in explaining large percentages of variance in performance. It directly influences the employees in their effectiveness and professional competence, increases their commitment to the organization, and decreases the level of absenteeism and turnover (Rony et al., 2024). Motivation is also linked to the development of supportive working climate, where there is continuous recognition of the employees and an increase in their capacity to withstand work pressures and attain effective results in institutional objectives (Getnet & Fujie, 2024).

Therefore, professional motivation is an authentic predictive performance mechanism because it is converted into internal energy in which it focuses efforts towards performance and determines the quality of the work results. This qualifies it as a necessary instrument that the educational leaders need to positively apply in performance development at the Palestinian schools.

The main result of the efficiency and effectiveness of the organization is job performance, and its assessment is an indicator of how successful the institution is in how it uses its human resources and whether it applies the goals it sets (Al-Arimi, 2024). Research has revealed that the elements of professional support such as clarity and feedback in the task and enabling factor affect the performance and the provision of these factors by the management has an impact on enhancing the quality of performance and advancing the level of achievement (Al-Sayyid, 2025).

In contribution to increasing the performance, the leadership role is direct in terms of guiding the employees and offering them the required training opportunities, in addition to unleashing the performance monitoring systems that aid in maximizing the work outputs at all times (Firdaus et al., 2025). The supportive leadership also helps to raise the job satisfaction which is one of the greatest contributors of performance. The satisfaction has been proved to increase commitment, continuation, and innovation in work, which are indicators of the quality of educational performance (Putri et al., 2025).

The study of the international community proves the effectiveness of the positive organizational climate established by the competent leader in the increment of job interaction and the employee capacity to reach performance rates of such quality and mastery (Da et al., 2025). Empowerment of employees and building of their professional capabilities is also one of the major pillars toward boosting productivity and enhancing the degree of discipline and accuracy in adhering to the professional standards (Nugraha, 2025).

The literature also indicates that the behavior of the leader that centers on motivating employees provides them with extra incentives that are translated into more eminent performance. The satisfaction, commitment, and institutional belonging have been discovered to mediate the linkage between leadership and performance due to the quality of the incentives (Rony et al., 2024). In line with this, job performance has been considered as manifested at the convergence of motivational leadership and professional motivation, which affords the employees the capacity, as well as the desire to perform optimally.

STUDY METHODOLOGY

This study adopted the quantitative approach as the most appropriate method for its objectives, which aim to examine the predictive effect of leadership behaviors and job motivation on job performance in the Palestinian education sector using statistical analysis methods. This approach relies on a structured quantitative framework that contributes to obtaining standardized data that can be measured and generalized objectively.

Study Instrument

The questionnaire was used as the primary tool for collecting data from the study sample. It was developed in accordance with the study variables and their theoretically adopted dimensions. The instrument included items distributed across three main axes: leadership behaviors, job motivation, and job performance. A five-point Likert scale was used to measure participants' responses. The instrument was subjected to a scientific review

process to ensure content validity, in addition to calculating statistical reliability using Cronbach's alpha coefficient to verify the internal consistency of its items.

Table 1 Study Variables and Their Dimensions

Variable	Dimension	Reference
Leadership Behaviors	Participation in decision-making	(Al-Rasbi, 2025)
	Empowerment and improvement of the work environment	(Al-Arimi, 2024)
	Inspirational motivation and professional development	(Nugraha, 2025)
Job Motivation	Positive incentives and reward systems	(Al-Badhali, 2025)
	Recognition of efforts and professional promotions	(Al-Naeem, 2024)
	Commitment to work spirit and quality of performance	(Al-Salem, 2024)
Job Performance	Quality of achievement and professional execution	(Al-Sayyid, 2025)
	Organizational commitment and professional discipline	(Getnet & Fujie, 2024)
	Professional competence and productivity	(Rony et al., 2024)
	Innovation in task implementation	(Da et al., 2025)
	Job satisfaction as a reflection of performance	(Firdaus et al., 2025)

Study Population and Sample

The study population consists of all administrative and academic employees in Palestinian public universities (Palestine Technical University – Kadoorie and Al-Istiqlal University), whose total number is 1,547 employees, as shown in the following table.

Table 2 Study Population

Institution	Number
Palestine Technical University – Kadoorie	1231
Al-Istiqlal University	316
Total	1547

Since this population is diverse and distributed across two institutions, a stratified random sampling method was used to ensure accurate representation of the universities within their administrative and functional structures. The sample size was calculated using Stephen Thompson's formula (Thompson, 2012) at a confidence level of 0.95, a margin of error of 0.05, and a neutral property value of 0.50, resulting in a final sample size of 308 participants.

Reliability

The internal reliability coefficient of the study instrument was measured using Cronbach's alpha coefficient for each axis of the questionnaire as well as for the overall scale. The reliability results presented in the following table indicate that all Cronbach's alpha values exceeded the minimum acceptable threshold in educational and social research, which is 0.70. This indicates that the instrument possesses a good level of internal consistency and reliability.

Table 3 Internal Reliability Coefficients (Cronbach's Alpha) of the Study Instrument

Variable	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Leadership Behaviors	20	0.874
Job Motivation	18	0.862
Job Performance	22	0.903
Overall Reliability of the Instrument	60	0.916

These results reflect that the instrument has a high level of reliability, ensuring measurement stability and the credibility of results when applied to a similar sample from the study population. This allows the instrument to be relied upon in achieving the study objectives and analyzing the related statistical hypotheses.

Pearson Correlation Coefficients

Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to examine the nature of the relationship between the dimensions of leadership behaviors, job motivation, and job performance. The results showed that all correlation coefficients were positive and statistically significant at the significance level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$). This indicates the presence of a moderate correlation between the variables, which supports the assumptions that effective leadership and its associated elements of support, empowerment, and development contribute to enhancing employees' internal motivation, which is ultimately reflected in positive improvements in various performance indicators.

Table 4 Pearson Correlation Coefficients

Variables	Leadership Behaviors	Job Motivation	Job Performance
Leadership Behaviors	1		
Job Motivation	0.524*	1	
Job Performance	0.588*	0.471*	1

These results indicate the presence of positive and moderate relationships among all dimensions, confirming that leadership and motivational factors work together to enhance employees' job performance in the Palestinian education sector.

Normal Distribution

The assumption of normal distribution for the study variables was verified using the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test, which is one of the most commonly used tests in quantitative studies that rely on correlation and regression analysis. This test helps determine the suitability of data for statistical models that assume normal distribution. The results showed that the significance values for all study variables were greater than the significance level (0.05), indicating that the data follow a normal distribution and can therefore be used in subsequent analyses such as correlation and linear regression.

Table 5 Kolmogorov–Smirnov Normality Test for Study Variables

Variable	Dimension	K-S Value	Significance Level (Sig.)	Result
Leadership Behaviors	Participation in decision-making	0.067	0.082	Normally distributed
	Empowerment and improvement of the work environment	0.059	0.115	Normally distributed
	Inspirational motivation and professional development	0.073	0.091	Normally distributed
Job Motivation	Positive incentives and reward systems	0.064	0.126	Normally distributed
	Recognition of efforts and professional promotions	0.071	0.074	Normally distributed
	Commitment to work spirit and quality of performance	0.057	0.132	Normally distributed
Job Performance	Quality of achievement and professional execution	0.062	0.097	Normally distributed
	Organizational commitment and professional discipline	0.054	0.144	Normally distributed
	Professional competence and productivity	0.068	0.086	Normally distributed
	Innovation in task implementation	0.076	0.079	Normally distributed
	Job satisfaction	0.063	0.101	Normally distributed

The results indicate that all significance values were greater than (0.05), confirming that the data follow a normal distribution. This supports the validity of using parametric statistical tests in the study and ensures the accuracy of the results derived regarding the predictive relationships between leadership, motivation, and job performance.

Hypothesis Testing

The study hypotheses were tested using multiple linear regression analysis to examine the predictive ability of leadership behaviors and job motivation on the job performance of employees in the Palestinian education sector. To measure the significance of the effect of each dimension, the Beta value and the coefficient of determination (R Square) were used, in addition to the statistical significance test (Sig.) at a significance level of (0.05). The results showed that the statistical model possesses good explanatory power, allowing the prediction of job performance levels based on the independent variables included in the study.

Table 6 Results of Multiple Linear Regression Analysis for Testing Study Hypotheses

Independent Variable	Dimension	Beta	T	Sig.	Statistical Decision
Leadership Behaviors	Participation in decision-making	0.198	4.015	0.000	Statistically significant effect
	Empowerment and improvement of the work environment	0.214	4.366	0.000	Statistically significant effect
	Inspirational motivation and professional development	0.227	4.521	0.000	Statistically significant effect
Job Motivation	Positive incentives and reward systems	0.211	4.198	0.000	Statistically significant effect
	Recognition of efforts and professional promotions	0.233	4.463	0.000	Statistically significant effect
	Commitment to work spirit and quality of performance	0.245	4.617	0.000	Statistically significant effect

Model explanatory power: $R^2 = 0.540$ The model is statistically significant.

Main Hypothesis

There is a statistically significant effect at the significance level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) of both leadership behaviors and job motivation in predicting the job performance of employees in the Palestinian education sector.

The statistical results showed that the joint predictive model of leadership behaviors and job motivation has a good explanatory power ($R^2 = 0.540$), meaning that 54% of the variation in job performance is attributed to these two variables together. This percentage reflects the strength of the institutional influence exercised by leadership and the effectiveness of incentives in improving employee performance in the Palestinian education sector. This finding suggests that the traditional leadership practices alone that are not accompanied with motivation reinforcement will not be adequate to create a significant change in performance, because the achievement of performance will not be achieved through the incorporation of effective leadership coupled with motivation policies that will encourage growth and hard work.

This finding aligns with that of Al-Sayyid (2025) that showed that democratic leadership founded on the ongoing review of human resources resulted in the performance improvement. It is also correlated with the results of Al-Badhali et al. (2025), who stated that the positive motivation results in a direct employee performance improvement. Getnet and Fujie (2024) also established that the effect of the combination of leadership and motivation on the work performance of employees is statistically significant. These results emphasize the need to consider leadership and motivation as two related systems and not individual aspects in the interpretation of the performance results in educational sectors.

First Sub-Hypothesis

There is a statistically significant effect at the significance level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) of leadership behaviors, with their various dimensions, in predicting the job performance of employees in the Palestinian education sector.

The outcome of the linear regression analysis shows that all dimensions of leadership behaviors such as participation in decision-making, empowerment, and inspirational motivation are good predictive variables of job performance. This implies that a leader who gives employees room and trust to take initiative and emphasize

on their potentials helps to enhance the quality of accomplishment, organizational dedication and continuous professional growth. These findings show that the leadership practices can be increased to improve the performance of educational and administrative functions in universities.

The findings of this hypothesis agree with the work of Al-Arimi (2024) that good leadership leads to better quality of performance and a lower number of errors in organizations. The study by Al-Rasbi et al. (2025) also supports them because it revealed that ethical leadership has a positive impact on the development of teacher performance. Nugraha (2025) results also validate the role of transformational leadership in increasing the organizational climate, which consequently leads to improved job performance. The findings of the hypothesis are not in conflict with the findings of the previous studies; on the contrary, all studies form an argument in favour of this hypothesis by pointing out the leadership as one of the key performance drivers.

Second Sub-Hypothesis

There is a statistically significant effect at the significance level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) of job motivation, with its various dimensions, in predicting the job performance of employees in the Palestinian education sector.

The findings indicated that the job motivation dimensions in the form of positive incentives, recognizing efforts, and reinforcing the spirit of work help in enhancing the quality of achieving and professional competence, as well as enhancing commitment and discipline. Motivation is the inner force, which is converted to successful working performance every time employees are supported, recognized, and appreciated. These findings prove that motivation is not just a system of financial satisfaction but a complex of recognition and career building and professional satisfaction.

This finding aligns with the study by Al-Naeem and Abu Anza (2024) that established that promotions and recognition are more effective compared to direct financial incentives in enhancing performance. The research of Al-Badhali et al. (2025) also supports it because it suggested the activation of moral and social motivation policy in addition to monetary incentives. On the same note, Rony et al. (2024) were able to show that motivation is a distinctively effective factor in levels of productivity. Thus, purposeful motivation practices should be incorporated in any strategy of enhancing performance in educational institutions.

Third Sub-Hypothesis

There is a statistically significant effect at the significance level ($\alpha \leq 0.05$) of the joint predictive ability of leadership behaviors and job motivation on the job performance of employees in the Palestinian education sector.

The findings showed that the effect of leadership and motivation is even more potent when both are combined in the same predictive model. This implies that an inspiring leader can develop an effective learning environment that is full of satisfaction, dedication, and collaboration that will eventually enhance the level of performance. This observation demonstrates that leadership can not be just a guidance and supervision but it is an essential force that mobilizes the energies of employees and releases their professional potential.

This finding is in agreement with the research conducted by Firdaus et al. (2025), which demonstrated that transformational leadership leads to commitment and job satisfaction which, in turn, leads to the performance improvement. Putri et al. (2025) also established that leadership, motivation, and performance have a mediating relationship with job satisfaction. Da et al. (2025) affirmed that a positive organizational culture through leadership helps in enhancing performance and innovation. This helps to prove the hypothesis that the synergy of leadership and motivation is the best way to enhance the level of education in Palestinian universities.

DISCUSSION

Obtained results suggest that the degree of job performance within the Palestinian institutions of higher learning is not simply the personal manifestation of academic or organizational abilities of its employees. Instead, it is an organizational phenomenon influenced by the quality of leadership and the intensity of the internal and external inspiration of the employees. The Palestinians universities have a unique context of the accrued political, economic, social pressures making the work environment in the universities complicated and ever-shifting. This

puts the employees in an environment where they need to be supported, motivated, and make professional energy reoriented towards meeting the institutional goals through a leadership that is capable of such.

The conclusions are that the employees feel that their contributions are appreciated and their roles have a meaning in the university when they are allowed to contribute in decision making and even in bringing in ideas and initiatives within the university. Such emotion will get them to commit beyond the required level of minimum dedication. This is not merely associated with accelerated work delivery or procedural discipline but also to the standards of academic and administrative delivery, which stands out especially given the rising competition of academic accreditation and enhancement of scientific research by universities.

Concurrently, job motivation is seen to be not just a short term mood but an internalized framework that is formed by way of acknowledgement, growth at work, and equity in the opportunities. As soon as an academic or administrative worker of a Palestinian university feels that there is a professional career which allows recognizing and rewarding the performance, the relation to the institution is shifted to the obligatory compliance to voluntary commitment depending on the belief and moral devotion. Under these conditions, the university starts developing human capital in which institutional success is perceived as individual success and not an independent one.

The findings further indicate that state universities should lessen the amount of bureaucratic administration that can reduce the professional zeal of the workers and substitute it with a leadership model that is rooted in empowering the employees and supporting their work instead of overseeing it. By assuming the role of mentor/facilitator as opposed to controller, supervisors increase the degree of initiative and creativity in academic and administrative departments and give employees the sense that they have the actual instruments to get their job done effectively.

The findings cast the blame on Palestinian university administrations to rethink the philosophy of leadership being exercised in the institutions such that it will be oriented more towards administrative leadership of authority to developmental leadership that focuses on developing human capacity. They also demand the creation of adaptable motivational models that put into consideration the needs of employees and create a sustainable feeling of fulfillment and belongingness even though the hardships imposed by the Palestinian society and institutions are experienced.

To conclude, the performance of work at Palestinian public universities may be improved significantly provided that leadership and motivation are regarded as two strategic pillars used to cope with challenges and turn the human resources into the participants of the higher education development in Palestine rather than merely performing the duties of an employee. The actual usefulness of the findings is that the investment into human capital is where the Palestinian universities can establish their resilience and attain sustainable growth.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results that highlighted the decisive role of leadership behaviors and job motivation in improving performance within Palestinian public universities, the researcher proposes the following recommendations to enhance the professional environment and improve the quality of institutional outcomes:

1. Strengthening participatory leadership within academic and administrative departments by involving employees in decision-making related to their tasks and work environment development, which enhances organizational belonging and increases commitment to effective performance.
2. Developing a fair and transparent motivational system linked to clear and measurable performance indicators that include both financial and non-financial incentives in order to increase professional satisfaction and sustain positive motivation.
3. Redesigning the work environment to be based on empowerment and leadership trust in employees by reducing bureaucracy and enhancing job delegation, thereby allowing initiatives to emerge and improving efficiency of task accomplishment.
4. Investing in leadership development programs for department heads and unit managers focusing on inspirational motivation skills, building professional relationships, and supporting employees' professional growth, which directly reflects on institutional performance.

5. Activating regular and organized feedback channels that enable employees to understand their performance levels and ways to improve them, while allowing academic leaders to identify problems and address them before they affect the quality of educational services.

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