

**SUPERVISORS' LEADERSHIP STYLES AND  
SUBORDINATES' PERFORMANCE IN PALESTINIAN  
PUBLIC ORGANIZATIONS: THE MEDIATING ROLE  
OF COMMUNICATION SATISFACTION**

**by**

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**Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements  
for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy**

**December 2012**

## DEDICATION

*To the most appreciated parents; "Hajj Khalil Alsayed", and "Hajja Rewaida Alsayed",*

*To my beloved wife "Heba Al-Dalou",*

*To my kids; Ola, Rasha, Khalil and Afnan,*

*To the memory of my beloved Palestinians*

*And*

*All those who respect knowledge.*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I begin by expressing thanks, gratitude and praises to ALLAH SWT for His permission, strength and patience given to me that made it possible for me to complete this work Whom His Majesty Said (And remember! your Lord caused to be declared (publicly): "If ye are grateful, I will add more (favours) unto you." (Ibrahim: 7). I also thanks many people as compliance with the sayings of the Prophet Muhammad "Peace be Upon Him" said: 'Whoever does not thank people (for their favours) has not thanked Allah (properly), Mighty and Glorious is He!' (Musnad Ahmad, Sunan At-Tirmidhî).

Therefore, I have to express my sincere thanks and gratitude to those candles that illuminated my way in the journey of the study, and supported me until this work has seen the light. I wish to convey my deep gratitude to my main supervisor Dr. Mohammad Hossein Motaghi for his invaluable continuous and tremendous guidance during my study. He has widened my horizon in conducting the research. Without his supports and encouragement, it still remained unfinished work. I also acknowledge gratefully the encouragement of Associate Professor Intan Osman who is my co-supervisor. She let me see the broad picture from the beginning. She made her knowledge as an open book. I am deeply indebted to both of them; they were more than supervisors for me.

I wish to specially thank my beloved wife Heba Al-Dalou for her continuous support, patience and care for the family while I have been away and busy with this study.

I would like to thank the Dean, School of Management. Professor Dr. Ishak Ismail, Deputy Dean of Research Associate Professor Dr. Zamri Ahmad for their attention, advice, support, and holding the USM fellowship. Their help allowed me to focus more on my study. I would like to express my gratitude and special thanks to the examiners of this thesis Professor Dr. Hazman Shah Abdullah (External Examiners), and internal examiners Dr. Anees Janee Ali and Professor Dr. Aizzat Nasurdin for their critical comments and suggestion to improve the thesis; they made the way much clear and more interesting. My appreciation and gratitude is also goes

to all staff and lecturers of the School of Management who had unselfishly shared their professional knowledge and exercise particularly Dr. Lilis Surlenty, Associate Professor Dr. Krishnaswamy Jayaraman, and thanks to Dr. Yudi Fernando for their assistant and knowledge share.

I would like to thank all respondents (supervisor and employees) who dealt with questionnaire seriously, for their cooperative than my expectation. I cannot forget to register respectfully thanks for Professor Dr. Mohammad Asquol Minister of Education and Higher Education in Palestine, and Dr. Basem Naim, Minister of Health in Palestine who approved to collect data and have sent their recommendations to all respondents to be cooperative.

Thanks are due to Professor Dr. Avolio, and Professor Dr. Hazen, for their sharing knowledge and responding to my questions and special thanks for Prof. Dr. Hazen who allowed me to use his scale of Communication Satisfaction.

There are many people, who have assisted me but not mentioned here. I am grateful for their contribution too. To everyone I pray to Allah to pay you all with *Jannah Firdausi*.

Alaedin K. I. Alsayed

December 2012

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CSQ	Communication Satisfaction Questionnaire
EMRO	Eastern Mediterranean Regional Observatory
FRIDE	Fundación para las Relaciones Internacionales y el Diálogo Exterior. In English "Foundation for International Relations and Foreign Dialogue"
ICA	Israeli Civil Administration
ILO	International Labor Organization
IUG	Islamic University of Gaza
KMO	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin
LMX	Leader-Member Exchange Theory
MLQ	Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOH	Ministry of Health
MOP	Ministry of Planning
MPIC	Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation
PCBS	Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics
PCDCR	The Palestinian Center for Democracy and Conflict Resolution
PCSL	Palestinian Civil Service Law
PDP	The Palestinian Development Plan
PECDAR	Palestinian Economic Council for Development and Rebuilding
PGPC	Palestinian General Personnel Council
PLO	Palestinian Liberation Organization
PNA	Palestinian National Authority
PPS	Palestinian Public Sector
SAACB	State Audited and Administrative Control Bureau
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Science
TLT	Transformational Leadership Theory
TUIUG	Translation Unit of Islamic University of Gaza
UNISPAL	United National Information System on the Question of Palestine
UNRWA	The United Nations Relief and Works Agency
USM	Universiti Sains Malaysia. In English "Science University of Malaysia"
VIF	Variance Inflation Factor

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## **GAYA KEPIMPINAN PENYELIA DAN PRESTASI SUBORDINAT DAN DALAM ORGANISASI AWAM DI PALESTIN: PERANAN PENGANTARA KEPUASAN KOMUNIKASI**

### **ABSTRAK**

Tujuan kajian ini adalah untuk mengkaji kesan setiap gaya kepimpinan pengurus (transformasi, urus niaga, dan "*laissez-faire*") ke atas prestasi pekerja dan hasil kepimpinan hasil (usaha tambahan, kepuasan dengan pemimpin, dan pemimpin. keberkesanan). Kajian ini juga mengkaji kesan pengantara kepuasan komunikasi pekerja yang dikonsepskan sebagai konstruk multidimensi yang terdiri daripada tiga faktor (maklumat, hubungan, dan maklumat / hubungan). Data dikumpul melalui soalselidik yang ditadbirkan secara persendirian ke atas pengurus dan kakitangan mereka dari dua organisasi awam Palestin (Kementerian Kesihatan dan Pendidikan). Sejumlah 342 jawapan telah diterima dan diguna bagi tujuan kajian ini. Data dianalisis dengan menggunakan Pakej Statistik untuk perisian Sains Sosial (SPSS).

Keputusan kajian ini menunjukkan bahawa ketiga-tiga gaya kepimpinan berkaitan secara signifikan dengan prestasi kerja, dan gaya transformasi dan transaksi berkaitan secara positif dan "*laissez-faire*" secara negatif. Kajian seterusnya mendapati bahawa gaya kepimpinan berkaitan dengan usaha tambahan dan keberkesanan pemimpin. Hanya gaya transformasi yang berkaitan dengan ketara dan positif dengan kepuasan dengan pemimpin hasil kepimpinan. Kajian ini juga menunjukkan bahawa dimensi maklumat, hubungan, dan maklumat hubungan pengaruh kepuasan komunikasi ke atas prestasi kerja, dan hasil kepimpinan tetapi kesan dimensi maklumat negatif dan / atau tidak penting. Selain itu, ketiga-tiga gaya kepimpinan diramalkan sebagai peramal kepada komponen kepuasan komunikasi. Didapati juga, faktor kepuasan komunikasi mempunyai hubungan dan hubungan / maklumat sokongan yang penting bagi pengantara kesan pada transformasi, urus niaga dan "*laissez-faire*" dan prestasi kerja, dan hasil kepimpinan.

Akhirnya, penemuan mencadangkan bahawa setiap transformasi dan gaya urus niaga kepimpinan adalah penting kepada Kementerian Palestin untuk memastikan pencapaian prestasi yang tinggi dan memastikan kepuasan komunikasi serta mengelakkan aspek tingkah laku "*laissez-faire*".

Justeru, Kementerian Palestin perlu membangunkan kemahiran kepimpinan pengurusan yang memberi tumpuan kepada tingkah laku transformasi dan transaksi, dan memastikan kepuasan komunikasi di kalangan pekerja untuk mendapatkan hasil yang tinggi. Limitasi penyelidikan serta cadangan kajian untuk masa akan datang juga dibincang.

# **SUPERVISORS' LEADERSHIP STYLES AND SUBORDINATES' PERFORMANCE IN PALESTINIAN PUBLIC ORGANIZATIONS: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF COMMUNICATION SATISFACTION**

## **ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this study was to examine the effect of each of the three leadership styles of supervisors (transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire) on employees' job performance and leadership outcomes in terms of (extra effort, satisfaction with leader, and leader's effectiveness). The study also examined the mediating effect of employees' communication satisfaction, which is conceptualized as a multidimensional construct consisting of three factors (informational, relational, and informational/relational). Data were collected via questionnaire and administered personally on supervisors and their employees from two Palestinian public organizations (Ministries of Health and Education). A total of 342 usable responses were accepted for the purpose of the present study. The data was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software.

The results of the present study revealed that the three styles of leadership were significantly related to job performance whilst transformational, transactional styles were positively, and laissez-faire negatively related. The study further found that leadership styles were related with extra effort and leader's effectiveness, only transformational style was significantly and positively, related to satisfaction with leader. The study also revealed that informational, relational, and informational/relational dimensions of communication satisfaction influence on job performance, and leadership outcomes but the effect of informational dimension was negative and/or insignificant. Additionally, the three styles of leadership were predictors of communication satisfaction. Further, the relational and informational/relational factors of communication satisfaction were found to have significant positive support on mediating effect; and informational dimension has negative mediating effect on transformational, transactional; and laissez-faire and job performance; and leadership outcomes. Finally, the findings suggested that each of the transformational and transactional leadership styles were important to Palestinian ministries to ensure high performance outcomes and ensure communication satisfaction as well, avoiding the aspects of laissez-faire behaviors.

Therefore, Palestinian ministries should carefully develop supervisory leadership skills focusing on transactional and transformational behaviors, and ensure communication satisfaction among employees in order to gain high expectations. Limitations of the present study, recommendations for future research were also discussed.

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1. 1 Introduction to the Problem

Leadership is one of the most important factors contributing to the success of organizations; through which organizations could be led to achieve goals, to ensure high performance and satisfaction. Therefore, leadership is a process by which the leader influences the followers towards organizational objectives (Lussier & Achua, 2004), and an influential factor on employees' performance (Vigoda-Gadot, 2007). An effective leader directs the organization to effectiveness (Ingraham & Getha-Taylor, 2004).

However, the effective leader must be communicative (Tourish & Jackson, 2008). Information flows through leader-follower communications, to enhance trust (Cheney, 2007; Ilozor, Ilozor, & Carr, 2001) and ensure the participation of subordinates in decision-making (Moynihan & Ingraham, 2004). Hence, to realize trust and ensure decision sharing, the organizational communication must be effective (Sharma & Bajpai, 2010). Effective communication furthermore, leads to communication satisfaction among members of the organization (Pavitt, 1999).

Communication satisfaction refers to the individual's degree of satisfaction with all the varying aspects of communication within the organization (Downs & Hazen, 1977). Furthermore, communication satisfaction is the *précis* of a person's satisfaction, which could be saturated from information flow and diverse relationships (Pincus, 1986), and reflects positive job performance (Goris, 2007; Goris, Vaught, & Pettit, 2000; Pincus, 1986). In this regard therefore, employees

could have high level of satisfaction with communication and perform their tasks better.

Although some studies on leader-follower relationship have been conducted, only few of them examines the mediating role of the variables involved in leader-follower relationship (Jing & Avery, 2008). In similar arguments relative to this, Pillai, Schriesheim, and Williams (1999) investigated the relationship between leadership styles and performance, and the study affirmed that there is mediating relationship between leadership styles and performance.

Therefore, in an effort to contribute to the body of knowledge in this respect, the present study investigates the mediating role played by communication satisfaction of employees, in the relationship between supervisors' leadership styles; the outcomes of leadership styles and job performance of employees in organizations of the Palestinian Public Sector (PPS).

## **1.2 Background of the Study**

Since the establishment of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) in 1994 (Sayigh & Shikaki, 1999), it inherited from the Israeli government a public sector run by Israeli Civil Administration (ICA) (Institute of Law, 2008). The PNA also inherited an organizational structure and performance procedures characterized by unauthorized horizontal communications and information sharing. Additionally, no opportunities existed for Palestinian employees to occupy leadership positions, but who mostly performed their duties based on Israeli military orders, with fears of punishment and loss of jobs and getting little in terms of rewards or motivation. In

essence, autocratic style of leadership, coupled with limited aspects of transactional leadership was experienced by the Palestinian organizations. Subsequently, and based on the Oslo Accords of 1993 between the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) and Israel, the PNA was established (Oslo Agreement, 1993; Qurai, 2005). The PNA gave priority for PLO members, whose leaders returned after years in exile of enduring hardship and sacrifices, to join supervisory positions in the public sector (Alfarra & Alkhateeb, 2007; Sayigh & Shikaki, 1999).

The organizations of the Palestinian Public Sector (PPS) comprised mostly a combination of returnee leaders and the local civil servants as followers. The leaders had political experiences at senior levels, but little or no training in public administration. In fact, some evaluation reports (e. g., Abo-Shamaleh, 2004; Abu-Arrob, 2007; Sayigh & Shikaki, 1999) indicated that the leaders had no experience with policy formulation, decision-making and planning. Therefore, in some cases, those who were in supervisory positions allowed their subordinates to do whatever they thought was the best and did little or nothing to supervise them (Alfarra & Alkhateeb, 2007; Alfarra & Alouh, 2007), or acted like army generals to their subordinates who were affected by the Israeli military rules.

The PNA, like any other government agency in developing countries (with its own uniqueness) needed to grow and develop. In fact, the development of the PNA was maintained and evaluated by donor agencies such as the World Bank, European Union and the United Nation Relief and Working Agency (UNRWA). These donors provided contingent assistantship to meet high performance (Shahwan, 2003). For these reasons, in response to the lack of skilled human resources, the first Palestinian Development Plan (PDP) was effectively focusing to developing the human resources of PNA's organizations for three years, from 1998 to 2000 (MPIC, 1997).

This “program was heavily financed (24.41 percent) from the general budget” (Shath, 1998, p. 11). It aimed to support the PNA, and according to the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MPIC), “finance the building of the economy and society of both the West Bank and the Gaza Strip” (Shath, 1998, p. 7). Human resource training programs were organized and carried out. Some Palestinian agencies such as (PECDAR) claimed the training responsibility and conduct national conference to discuss best methods of training that contribute to realize high quality outputs due to proposed training programs for employees (Dajani, 1999).

As a result, some programs including governmental programs for developing the public sector were organized to resolve supervisory weaknesses (Al-Madhoun & Analoui, 2003a, 2003b). These training programs motivated researchers such as Al-Madhoun and Analoui (2002) to investigate their effectiveness. The research confirmed that Palestinian supervisors' effectiveness is significantly formed by people-based skills of most Palestinian supervisors, regardless of their formal positions in organization. Based on these training programs which were carried out across private and public organizations; supervisors started to practice their learned skills and utilized the most recent theories of leadership. In this regard, transformational and transactional styles were practiced to improve the quality of work and job performance of employees (Isa, 2008).

Suffice to say, that awareness of supervisory skills and leadership styles were cultivated in the society and their practice is motivated. However, the PNA faced additional challenges, which imposed an increasing burden on its management and organizational structure in the practice of these skills and styles. The PNA, during the first five years functioned within a semi-stable situation where, by the end of the year 2000, Israel started attacking the PPS's organizations and destroyed the infrastructure

because of the latest *Intifada*. Because of this, the leaders were unable to commute between the Palestinian territories (West Bank and Gaza Strip) which are not attached geographically. Additionally, each of these areas had some characteristics different than the other, as a result of being historically ruled by two different political systems before 1967 (Egyptian system in Gaza Strip and Jordanian system in the West Bank) (Institute of Law, 2008). In fact, there are some geographical differences between the West Bank, containing many well defined provinces and Gaza Strip, with small area and highly dense population; thus creating a decentralized system in the West Bank and a centralized system in the Gaza Strip (EMRO, 2006, p. 12).

The recent evaluation reports indicated that the performance of the PPS organizations was still low, and as such, future funding may be discontinued (PCDCR, 2008; UNISPAL, 2006). In fact, the Ministry of Planning (MOP) spent efforts and expended high costs to achieve these developmental plans, which are renewed every three years. The last PDP plan (2008-2010) still focuses on training programs, as these programs are essential to improve employees' knowledge; skills and ability. It was observed that these programs, as a consequence of the PDP plans, did not focus on the behaviors of supervisors as being either transformational and transactional, nor on the communication between leaders and followers (for example, see Ministry of Planning, 2008). This could be one important reason why their performances improve slowly, whereas the PNA spends millions to develop individual's skills.

Furthermore, the PNA must be prepared to perform its duties in a harsh (attacks from outside and acts of terrorism from inside) and under an unstable situation. Tasks and duties cannot be carried out based on a certain plan; decision-

makers do not have sufficient information about what is going to happen and have difficulty in predicting changes. This exceptional or unique situation continued for more than ten years, but the PNA is still existed.

Based on this situation, leaders were responsible to maintain the organizations – at least – providing basic services, and forced to lead their followers to ensure their participation to realize organizational objectives. Hence, it seems that leaders were forced to deal with transformational behaviors in some cases; considering their followers, inspiring, motivating, and influencing them towards bigger vision. This effect increases among leaders who; occupy high-professional positions, are more educated, and play important roles. In some other cases, leaders might become more transactional using punishment and/or reward for employees at lower levels or, with those who were less educated. In this regard, Limsila and Ogunlana (2008a) reported that transformational behaviors may be effective with professional employees, while transactional behavior was more suitable for technicians or site workers.

Different idea from the preceding paragraph, Bass, Waldman, Avolio, and Bebb (1987), state that in public organizations have a tendency to pursue the example of any characteristic of active behavior of leadership that is observed in their immediate superiors' characters. In any case, leaders were obligated to keep the existence of the PPS organizations and provide acceptable level of services. Therefore, if leaders are not able to improve the performance, they are required to, at least keep it at not less than the average of its regular performance. In this case, therefore, the employees' job description did not make sense; since employees could be asked to perform, some other duties are modally in their job descriptions.

Based on the uniqueness of PPS, the leader could be transformational or transactional. The leader in the case of PPS cannot be autocratic because he/she cannot take any decision individually without information being known by the employees; the leader cannot be excessive in punishment, where an employee takes the risk losing his/her life to be at workplace, and as such, the leader must be effective. Ingraham and Getha-Taylor (2004) indicated that the leader in unstable communities to be effective; must act quickly and think creatively, he/she must have high communication skills to be effective. In fact, previous studies on PPS (e. g., Alfarra & Alkhateeb, 2007; Almasri, 2007) failed to identify the Palestinian leader as either autocratic or democratic, while some research concluded that 60% of the Palestinian school supervisors practices included transformational behaviors (Isa, 2008). Another study of the private sector reported that aspects of transformational and transactional leadership were applied (As-Sadeq & Khoury, 2006).

Therefore, these styles of leadership studies indicate that supervisors are aware that identifying leadership style is important to assist PNA presenters to make successful developmental plans; and help in increasing performance. In other words, there is a need to enhance the performance of PPS, which is mainly based on human capital achievements. There is also the need to investigate whether job performance is affected through leadership styles (transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire) and as well, the nature of this effect. Additionally, there is a need to investigate the role of communication, linking leaders with their followers and identifying the extent to which satisfactory communication contributes to enhance performance; by providing sufficient information and through effective relations.

Consequently, a leadership style of a supervisor by itself may not have an impact on the effectiveness of the organization and job performance of employees. It

must be directed to job performance, and mediated by a third factor by which changing tasks are explained; procedures are delineated and communicated accordingly. The literature supports this idea, where on one hand, Pillai, et al. (1999) indicated that leadership-performance relationship – in some cases – might need to be investigated through mediating variables, to provide better understanding of the leadership effect.

Most times, in the changes created, employees cannot perform their tasks based on their job descriptions (in the new situation, job description is meaningless). They must accomplish tasks, which are being communicated by the supervisors. How these tasks are accomplished not only depends upon leadership styles of supervisors but also depends on; the way in which adequate amount of transferred information, the degree of accuracy, free flow of these information. It further depends on the degree to which employees receive and perceive information about their work environment, and the extent to which employees need to know how their efforts are recognized and how their problems are dealt with. These are factors which are directly related to communication satisfaction, as a multidimensional concept (see Downs & Hazen Downs, 1990; 1977).

Based on the aforementioned, communication satisfaction may mediate the relationship between leadership styles of supervisors and job performance of employees in PPS; in order to provide a better understanding of leadership-performance relationship.

In Palestinian context, PPS consists of Public organizations that provide the executive administrative apparatus and manages civil governmental organizations. PPS provides public services to citizens and organizes smooth citizens-government

relationships. This apparatus (PPS) were established in 1994 through the Oslo Accord (1993) as part of PNA which gave the legitimacy for PNA to act on 22.6% from the total Palestine. Other organizations such as Ministry of Education and Ministry of Health are also part of PNA, but existed as civil units under Israeli military administration (Sharvit-Baruch, 2011). These organizations (Ministries of Education and Health) are the first established organizations in era of PNA rule, as a consequence of previous civil administration units ruled by Israeli Civil Administration (ICA) (Abdullah, 2002).

Organizations of the PPS have their unique characteristics. The organizations were established to provide services for citizens, to achieve the goals of PNA, and to resist against any forms of risks and challenges. These organizations are not profitable, as their success reinforces the existence of PNA. Additionally, their successes have a national mandate. Therefore, individuals in such organizations are selected based on specific criteria avoiding suspected persons, and thus, priority was given to returnee members of PLO to occupy leadership positions when the PNA's organizations were established (Amundsen & Ezbidi, 2002).

The following section provides some valuable information about job performance, communication satisfaction, and leadership style in the PPS organizations.

### **1.2.1 Job Performance in Palestinian Public Sector**

Job performance in PPS like in any other organizations signifies the degree to which the human beings add to the organization through attaining definite and official jobs in which he/she is employed to grasp what is given in his/her contract. It also

indicates the level of achieving organizational goals that could be interpreted on employees' tasks and duties. The PNA is a relatively newly established organization, the most important goal is not to realize high performance because it is the first time for Palestinians to become supervisors and subordinates within the organ of the Palestinian government. Another reason for not pursuing high performance goals in PPS has to do with rules and regulations they inherit from laws and previous documentation that originate from Jordanian acts in the West Bank, and Egyptian Acts in the Gaza Strip (Institute of Law, 2008). Thus, such replications of work standards might create some confusion that may affect the performance of employees, particularly when some changes happened previously between leaders in these two areas of Palestine.

The most important issue is that the performance of employees has recorded low levels, while it was poor for a long time without essential improvement. The recent evaluation report presented by some donor agencies showed that the performance of the PPS organizations was still low (PCDCR, 2008; UNISPAL, 2006). As earlier mentioned, although the PNA through its organizations has attempted to improve the performance, yet it has remained poor. Performance among the PPS organizations is measured at two levels; organizational level and individual level. The main aspect of evaluation is based on the quality and quantity of achievements. At organizational level, the achievements are usually reported in annual progress reports prepared by the organization. Such reports summarize all the goals achieved during one-year period. Additionally, organizational progress reports are prepared to be submitted to the Council of Ministries, where reports from all organizations are summarized in one general report about the performance of PPS.

At the individual level, job performance is measured by one confidential report filled at the beginning of each year (PCSL, 1998). The report is comprehensive and includes criteria such as task achievements and productivity, commitment; and mental and physical ability. Only full-time and formally employed persons who have worked more than six month are allowed to be evaluated based on this confidential report.

According to Palestinian Civil Service Law (PCSL) (1998), employees who score less than 65% for two consecutive years are punished and may lose their jobs, whereas the rewards offered for high performance (scores above 85%) are letter of accomplishment and the employee could have priority to be nominated for higher position when available. The evaluation takes place at all levels simultaneously. Each supervisor evaluates his/her subordinates. The report is then submitted to the top management.

The evaluation report is the key measure of job performance. This method could have some weaknesses because the scores of this report are confidential, and as such does not provide feedback to employees, except very high or low. Additionally, the evaluation process takes place annually, therefore, the organization delays taking action for one year. In other words, if there is weak performance at the beginning of the year, this could continue for the whole year without actual corrective action. Moreover, since the employees know the time of evaluation, they could thus increase their performance at that time. This may affect the supervisor's judgment when he/she begins the evaluation of his/her subordinate.

In conclusion, job performance could be planned to be evaluated from time to time by other councils, by selecting a random sample of individuals. These councils

such as Palestinian General Personnel Council (PGPC) and State Audit and Administrative Control Bureau (SAACB) have the right to inspect at any time of the year. The present study uses a scale for job performance, which reflects the actual performance of employees. The performance is measured by the supervisor. The supervisor evaluates his/her immediate subordinate during the year when, the employee is not expected to be evaluated. Additionally, employees are selected randomly, which could reflect the actual performance.

### **1.2.2 Communication Satisfaction in Palestinian Public Sector**

Satisfaction with organizational communication is a field of study that has not been investigated before in Palestine. In this section, the focus is on organizational communication at regular and under emergencies. Organizations in the PPS communicate with one another based on some regulations and procedures, to ensure coordination and achieve common goals. This communication is limited to the ministerial level and for routine activities. On the other hand, in each organization, there is vertical and horizontal communication. Additionally, ministerial headquarters communicate with the official departments, which are in other governorates. In the headquarters, informal relations usually affect communication. Information could flow rapidly and easily rather than between headquarters and official branches.

The Palestinian organizations could face Israeli attack at any time, whereas some other parts may be occupied. Some other areas may be under siege or closure. The role of communication becomes more important under these emergencies. Therefore, some employees may be delegated to work on behalf of their supervisors whenever the supervisors cannot reach their workplaces. In other words, such

employees could have direct contact with top leaders; they may obtain more information about the organization, their jobs, and regulations. Such employees may be saturated with information that they usually do not get under normal situations. In this case, when the situation becomes stable, information provided during emergency situations challenge supervisors since employees knew confidential information. This challenge – to some extent – varies depending on leaders trust, but the real disastrous challenge takes place when such information is leaked to hostile parties, such as “*Israel*”. For that, during emergency situation, work-related information can be provided smoothly, but organization-related and strategic information are provided in very limited cases depending on the level of trust.

From another perspective, some basic ministries such as Ministries of Health and Education continue working during these emergencies. For example, the Ministry of Health increases communication with its branches, hospitals, clinics and site temporary clinics. The Ministry of Education on the other hand, communicates with the directorate of education in each governorate, and with all public and private schools. In conclusion, the leaders in the mentioned ministries usually attempt to provide work-related information. The general aspect of communication in PPS is vertically and formally, but because of the nature of these two ministries, communication direction is horizontal and effected informally compared with other organizations and individual level, but limited to certain work-related issues. Organization-related information such as polices, weakness and strengthen points, failures and financial information are accessible to certain individuals and positions due to security reasons.

### **1.2.3 Leadership Style in Palestinian Public Sector**

In the public sector of PNA, the term supervisor is an occupational title, whereas leadership is not. Hughes, Ginnett, and Curphy (2009) highlight that leadership is a process and not a position. Therefore, the present study attempts to differentiate between leadership and management by focusing attention on the leadership styles of supervisors.

The Palestinian communities and organizations are of unique nature, the main reason for focusing on their turbulent and unstable situations. The literature indicates that there is no need for a special style of leadership under a turbulent situation, where leaders are generally required to have the same qualities needed (James & Wooten, 2005), but, are expected to be effective with quick action and to think creatively (Ingraham & Getha-Taylor, 2004). Moreover, the literature concluded that transformational leadership is effective (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, & Bommer, 1996), and likelihood (Bass & Riggio, 2006) among unstable communities. Therefore, an unstable community such as Palestine requires creative and effective leaders and transformational leadership should be expected.

Recently researchers begin to pay attention to leadership studies on Palestinian public organizations although only few studies have been conducted (e. g., AbuNada, 2007; Alfarrar & Alkhateeb, 2007; Almasri, 2007; Isa, 2008). However, the leadership style in the PPS still requires to be studied, to be properly understood.

From the literature on leadership in Palestine, it could be observed that findings from previous empirical studies are varied in describing leadership style. Almasri (2007) opined that the leadership style is autocratic, whereas Alfarrar and Alkhateeb (2007) showed that the most practiced style of leadership was democratic;

both studies were performed on public sector organizations. The contradiction between these studies provides an insight to the leadership in PPS based on different approaches. Furthermore, few other studies such as (AbuNada, 2007) investigated transformational, transactional, and laissez-fair styles of leadership in PPS. An insight into the literature of leadership in PPS suggests that some aspects of transactional and laissez-faire leadership were used (Alfarra & Alkhateeb, 2007), while some constituents of transformational leadership are also prominent (Isa, 2008). Furthermore, transformational leadership behaviors are not rare (Bass, 1995).

Alfarra and Alkhateeb (2007) indicated that some leaders tend to completely delegate their authorities to subordinates, fading in their roles of leading, whereas no monitoring of the followers' activities is carried out. This result indicates some aspect of laissez-faire leadership, representing lack of follow-up of delegated authority, and leading to chaotic work. Alfarra and Alkhateeb (2007) pointed out that employees in PPS tend to carry out their tasks more for fear of punishment rather than for getting rewards, indicating some aspects of transactional leadership style.

Isa (2008) examined aspects of leadership in government schools; the author indicated that the head teachers practiced the transformational style of leadership in public schools in Gaza, at the rate of less than 60%. As-Sadeq and Khoury (2006) also studied the leadership style in the Palestinian Industrial Sector and found that the most frequently used style was transactional leadership, while transformational leadership was found to be less frequently practiced style and laissez-faire was the least utilized style, but which was more frequent among supervisors that have little qualifications.

Studying transformational and transactional leadership using a contemporary approach such as relational approach to leadership is still limited in Palestine. Therefore, the present study aims to investigate the relationship of leadership style mainly affecting employee's performance. Furthermore, the study – subjectively – also aims to identify the prevailing leadership styles in public sectors in PNA.

In conclusion, leadership style seems not to be well identified in PPS, in spite of practicing some aspects of transformational and transactional leadership, but those behaviors were not considered by top leaders to be directed towards job performance or related to other organizational factors such as satisfaction and effectiveness. Additionally, job performance is the key tool which reflects the organizational performance (Borman & Motowidlo, 1997).

In PPS organizations where, employees are evaluated once annually through a confidential quantitative report, the score of evaluation is consider acceptable when employees' evaluation is 65% and above. There are different aspects of communication; vertical and horizontal, formal and informal, but the majority practiced in PPS seems to be vertical and formal. Communication is an important medium that connect official branches with the headquarters and connects organizations together. The role of communication becomes more important under emergencies, where leaders on all supervisory levels are able to communicate with employees on all levels beyond the structural and formal methods. Because the emergence situation is permanent in PPS, employees are supposed to have full information about their organization and their jobs, where leaders are compelled to provide more information in order to get the jobs done.

### 1.3 Problem Statement

The present study suggests or proposes solutions to a serious problem facing PNA in general, and the public sector organizations in particular. This problem focuses on the existing low performance recorded among the PPS organizations, which have become disastrous and threaten the existence of PNA, to the extent that the donors could withdraw their contingent assistantship, if the performance remains low. The symptoms of low performance were first observed in the first evaluation report of PPS organizations written by Sayigh and Shikaki (1999). This report was submitted to the council of foreign relations in USA, in order to assist some interested parties such as UNRWA, World Bank, International Monetary Fund, European Union and other donors to evaluate their assistantship to PNA. The feedback given to PNA has intended to strengthen the institutes in PNA in order to increase their performance.

Officials of the Palestinian Authority have made significant efforts to improve the performance of employees – at both subordinatedly and supervisory levels – as clarified in the background of the present study. Based on these training programs carried out across private and public organizations, supervisors started to implement their acquired skills, utilizing the latest theories of leadership.

Unfortunately, the recent evaluation reports prepared by internal (such as the Palestinian State Audit and Administrative Control Bureau) and external agencies (e.g., World Bank and UNRWA) still reported poor performance among the public institutes of the PNA (Abu-Arrob, 2007; Khatib, 2001; PCDCR, 2008; Sayigh & Shikaki, 1999; UNISPAL, 2006). Even though these agencies used different criteria to evaluate performance, they however, unanimously concluded that the PPS organizations failed to achieve the main objectives of providing proper services for citizens, for which they were established.

As a consequence of the above, the low performance recorded by these organizations has now become a national challenge that not only threatens the existence of the Palestinian Authority as a whole, but is also the basis upon which donors have threatened to withdraw their assistantship, in the form of the contingent funds used in the running the PPS organizations. If this happens, the project of establishing an independent state could only remain a dream, so long as the PPS organizations are unable to serve the community.

Therefore, the researcher was motivated to consider factors responsible for the low performance between the period 1994 and 2008. From the literature, effective leadership behaviors were reported as important factors affecting performance at all supervisory levels. It could be one of the key factors, which would assist to increase performance level. From the insights of leadership literature in Palestine, very few studies were carried out relating to leadership. These studies failed to identify supervisors' leadership style as being either democratic or autocratic in order to investigate its effect on organizational level variables (e.g., job performance, satisfaction and effectiveness). Whereas Alfarra and Alkateeb (2007) reported that the Palestinian supervisor is democratic, Almasri (2007) reported their behavior as autocratic. Both studies were performed in public sector and within the same period. These findings motivated the researcher to consider other styles of leadership – transformational and transactional leadership were selected as the basis of the present study to reflect effective styles and laissez-faire to reflect ineffective behaviors. A study by Isa (2008) indicated that 60% of supervisors' practices were transformational behaviors. Furthermore, in a study by As-Sadeq and Khoury (2006) it was reported that transformational leadership encourages the greatest satisfaction, promoted the willingness to exert extra effort and effectiveness among employees. Unfortunately, it was utilized less than transactional style, whereas the laissez-faire was noted to be the least commonly occurring leadership

style in Palestine. The literature supports this argument, indicating that leadership styles (transformational and transactional) are positively related with job performance, while laissez-faire leadership was found to be a negative factor (Elkins & Keller, 2003; Maslyn & Uhl-Bien, 2001; Wayne, Shore, & Linden, 1997).

The researcher on his knowledge found no available study has examined the relationship between leadership styles and job performance in Palestinian public organizations. Another reason which motivated the present study to focus on transformational and transactional styles, was because most of the recent studies (e. g., Ahmadi, Ahmadi, & Zohrabi, 2012; Hamstra, Yperen, Wisse, & Sassenberg, 2011; Khan, Ramazan, Ahmed, & Nawaz, 2011) were focused on these styles of leadership, whereby these studies were instrumental to contributing theoretically and practically, for solving problems in different societies. In these studies, recommendations were made showing that those styles still needed to be further investigated. Moreover, the transformational and transactional styles are expected to be effective styles of leadership (Bass, 1985; Bass & Avolio, 1993).

Based on the above, the researcher took an interest in the supervisors' leadership styles, which could be considered as one of the solutions to improve employees' job performance and contribute to positive organizational factors such as satisfaction with leader and effectiveness. The choice of leadership as the potential solution is justifiable based on the argument that leadership is one of the most influential factors contributing to the increase in performance of employees (Borkowski, Deckard, Weber, Padron, & Luongo, 2011; Day, Hock-Peng, & Chen, 2004), group (Carmeli & Waldman, 2010; O'Connell, Doverspike, & Cober, 2002), organization (Metwally, 2012; Salman, Riaz, Saifullah, & Rashid, 2011), while no previous studies have been carried out in PPS on this topic.

For the purpose of the present study, the leadership style itself may not necessarily be the only factor affecting job performance. Due to uniqueness of Palestine as discussed in the background of the present study. Supervisors are required to provide full information in order to get tasks done. This information is a basic tool to achieve tasks when individuals are unable to reach their work places due to Israeli attacks. Therefore, the extent to which supervisors provide information and keep healthy relations are synonymous with the ability of employees to deal with their jobs properly, particularly during permanent crises situations. The field of communication satisfaction built on relational and informational communication has never been investigated in PPS.

Moreover, as mentioned in the background of the present study, the PPS organizations may still be affected by the Israeli Civil Administration that had limited communication channels lacks horizontal communications and limited flow of information among civil administration units. The researcher suggests that communication satisfaction is an important factor that could explain the effect of leadership style on job performance. The literature is strongly in support of this idea, as leadership styles (transformational and transactional) were positively affected by employees' communication satisfaction (Ulloa-Heath, 2003). Very few studies were carried out to link leadership style to communication satisfaction (Gray & Laidlaw, 2004; Stigall, 2005). Additionally, communication satisfaction of employees was reported as a key factor which affects job performance of employees (Pincus, 1986).

Accordingly, the researcher was thus motivated to investigate the previous relationships, to suggest solutions to low performance by identifying the effect of leadership style of supervisors on communication satisfaction of employees, and the affect of communication satisfaction of employees on their job performance. Hence, the role of communication satisfaction is suggested here to be a potential mediator. Direct effect of leadership style on job performance and outcomes of leadership is investigated

as well. The literature strongly supports that leadership style – job performance relationships need to be investigated by mediating variables (Jing & Avery, 2008; Yukl, 1989).

Consequently, the framework of the present study links leadership style as independent variable, communication satisfaction as a mediator and job performance and outcomes of leadership styles as the dependent variables, based on interesting findings in the literature. Additionally, the framework of the present study emerged from the LMX theory.

The LMX theory assumed that the exchange between the leader and follower occurs through communication (Graen, Dansereau, & Minami, 1972). In this regards, empirical studies have shown that this exchange are determined by high or low quality relations, based on satisfaction with communication (Mueller & Lee, 2002). As such, considering the role of communication satisfaction as a potential mediator may direct the present study towards a clearer vision, in order to propose solutions. Leadership style is the factor that has effects on employees' satisfaction with communication; where leaders ensure free flow of information and build healthy relations, they - in fact - create aspects of satisfaction with communication. Accordingly, employees may perform better when they are satisfied with communication, where they have enough information about their jobs, they know how their jobs are going to be evaluated and the organizational objectives become clearer.

In conclusion, the present study addresses the relationship between leadership styles of supervisors in PPS and employees' job performance and the outcomes of leadership styles. The role of communication satisfaction is presented as a potential mediator in this relationship

## 1.4 Research Objectives

The research objectives are listed as follows:

1. To address the relationship between supervisors' leadership styles (transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire) and leadership outcomes (extra effort, satisfaction with leader and leader's effectiveness) in Palestinian public organizations.
2. To address the relationship between supervisors' leadership styles (transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire) and employees' job performance in Palestinian public organizations.
3. To investigate the relationship between supervisors' leadership styles (transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire) and employees' communication satisfaction.
4. To investigate the relationship between employees' communication satisfaction and leadership outcomes (extra effort, satisfaction with leader and leader's effectiveness).
5. To address the relationship between employees' communication satisfaction and their job performance.
6. To examine if the role of communication satisfaction of employees could mediate the relationship between supervisors' leadership styles (transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire) and dependent variables; leadership outcomes (extra effort, satisfaction with leader and leader's effectiveness) and employees' job performance.

## 1.5 Research Questions

The present study investigates the organizations of PPS to identify the relationships between leadership styles and (leadership outcomes, and job performance of employees) and examine if communication satisfaction could mediate these relationships. Therefore, the research questions to be answered are as follows:

1. What is the relationship between supervisors' leadership styles (transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire) and leadership outcomes (extra effort, satisfaction with leader and leader's effectiveness)?
2. What is the relationship between leadership styles (transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire) of supervisors and job performance of employees in Palestinian public organizations?
3. What is the relationship between leadership styles (transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire) of supervisors and employees' communication satisfaction?
4. What is the relationship between communication satisfaction of employees and leadership outcomes (extra effort, satisfaction with leader and leader's effectiveness)?
5. What is the relationship between communication satisfaction of employees and their job performance?
6. Does communication satisfaction of employees mediate the relationship between leadership styles (transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire) of supervisors and dependent variables, employees' job performance; and Leadership Outcomes (extra effort, satisfaction with leader and leader's effectiveness)?

## **1. 6 Significance of the Study**

The study could contribute to the literature, organizations, society and to research methodology.

### **A) Significance to the Literature**

Leadership styles have received lots of interest from scholars, but few studies are concerned about leadership in the public sector (Wart, 2003). Some authors such as Ingraham, and Getha-Taylor (2004) reported that the public sector still needs to get serious about leadership.

Furthermore, studies have examined communication satisfaction in the organization, but research conducted on communication satisfaction and leadership styles (transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire) are rare. For instance, previous study investigated communication satisfaction as a mediator between leadership styles (performance – oriented and consideration – oriented) and leadership effectiveness (Lee & Lin,1999). Further, Madlock (2008) investigated relational and task leadership with communication satisfaction. Only a few studies (e. g., Kasila, Poskiparta, & Villberg, 2006; Madlock, 2008) have mentioned that leadership is associated with communication satisfaction. Most of these studies did not consider (transformational, transactional, and laissez-fair) styles of leadership as contained in the present study nor presented communication satisfaction as three-dimensional construct.

On the other hand, few studies (e. g., Parrish, Tucker, & Gulbro, 1996; Ulloa-Heath, 2003) pointed out that transformational leadership was positively related to communication satisfaction, while transactional leadership was negatively or not related but, these studies did not consider the impact of laissez-faire style as is considered in the