

Exploring the Role of Leadership Styles in Innovation Teams: A Case Study of King Abdullah Medical City Makkah, Saudi Arabia

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ABSTRACT

Innovation teams have received increasing interest from academia and practice. However, little is known about how the performance of innovation teams is fostered. We investigate the role of leadership styles (i.e., autocratic, participative, and laissez-faire) in promoting the team performance during each stages of team growth (i.e., forming, storming, norming, performing and adjourning). A qualitative approach with different data collection techniques has been used in this study. The data were collected from four (4) focused groups, eight face-to-face interviews and unstructured researcher's non-participatory observation and it was generated from King Abdullah Medical City (KAMC), a healthcare organization located in Makkah, Saudi Arabia, in March 2019. The findings demonstrate that the participative style is the most influential. In contrast, autocratic and laissez-faire styles have fallen short to keep the members move forward to the final stages of the project. have been

KEY WORDS: DESIGN THINKING; INNOVATION CHAMPION; INNOVATION TEAMS; LEADERSHIP STYLES; TUCKMAN'S MODEL.

INTRODUCTION

Prior studies have found that leadership plays a significant role in improving followers' satisfaction, commitment and performance (Limsila, and Ogunlana, 2008; Ribeiro et al., 2018, Mwesigwa et al., 2020). The extant literature has also informed a critical impact of leadership styles on employees' job performance (Mohiuddin, 2017; (Mwesigwa et al., 2020), creativity (Herrmann, & Felfe,

2013), motivation (Fiaz et al., 2017 and organizational innovation (Alblooshi et al., 2021).

Boosting innovative ideas has been increasingly a critical goal that every organization aspires to achieve. Organizations pursue creative ideas and encourage creativity by fostering innovation teams to compete successfully in a dynamic, fiercely, and highly competitive markets. However, health organizations strive for ways to promote innovation teams to produce innovative solutions to health problems (Varkey et al., 2008; Ferguson et al., 2019; Mitchell and Boyle, 2020).

Improving the effectiveness of teams in the organization has been increasingly an essential goal for organizations to survive in a rapidly increased global competition (Kozlowski, 2018). Innovation team effectiveness is critical to physical and virtual organizations in general and health organizations in particular (West et al., 2003),

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which strive to bolster innovative projects to improve human beings' health and life (Varkey et al., 2008; Ferguson et al., 2019). Improving teams' performance is not viable without understanding the development stages and factors that could enhance the teams' development. Previous research has found that leadership styles influence teams' creativity (Pei, 2017) and performance (Morgeson et al., 2010); (Gyanchandani, 2017).

However, limited attempts exist in exploring the impact of leadership styles on innovation team development and functions (Eisenbeiss et al., 2008; Morgeson et al., 2010). Besides, most of the research conducted on leadership behavior theories were in western countries, studies exploring leadership styles in eastern countries are scarce (Memon, 2014). Moreover, although a substantial amount of academic papers on leadership behaviors have been conducted over the past half-century, a lack of clear-cut practical leadership actions exists (Yukl, 2012). Further, Day (2012) emphasizes that "Context matters, especially with leadership." Hence, this study aims to investigate behaviors that are valid and useful to improve the development of innovation teams.

The current study seeks to achieve two primary purposes: first, to delve into the influence of leadership styles on Tuckman's development stages of innovation teams (i.e., forming, storming, norming, performing, and adjourning). Second, the study explores the team members' insights into the role of the apparent leadership style in impacting the innovation project's progression. To achieve the above purposes, we need to underscore the process of team leadership and to question how the involved sources of interaction are functioning side by side with the challenges the team members are facing (Morgeson et al., 2010, Mitchell and Boyle, 2020, Alblooshi et al., 2021).

Leadership style, also referred to as behavior, is a phenomenon that attracted scholars and practitioners' attention. This is attributed to leadership influence on employee motivation (Fiaz et al., 2017), team performance and well-being (Alblooshi et al., 2020) and project success (Raziq et al., 2018). Several decades ago, a substantial body of literature had differentiated the two approaches of leadership styles: task-oriented styles and interpersonally oriented style (e.g., Lewin and Lippitt, 1938; Bales, 1950; Hemphill and Coons, 1957; Likert, 1961). While the former is concerned with fulfilling tasks organized around task-relevant activities, the latter is mainly concerned with interpersonal relationships by taking into consideration workers' conditions (Eagly et al., 2003).

Prior studies have explored a wide variety of taxonomies which elucidate leaders behaviors, frame these styles into groups (Yukl, 2012; Behrendt et al., 2017) and explicate its impact on followers (Dierendonck et al., 2004; Jong and Hartog, 2007). In 1945, a pioneering attempt to explore leaders' styles was initiated by the Ohio State University leadership studies group (Carter 1958). The study's significant contribution is identifying

two dimensions of leadership behavior: Consideration and initiating structure. Following the steps of the Ohio state university, the University of Michigan group has found two styles of leadership: Employee-Centered and Production-Centered (Katz and Kahn, 1950). Most of the earlier leadership theories are consistent with leadership dimensions by which four basic leadership styles surfaced: an Autocratic (or authoritarian) leader (High emphasis on performance and low emphasis on people), Laissez-Faire Leader (low emphasis on performance and people), Human Relations Leader (low emphasis on performance and high emphasis on people), and Democratic (or participative) Leader (high emphasis on performance and people) (Lewin and Lippitt, 1938; Warrick, 1981).

Autocratic leaders are characterized by their style that enforcing control over their followers and ignore personal relationships. Autocratic leaders focus predominantly on performance with low or no consideration on people (Warrick, 1981). Decision-making is often centralized with the leader without any thought of the opinion of the followers (Hassan et al., 2016). On the contrary, democratic leaders put a high emphasis on people and performance (Warrick, 1981). Democratic leadership is described as the performance of three functions: the distribution of responsibilities among members, the empowerment of group members and the support of the decision-making process of the group" (Gastil, 1994, p. 953).

Unlike autocratic leaders, democratic leaders encourage followers to participate in decision making. Prior studies have shown that autocratic leadership, relative to democratic, negatively influences the stability of the groups. It shows that many members exit their groups when supervised by autocratic leaders (Van Vugt et al., 2004). However, prior studies have found that democratic leaders positively impact group member satisfaction (Foels et al., 2000). Moreover, a study by Somech (2006) has also found that the participative leader in heterogeneous teams assists team members to exploit better heterogeneity of the groups in terms of the variety of professional backgrounds, knowledge, skills, and abilities.

Laissez-faire is a leadership style that mainly circumvents decision making, avoids problem-solving, and elope engagement. It is also described as "a general failure to take responsibility for managing" (Eagly et al., 2003, p. 571). The impact of Laissez-faire leadership style on followers' performance is yielding mixed results. Opponents of Laissez-faire leadership style has found that laissez-faire leaders are negatively impacting followers (Skogstad et al., 2007; Nielsen, et al., 2019) while proponents of this style argue that it has a positive impact on followers (Yang, 2015).

A modern view of leadership styles was following the older approach by studying new types of styles during the 80s and 90s. This updated perspective of styles focuses on how effective leaders can inspire and

foster followers' abilities and skills (Eagly et al., 2003). A pioneering attempt conducted by Burns (1978) and elaborated by Bass (1985; 1998) has yielded a new style called transformational leadership. Transformational leaders are characterized by considering themselves as role models to their followers by fostering their trust and confidence, empowering them to utilize and unleash their full potential (Eagly et al., 2003). Transformational leadership has consistently been related to employee satisfaction and empowering work environment (Boamah et al., 2018). In contrast, transactional leadership is concerned with managing, clarifying, rewarding, and correcting (Bass, 1998; Eagly et al., 2003).

Team leadership: The impact of leadership in organizations has been a phenomenon that attracted the attention of management and organization scholars over a hundred years (Eisenbeiss et al., 2008) and historian and philosopher a millennia ago (Kozlowski et al., 2016). An exploding number of empirical studies has shown a substantial impact of leadership on employees' performance, motivation (Ullah et al., 2019) and innovative behavior (Jong and Hartog, 2007). Leadership is a process of substantial importance as it could influence organization's performance (AL Khajeh, 2018) and employee outcome behaviors such as commitment (Mwesigwa et al., 2020; Yahaya and Ebrahim, 2016) and satisfaction (Huey Yiing and Zaman Bin Ahmad, 2009).

Prior studies have emphasized leadership's role in team performance and innovation (Dackert et al., 2004; Somech, 2006). In particular, functional leadership theory is employed to explore the essence of team leadership; Moreover, team leadership is previously described as ". . . leader as completer . . . the best a leader can do is to observe which functions are not being performed by a segment of the group and enable this part to accomplish them" (Schutz, 1961, p. 61). McGrath also asserts that "the primary purpose of leadership is to ensure that the group fulfils all critical functions necessary to its own maintenance and the accomplishment of its task" (1962, p. 5).

Accordingly, team leadership is defined as the process of the team need satisfaction in the service of enhancing team effectiveness (Morgeson et al., 2010). Besides, team leadership refers to "teams with a clearly identified leader who sets the team's tone or culture. The leader engages and motivates the team, ensures that communication is free-flowing, and ensures that all members can participate in the team and feel supported. Through this, they elicit a commitment to the team and its objectives. The leader provides a safe climate for constructive disagreement and ensures conflicts are resolved. They provide feedback on team performance and encourage reflection, openness, and learning culture." (Sims et al., 2015b, p. 212). Salas et al. (2018) have also emphasized that coordination, communication, and adaptability are critical competencies to increase teamwork efficiency.

Morgeson and colleagues (2010) have contributed to team leadership literature by modeling sources of leadership in teams based on the interaction of structural dimensions of locus of leadership and formality of leadership. The locus of leadership dimensions describes the leader's role as an engaged member of the team (internal) or an (external) member of the team who does not participate in any related teams' tasks. However, the formality of leadership dimension represents whether the leader is responsible for team performance as formalized in the organization (formal) or whether the leader is informally accountable for a team's leadership and performance (informal) (Morgeson et al., 2010). According to Morgeson et al. (2010), team leaders in the current study are considered internal and informal. In particular, internal and informal leadership are characterized by shared leadership responsibilities among team members (Day et al., 2004) or when a member occurs informally as a leader (Foti and Hauenstein, 2007).

Morgeson and colleagues have also described team leadership functions based on two phases of team development: transition and action phases. The leadership functions that were manifest in the transition phase are: composing team, defining mission, establishing expectations and goals, structuring and planning, training and developing, sense-making, and providing feedback. However, the action phase is characterized by the leader who mainly monitors, manages, and challenges teams. Add to that; the leader should be occupied with performing team tasks, solving problems, providing resources, encouraging team self-management, and supporting social climate (Morgeson et al., 2010).

Moreover, leadership style plays a critical role in cross-functional team processes and performance (Somech, 2006). Innovation in organizations is considered the process to create and develop new methods for getting things done. Innovation enables idea generation, and ideas' implementation, leading to the best methods, practices, or products. Creativity and innovation appear at levels such as individuals, work teams, organizations, or in a combination of all these levels. However, the results can be recognized in one or more of these levels (Anderson et al., 2014).

Cross-functional teams are essential for innovation projects, where organizations need diverse team with variety of perspectives and experiences to solve complicated problems (Thayer et al., 2018; Usher and Barak, 2020). However, functional diversity can also lead to conflicts, which may hinder an optimal performance of team's (Driessen et al., 2015). According to Edmondson and Nembhard (2009), using teams in organization for developing new products can promote both internal and external success (Hayes et al., 1988; Wheelwright et al., 1992). Internally, successful teams have accelerated the product development cycle, reduced development costs, and increased new products quality (Cooper and Kleinschmidt, 1994; Gupta and Wilemon, 1990; McDonough, 2000; Sarin and Mahajan, 2001; Valle and Avella, 2003).

A recent study that explored the challenges facing innovation teams during the staging of the innovation teams has identified the following: leader selection criteria, leader personal characteristics, communication, cross-functionality, and task distributions as the major challenges (Kutob and Alhothali, 2020). Team development is described as a vernacular practice by which team members attempt to establish their way of conducting work with compelling social structures, norms, and practices (Kozlowski and Ilgen, 2006). It is considered holistic as all members go through this process together and it has been long related to team performance (Zhu et al., 2020). A pioneering attempt to structuring team development is demonstrated in Tuckman's stage model (1965).

The Tuckman's model, first published in 1965, demonstrates the progress of the team in four consecutive stages: forming, storming, norming, and performing which were based on clinical therapy and T-groups. Later on, the model has been updated by Tuckman and Jensen (1977) to involve a fifth stage called adjourning. The first stage forming represents the phase where the members are selected and where the design thinking occurs. Second, the storming stage in which the team faces conflicts and issues in dealing with each other. Then, the norming stage through which the team becomes more stable and familiar with each other. While the team becomes more effective and efficient at the stage of performing, in which the team improves substantially and provides valuable outcomes. The final stage of the Tuckman model is the adjourning stage in which the team approaches the closure, and the opportunity of starting a new project with the same team arises.

Tuckman's model is one of the influential models as "it responds to the growing importance of groups in the workplace and to the lack of applicable research... useful for practice by describing the new ways that people were working together, helping group members understand what was happening in the development process, and providing consultants a way to predict the stages of growth in groups" (Bonebright, 2010, p. 112). Hence, in this study, Tuckman's model will be utilized to frame the stages of innovation team development.

Working in teams has increasingly become a typical structure of work in organizations (Hiller et al., 2006). This unprecedented use of team-oriented work is attributed to its impact on the organizational success and its agile response to uncertainty (Kozlowski, 2018). Health organizations are among the pioneering organizations in utilizing teams to achieve tasks and daily work activities. Failures of team leadership, coordination, and communication are the leading causes of major crises such as air crashes, medical errors, and technical failure. Therefore, innovation teams are considerably significant to the health industry.

A large body of research has investigated the efficiency of working in teams to produce innovative solutions to medical and health problems (Hewitt et al., 2014; Sims

et al., 2015a; Sims et al., 2015b). Sims and colleagues (2015b) have utilized realist synthesis theory to explore the underlying processes used by inter professional teamwork to improve team efficiency. The findings reveal that 13 mechanisms, such as (e.g., leadership, shared purpose, innovation, and critical reflection), when used together, would enhance teams' direction and focus.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

To collect data for the current study, a qualitative approach with different techniques of data collection has been administered. In particular, four (4) focused groups' members, eight (8) face-to-face interviews and unstructured researcher's non-participatory observations have been used for this study. Semi-structured interviews allow participants to freely talk about their experience as innovation team members and the ramification of leadership style on the projects' progress and performance. The use of interviews is justifiable as it enables the members to express their views without feeling embarrassed by their leaders. Conducting interviews also helps the researcher to meet the participants at their convenience.

The reason behind using focused group to gather data is that the respondents worked within small teams, they feel more comfortable to respond and for researchers it is faster to collect their answers at once. Besides, data collected from researcher's non-participatory observation is also considered during the program life cycle. Data were collected from King Abdullah Medical City (KAMC), a healthcare organization located in Makkah, a Holy City on the Eastern side of Saudi Arabia in March 2019.

The innovation champion's program owner has approved permission to start data collection. Further, the researcher received permission from the Research and Innovation Center in KAMC for data collection. The data collected from six innovation teams with the total number of 36 of KAMC staff from different departments, positions and backgrounds (medical and non-medical) who participated in the Innovation Champion in 2019. Table 1 below shows the participants' demographic information. A convenient sampling is used to get participants to participate in the study. An invitation email was sent to participants and direct managers to confirm the approval of their participation in the research. Participants' description in terms of their role in the team (i.e., member or leader) and the department where they work are displayed in (Table 1).

Participants were contacted via phone to schedule an appointment for the interview or the focus group. The interviews were recorded after taking the participants' permission. The interview questions are focused on the role of leadership from three main perspectives: the first is the leader selection mechanism and criteria. Second, the leader's characteristics and its impact on team performance in the project. Lastly, the main concerns and disagreements on the leader's characteristics.

The five-stages of Design Thinking model proposed by the Hasso-Plattner Institute of Design at Stanford (Plattner et al., 2009) was used as a reference guide for

innovation teams in managing and conducting their projects. See Table 2 below.

Table 1. Description of participants

Team Code	Type of team member	Participant Code	Department
1	Member	1	Executive Administration of Operation
	Member	2	Associate Executive Administration of Patient Affairs
	Member	3	Associate Executive Administration of Patient Affairs
	Member	4	Innovation Center - Taif
	Member	5	Innovation Center - Taif
2	Member	6	Executive Administration of Operation
	Member	7	Executive Administration of Research and Innovation
	Leader	8	Executive Administration of Medical and Clinical Affairs
	Member	9	Executive Administration of Medical and Clinical Affairs
3	Member	10	Executive Administration of Medical and Clinical Affairs
	Leader	11	Executive Administration of Medical and Clinical Affairs
4	Member	12	Executive Administration of Operation
	Leader	13	Executive Administration of Operation
5	Member	14	Health Economics Department
	Member	15	Patient Experience Center
	Member	16	Executive Administration of Medical and Clinical Affairs
	Leader	17	Executive Administration of Operation
6	member	18	Executive Administration of Administrative and Financial Affairs
	member	19	Executive Administration of Operation
	member	20	Marketing and Corporate Communication Department
6	member	21	Legal Affairs Department
	member	22	Executive Administration of Medical and Clinical Affairs

Table 2. The Innovation Champion project phases as adapted from d.school model (Kutob and Alhothali, 2020)

D.school Model	Empathize	Define	Ideate	Prototype	Test
Definition	Gain an empathic understanding of the problem trying to solve.	Analyze the observations and synthesize them in order to define the core problems the team have identified.	Identify new solutions to the problem statement and evaluate the options then select the suitable option for the problem.	Implement the solution and investigate either accepted, improved and re-examined, or rejected on the basis of the users'experiences.	Alternate and refine the solution in order to rule out problem solutions and derive as deep an understanding of the product and its users as possible.
KAMC Model	Design		Develop		Deliver

Data Analysis: The steps of Miles and colleagues (Miles et al., 2018) were utilized to analyze data for this study.

A holistic approach emphasized by the overall research questions followed by what the participants have discussed when answering the main questions is conducted. Then, drawing conclusions and checking the raw data to verify assumptions was established. The respondents were asked to explain their experience in light of the five stages of Tuckman's model. Specifically, they are encouraged to discuss the problems that face

them during the five stages of the team development model.

The first stage forming represents the phase where the members are selected and where the design thinking occurs. Second, the storming stage in which the team faces conflicts and issues in dealing with each other. Then, the norming stage through which the group becomes more stable and familiar with each other. While the team becomes more effective and efficient at the stage of performing, in which the team improves

substantially and provides valuable outcomes. The final stage of the Tuckman model is the adjourning stage in which the team is closing its project, and the opportunity of starting a new project with the same team members in the next project arises.

Table 3. Demographic characteristics of the participants

Variable	Criteria	Number	Percentage (%)
Age	18-24	0	0%
	25 to 34	9	41%
	35 to 44	10	45%
	45 to 54	3	14%
	55 and above	0	0%
Gender	Male	11	50%
	Female	11	50%
Education	Diploma	2	9%
	Bachelor	14	64%
	Master	6	27%
	PhD	0	0%

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 3 describes the demographic data of the participants. The findings reveal that the sample was balanced in terms of gender (50% female and 50% male). Participants were relatively young as (41 %) of them aged between 25 to 34 and (45 %) were between 35 to 44 years old. The majority of the sample (91%) is university educated. The themes were generated through using the thematic analysis and were classified into three major classes: the leader selection mechanism and criteria, the leader personal characteristics and its impact on team performance in the project. Table 4 below summarizes the themes discussed with the participants during their experience in the Tuckman's model of team building in comparison with three different leadership styles.

A group of respondents has demonstrated a set of leader characteristics that align with the autocratic leadership style. As displayed in table 2., during the forming stage, respondents emphasize that a member of the team assigns himself to be the group leader.

Being autocratic by nature, the leader assigns tasks and roles to other team members without prior discussion. "We were surprised that one of the team members had selected himself to be the leader without considering all the things that we have learned in the workshop to help us select the right leader. I would not be so sure about selecting him as a leader, but was obliged to accept that." (Team member (20) – male).

This finding corroborates with the existing literature on the characteristics of autocratic leaders. They take the sole duty to make choices and relevant decisions without seeking input from followers in the organization (Gandolfi and Stone, 2017; Harms et al., 2018). Besides, the leader assigns the tasks to team members without

participation in any of the tasks. This result confirms prior studies where the leader of this group is taking an external role where he/she does not participate in any related teams' tasks (Morgeson et al., 2010). Moving to the storming stage, respondents emphasized that this stage is critical as it involves conflicts and arguments. Respondents stress that the leader imposes (his/her) opinions and ideas over the other members' views and ideas. Although he/she has not participated in any tasks, he still has the power to enforce his opinion. "Our leader always refuses any other opinion: He is refusing our attempts to reach an agreement and finding any reason to complicate the situation and refuse our opinions." (Team member (3) – female).

The norming and performing stages are parallel with the developing phase in the innovation project, where the participants asked to brainstorm their ideas relative to the main problem and the need identified in the discovery phase. Respondents have emphasized that Develop phase in the project is synchronizing with the norming stage in the development model. During the norming stage, the leader becomes more understandable and acceptable to team members' contributions.

"we have reached now a point of agreements by all members" (Team member (3) – female). However, during the performing stage where the members are functioning as capable teams, respondents emphasized that the leader becomes more focused on task accomplishment (Warrick, 1980), and the team members become more comfortable with each other. "Sometimes, they are positive and sometimes negative, but the group members are like one family. We all talk together to reach something that satisfies all members of the team" (Team member (3) – female). Respondents stressed that through the adjourning stage, the members start feeling of achievement and being proud; however, the team members are unwilling to continue with the same team members in future projects. This finding also corroborates with prior studies, which emphasize that the viability of the team is an indicator of team effectiveness (Hackman, 1987). "I do not think we are going to participate in other projects together" (Team member (10) – female).

Researcher observation has been taken into consideration. The main finding is that autocratic leaders in innovation projects could decrease team performance. It could be inferred from delayed reports that should be submitted by their leader. Besides, the leader refuses the team's opinions and suggestions in situations that require mutual decision-making. Finally, the findings of these focus groups confirm the characteristic of the autocratic leadership style is not good for growth. Autocratic leadership style, where the leader is responsible for taking all the decisions, has full authority over the work and team, assigning tasks, and control the communication within the group (Lewin and Lippitt, 1938; Gandolfi and Stone, 2017).

Respondents of focus group two ascribe one of the democratic leaders' main features, where the leader

encourages shared opinion. In particular, (see table 4 above), the leader of this group was selected by voting during the team members agree to choose a leader to the group based on his previous experience and specialties. This result confirms the characteristics of democratic leaders, where the leader seeks the followers' opinions

when making decisions (Gandolfi and Stone, 2017; Rifaldi et al., 2019). Respondents also emphasized that the leader discusses the tasks and roles with the team members before assigning them. Hence, the characteristics of the democratic leader come to the surface.

Table 4. Leadership style in comparison to the team building stages

Tuckman Model of Team Building	Leadership Styles		
	Autocratic Scenario 1	Democratic Scenario 2	Laissez-Faire Scenario 3
Forming (team formation, setting ground rules and finding similarities)	The leader was selecting himself as a leader. The leader assigns tasks to members without prior discussion.	The leader was selected by voting or based on his previous experience and specialties. The leader discusses the tasks and roles with the team members.	Has unclear leader selection criteria. The tasks assignments have unclear goals and deadlines of the tasks.
Storming (Dealing with issues of power and control and suffering differences)	The leader assigns all the tasks to team members, and he did not participate in task accomplishment. The leader imposes his opinions and ideas over the other members' opinions and ideas.	The leader was sharing the decision-making opportunity regarding excluding one of his team members. The leader is trying to satisfy each member of the team on the expenses of the project due dates.	The team members are not a response to leader instructions, and the leader does not have enough skills to manage the conflicts. The leader tends to take all the work and do by him/herself.
Norming (Managing the team conflicts, finding the team norms, and refusing the similarities)	The leader becomes more understandable and acceptable to team contributions.	The leader and the team become more productive and achievable.	The leader becomes more aware of the things that are motivating her team members and try to increase their engagement.
Performing (functioning as a capable team)	The leader becomes more focused on tasks accomplishment, and the teams become more comfortable with each other.	The leader was sharing tasks based on the strong points of the team members.	The leader and the team are helping each other to resolve the conflicts and focusing on the results.
Adjourning (finding closure)	Feeling of achievement and proud, but the team are not willing to continue with the same team in future projects.	The leader and the team members are feeling as one family, and they are willing to continue to accelerate their project to the implementation phase.	The leader and the team members are wanted to stop by the deadline of the Innovation Champion program.

"The leader nominated by voting, and we are all agreed that this person was the best among us." (Team member (19) – female). Respondents of this focus groups stress that the leader was open to their opinions and seeking their contribution in decision making. A female team (7) member (team 2) indicates that "the leader asked us to help him to decide excluding one of the team members." Respondents have also emphasized that the leader was very flexible and cooperative. They also indicate that he was trying to satisfy each member; however, this has negatively impacted the project progress as it delays task

submissions. This result contradicts previous results in the literature (Hackman, 1987).

Even though members' satisfaction is an indication of team effectiveness, the findings of this study show that satisfying each team member impedes the progress of the project. During the norming stage, respondents give attention to the congruity level that becomes evident among the members. Hence, team members become more productive and capable of achieving their tasks. "The team performance after excluding the trouble maker

member, everyone becomes helpful and powerful; the task assigned by the leader and all team members were accepting and working on it. The leader asked the team to provide him with any notes on the way of managing the project." (Team member (7) – female). During the performing stage, respondents reveal that the leader was open and democratic in that he divides tasks and responsibilities, considering the strong points and characteristics of the team members.

"He was able to resolve issues once appeared. Moreover, find a suitable solution. He was perfect, energetic, and enthusiastic" (Team member (9) – female). Through this stage, respondents have expressed the feeling of harmony, agreement, and assurance. They emphasized that the leader and the team members are feeling as one family, and they are willing to continue to move their project to the implementation phase. This finding indicates the team's effectiveness as the members are satisfied and willing to move to the next stage. Their willingness to move forward corroborates with prior studies in terms of the viability of the team as a facet of team effectiveness (Hackman, 1987). The findings underscore the features of the democratic style of a leader. The leader of this group demonstrates the feature of democratic leaders where the leader sought team members' collaboration throughout the progress of the project. These features confirmed the characteristic of the democratic style as described by (Lewin & Lippitt, 1938; Rifaldi et al., 2019).

According to the researcher's observations, the democratic leader had positive influences on his/ her team, especially in innovation projects, which need more flexibility and dynamism. One of the most critical findings is that the team member selection at the beginning of the project has a significant impact on the members who have a democratic leader, which facilitates the team to pass the storming stage faster and easier than the other teams. Respondents expressed that they were struggling in the forming stage as the goals were not clear. Tasks are also blurred; no one was sure what to do or when to start. This finding confirms the characteristics of Laissez-fair leaders, where they avoid leadership (Eagly et al., 2003; Skogstad et al., 2014). This finding confirms the destructive role of the Laissez-Faire leadership style as it positively related to role ambiguity (Skogstad et al., 2014), role stress, interpersonal conflicts, and health problems (Skogstad et al., 2017).

Through the forming stage, the leader was not clear about goals, roles, and tasks, so respondents were not cooperating with him nor responding to his requests and instructions. Respondents also emphasize that the leader lacks the required skills to manage the conflicts. So, to proceed, the leader tends to take all the tasks and do them by him/herself. The results also approve previous studies' findings into the failure of Laissez-fair leaders to solve problems (Eagly et al., 2003). "...When it comes to the tasks and reports, he did not allow us to see it before sending it to the program manager. When he shows us, it seemed not familiar to us, and he assigned himself the rest of the tasks without any prior discussions, how

would I do the content of the report? We are not familiar with anything." (Team member (20) – male).

During the forming stage, the leader and the team are helping each other resolve the conflicts and focus on the results. "The team leader did not arrange the meetings. During the two hours at the meeting, I did not know what to do. In the first two weeks of the project, the picture was very blurry, meaning I would leave the team and join another team. We were already lost, and I do not want to say that the leader is the reason because he is trying hard not to fail, but he told us that he was like we lost until we started the project with what we know." (Team member (10) – female). Despite the leader's and members' efforts to move to the next stage, they fail, and their project has stopped without completion. The finding confirms prior studies that of Laissez-fair leadership style can deteriorate the effectiveness of the teamwork (Skogstad et al., 2007; Skogstad et al., 2017) as it leads to the failure of completing the project.

The findings of these focus groups indicate the salient feature of the Laissez-Faire leadership style, where the leader is more receptive to other opinions. This style of leaders does not have any constraints regarding who is taking the roles and decisions. This leadership style enables the team member to work freely, and the leader does not tend to engage in the process of leading (Lewin & Lippitt, 1938; Omolayo, 2007). The most apparent finding from the observation is that the members led by the Laissez-fair leader felt lost, reflecting on their ability to make the right decisions. As a concrete example, the team leader expressed his feelings of losing control and confusion "I am lost just like you (his team)." The team members were in a critical condition, and they needed to complete the project to participate in the contest. Another observational example is that one of the team leaders has closed his mobile while his team needs the project files that they are working with him to be submitted to the program manager.

CONCLUSION

Innovation teams have received increasing interest from academia and practice. However, little is known about how the performance of innovation teams is fostered. Hence, the current study explores the role of leadership styles (i.e., autocratic, participative, and laissez-faire) in promoting the team performance during the stages of team growth (i.e., forming, storming, norming, performing and adjourning). A qualitative approach consisted of four (4) focused groups, eight (8) face-to-face interviews and non-participatory observation have been used for this study. Data were collected from King Abdullah Medical City (KAMC), a healthcare organization located in Makkah, Saudi Arabia, in March 2019.

The findings demonstrate that the participative style is the most influential type of leadership. In contrast, autocratic and laissez-faire styles have fallen short as to keep the members moves forward to the final stages of the project. Moreover, the results indicate that all

the innovation teams passed through the team-building stages; however, the impact of leadership style differs from one group to another. The findings also demonstrate that the autocratic leadership style is the most effective as it is the only team members who are satisfied and have completed the project and are willing to move to the implementation stage. The study also has confirmed the destructive role of the laissez-faire leadership style as it leads to the failure of the innovation team project (Skogstad et al., 2007). For leaders to be adaptive, they must be aware of the critical contingencies that necessitate shifts in leadership functions. They must possess the required skills needed to help the team maintain its fit with their task environment and resolve challenges.

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