


# Chapter 5

## Exploring the Relationship Between Leadership and Well-Being

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Leadership and well-being are deeply intertwined, influencing individuals and organizational dynamics in profound ways. This study explores the bidirectional relationship between leadership styles, emotional intelligence, organizational culture, and well-being. By examining frameworks such as transformational, democratic, and ethical leadership, the research highlights the importance of adaptive, inclusive, and emotionally intelligent leadership in fostering employee satisfaction, mental health, and work-life balance. Additionally, the role of positive organizational culture and the evolving challenges of remote and hybrid leadership are analyzed. Findings suggest that leaders who emphasize empathy, ethics, and inclusivity create environments conducive to personal and collective growth. This comprehensive review provides actionable insights for leaders, policymakers, and organizations striving for effective leadership and enhanced employee well-being.*

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## **1. INTRODUCTION TO LEADERSHIP AND WELL-BEING**

In the public sector, where job demands, stress, and burnout levels are notably high, employee well-being is a crucial driver of organizational performance. According to research, reduced productivity from low employee well-being costs the world economy about \$1 trillion a year (WHO, 2020). Stress at work causes absenteeism, decreased productivity, and a decline in service quality in the public sector (Cooper & Quick, 2017). Despite this, little is known about how leadership shapes well-being; most studies concentrate on how leaders affect others rather than how leadership itself affects well-being on both an individual and organizational level.

Existing research has looked at how leadership styles affect employee motivation and job satisfaction, but there is still a lack of understanding of how ethical leadership and well-being work together to generate organizational success (Avolio & Gardner, 2005). In order to close this gap, this chapter examines the reciprocal relationship between leadership and well-being, arguing that it both influences and is influenced by employee well-being. A high-performing, mentally healthy workforce is more successfully fostered by leaders who develop their own psychological resilience and ethical awareness (Søvold et al., 2021).

The primary aim of this chapter is to develop a practical framework that links leadership styles and ethical practices to employee well-being and overall organizational performance in the public sector. By integrating insights from positive psychology, transformational leadership theory, and well-being interventions, we propose strategies that can enhance both leader and employee well-being, ultimately driving sustainable organizational success.

## **2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS IN LEADERSHIP AND WELL-BEING**

Over the past couple of decades, various theories and models exploring the dynamics of leadership and well-being have been articulated in the literature. In conventional leadership literature, leadership is concerned with organizational goals, mission, and vision; leaders are expected to be enthusiastic, self-assured, collaborative, and open; and followers are meant to be invitees who follow direction willingly. In comparison, the lens of leadership well-being suggests that well-being is not a peripheral activity or an add-on, but a core enabler for successful, meaningful, and effective leadership. This suggests that the integration of leadership and well-being is not simply attitudinal, an endorsement of well-being programs and services, but is systemic, focusing on the nature of the organization and transforming what organizations and their members do and how they do things. Traditional perspectives

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