



Leadership and Organizational Behavior as Drivers of Employee Well-Being: Pathways toward Healthier Workplaces

Randa Al-Madah^{1*}

¹Department of General Subjects, College of Business Administration, University of Business and Technology, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

***Corresponding Author**

E-mail: r.almadah@ubt.edu.sa

ABSTRACT

Employee well-being has become a central organizational concern because burnout, stress, disengagement, and poor psychological health can weaken both individual functioning and collective workplace capacity. Healthier workplaces require attention not only to employee coping but also to the leadership and organizational conditions that shape everyday work experiences. Existing research often treats leadership styles and organizational behavior constructs as separate explanations for employee well-being. This fragmentation limits understanding of how leaders, climates, job resources, and recovery processes jointly shape psychological, physical, and social well-being. This conceptual review proposes an integrated model in which transformational, servant, and ethical leadership operate as primary drivers of employee well-being. These leadership styles are theorized to work through psychological safety, organizational justice, perceived organizational support, job demands-resources processes, work-life balance, and recovery experiences. The framework includes a multi-leadership styles module, an organizational climate mediator layer, a job demands-resources and recovery pathways module, a well-being outcomes matrix, and a feedback loop for leadership development. Together, these components explain how healthier workplaces could emerge through coordinated leadership and organizational behavior practices. The integrated model provides a conceptual roadmap for designing organizational interventions that address climate, job resources, and recovery rather than relying solely on individual resilience. It suggests that leaders can help embed well-being into everyday work systems by shaping relational quality, fairness, support, and boundary norms. A systemic approach to employee well-being requires moving beyond isolated programs and toward leadership-driven workplace design. Healthier workplaces are likely to emerge when employee health is treated as a shared organizational responsibility rather than an individual burden.

Keywords: Leadership, Organizational behavior, Employee well-being, Burnout, Engagement, Psychological safety.

Introduction

Employee burnout, stress, and disengagement have become central challenges for organizations seeking to sustain healthy and productive workplaces. Leadership and work design research suggest that employee well-being is shaped not only by individual coping capacity but also by the social and structural conditions under which employees perform their work (Arnold, 2017; Inceoglu *et al.*, 2018). From an occupational health perspective, leader behavior can influence psychological strain, motivation, and the availability of resources that employees use to manage demanding work environments (Harms *et al.*, 2017; Montano *et al.*, 2017). A conceptual review of leadership and organizational behavior is therefore warranted to explain how healthier workplaces could be built through coordinated social, relational, and organizational pathways.

Many workplace well-being initiatives continue to emphasize individual resilience, mindfulness, or coping skills while giving insufficient attention to the managerial and organizational sources of strain. Reviews of leadership and well-being indicate that leader behavior could either reduce or amplify stress depending on whether leaders provide support,

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autonomy, fairness, and meaning (Inceoglu *et al.*, 2018; Kaluza *et al.*, 2020). Work engagement intervention research similarly suggests that employee well-being would be expected to improve when organizations address the conditions that generate engagement rather than treating engagement as a purely personal trait (Knight *et al.*, 2017). This article therefore positions leadership and organizational behavior as core antecedents of well-being rather than as peripheral contextual variables.

Separate research streams have already linked transformational leadership, servant leadership, psychological safety, job resources, and perceived organizational support to important employee health-related outcomes. Transformational leadership has been framed as relevant to employee psychological well-being because it can provide meaning, inspiration, and individualized consideration, while servant leadership has been positioned as a relationally supportive approach centered on follower needs (Arnold, 2017; Eva *et al.*, 2019). Psychological safety and perceived organizational support add organizational behavior mechanisms by explaining how employees interpret the workplace as safe, fair, and caring (Kurtessis *et al.*, 2017; Newman *et al.*, 2017; Frazier *et al.*, 2017). However, a comprehensive conceptual framework is still needed to synthesize these constructs into a coherent account of how leadership and organizational behavior jointly shape multidimensional well-being.

This article proposes an integrated conceptual model in which leadership styles and organizational behavior constructs function as co-drivers of employee well-being. The model suggests that transformational, servant, and ethical leadership could influence employee health by shaping psychological safety, justice, perceived support, job crafting, work-life balance, and recovery processes (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Sonnentag *et al.*, 2017; Hoch *et al.*, 2018; Lemoine *et al.*, 2019). Rather than treating burnout, engagement, and health as isolated outcomes, the framework positions them as interconnected indicators within a broader well-being system (Lesener *et al.*, 2019; Bakker *et al.*, 2023). This approach offers actionable pathways toward healthier workplaces by linking leader development, organizational climate, job demands-resources processes, and recovery-oriented work design.



Background

The Employee Well-Being Landscape

Employee well-being can be understood as a multidimensional construct that includes psychological, physical, and social functioning at work. Psychological well-being includes low strain, low burnout, and positive engagement, while physical and social well-being reflect bodily health, recovery capacity, supportive relationships, and a sense of belonging in the workplace (Montano *et al.*, 2017; Nielsen *et al.*, 2017). Biological aspects of health, including antioxidant balance and resistance to microbial stressors, may also contribute to employees' physical well-being and recovery capacity (Ahmed, 2023b; Ahmed *et al.*, 2023c). The job demands-resources tradition conceptualizes burnout and engagement as linked but distinct pathways through which workplace demands and resources shape employee health (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Lesener *et al.*, 2019). From this perspective, organizations are not merely settings in which health outcomes appear; they are social systems that could actively generate or protect employee well-being.

Leadership Styles and Employee Health Outcomes

Leadership styles have been repeatedly identified as meaningful antecedents of employee well-being because leaders influence meaning, fairness, workload interpretation, support, and interpersonal climate. Reviews and meta-analytic evidence indicate that transformational leadership, ethical leadership, authentic leadership, and servant leadership could contribute to better employee health by improving relational quality and increasing access to job resources (Arnold, 2017; Montano *et al.*, 2017; Hoch *et al.*, 2018; Inceoglu *et al.*, 2018). Servant leadership may be especially relevant because it foregrounds follower development, stewardship, and care, while ethical and authentic approaches emphasize integrity, transparency, and moral consistency (Eva *et al.*, 2019; Lemoine *et al.*, 2019). A leadership-centered well-being framework should therefore explain not only whether leaders matter, but also how different leadership forms activate distinct yet overlapping health pathways.

Table 1 presents a structured comparison of how distinct leadership styles activate specific psychological and organizational pathways that contribute to employee well-being.

Table 1. Comparative Functional Mechanisms of Leadership Styles in Activating Employee Well-Being Pathways

Leadership Style	Core Behavioral Signals	Primary Psychological Mechanism	Climate Translation Pathway	Resource Activation Function	Expected Well-Being Impact
Transformational Leadership	Vision articulation, inspiration, individualized consideration	Meaning-making and intrinsic motivation	Enhances psychological safety and engagement climate	Strengthens autonomy, purpose, and cognitive resources	Increased engagement, reduced emotional exhaustion
Servant Leadership	Stewardship, empathy, follower development	Relational care and trust formation	Builds perceived organizational support and belonging	Enhances social support and developmental resources	Reduced burnout, improved psychological resilience
Ethical Leadership	Fairness, integrity, transparency	Moral certainty and reduced ambiguity	Reinforces organizational justice and trust climate	Stabilizes expectations and reduces stress appraisal	Lower psychological distress, increased trust
Leader-Member Exchange (LMX)	Dyadic relationship quality, responsiveness	Socio-emotional exchange and reciprocity	Personalizes climate experience at individual level	Enables access to resources and opportunities	Increased satisfaction and reduced strain
Cross-Style Integration	Consistent relational signaling across styles	Cognitive-emotional coherence	Creates stable, predictable work environment	Synergistic amplification of resources	Sustained multidimensional well-being



Organizational Behavior Drivers

Organizational behavior constructs provide the climate and relational mechanisms through which leadership may become meaningful for employee well-being. Psychological safety helps explain whether employees feel able to speak up, ask for help, and discuss errors without fear, which would be expected to protect mental health in uncertain or demanding settings (Frazier *et al.*, 2017; Newman *et al.*, 2017; Edmondson & Bransby, 2023). Organizational justice and perceived organizational support indicate whether employees experience the workplace as fair, respectful, and concerned with their welfare, thereby shaping stress appraisal and attachment to the organization (Kurtessis *et al.*, 2017; Aggarwal & Mittal, 2021). Workplace incivility represents the opposite relational condition, as disrespectful interactions could erode psychological safety, intensify emotional demands, and weaken recovery capacity (Kuriakose *et al.*, 2023; Kuriakose & Sreejesh, 2023; Hayat *et al.*, 2025).

Mediating Mechanisms

The job demands-resources model offers a central mechanism for connecting leadership and organizational behavior to employee well-being. Leaders can influence whether employees experience work as resource-rich or demand-heavy by shaping autonomy, role clarity, recognition, workload expectations, and relational support (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Tummers & Bakker, 2021; Bakker *et al.*, 2023). Engagement, burnout, job crafting, and recovery experiences then serve as pathways through which leadership and climate could translate into psychological and physical well-being (Sonnentag *et al.*, 2017; Oprea *et al.*, 2019; Sonnentag *et al.*, 2022). This mediational view implies that healthier workplaces are not produced only by reducing demands but also by strengthening resources, enabling recovery, and supporting employee agency in shaping work.

Existing Integrated Models and the Missing Link

Prior models have combined leadership, organizational climate, and work design to explain employee attitudes and functioning, yet many remain oriented toward performance, motivation, or isolated well-being indicators. Integrative reviews have argued that leadership research should more explicitly connect leader behavior with employee health, job characteristics, and organizational context (Montano *et al.*, 2017; Inceoglu *et al.*, 2018; Kaluza *et al.*, 2020). At the same time, psychological safety, perceived organizational support, and job demands-resources research often explain climate and resources without fully specifying how leadership styles initiate or sustain these conditions (Kurtessis *et al.*, 2017; Tummers & Bakker, 2021; Edmondson & Bransby, 2023). The missing link is a unified pathways model focused specifically on multidimensional employee well-being as the central outcome rather than as a secondary consequence.

Framework Overview

High-Level Architecture

The proposed framework is organized as a multilevel pathway model in which leadership styles operate as upstream social drivers that shape organizational behavior conditions, which then influence job resources, recovery processes, and employee well-being. Transformational, servant, and ethical leadership are positioned as core leader inputs because each style contributes a distinct but complementary pathway: transformational leadership may provide meaning and inspiration, servant leadership may emphasize care and follower development, and ethical leadership may establish fairness, integrity, and trust (Arnold, 2017; Hoch *et al.*, 2018; Eva *et al.*, 2019; Lemoine *et al.*, 2019). These leadership inputs are theorized to create an organizational context characterized by psychological safety, perceived organizational support, justice, civility, and openness, allowing employees to interpret the workplace as more predictable, respectful, and health-supportive (Frazier *et al.*, 2017; Kurtessis *et al.*, 2017; Newman *et al.*, 2017). Once such a context is established, employees would be expected to experience stronger job resources, including autonomy, role clarity, social support, recognition, and opportunities for job crafting, all of which can reduce the harmful effects of excessive job demands (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Tummers & Bakker, 2021; Bakker *et al.*, 2023). The endpoint of the framework is a multidimensional well-being profile in which employees are less exposed to burnout risk, more likely to experience engagement, better able to recover from work demands, and more likely to sustain psychological, physical, and social functioning over time (Sonnentag *et al.*, 2017; Oprea *et al.*, 2019; Sonnentag *et al.*, 2022).

Figure 1 illustrates the integrated multilevel pathway model linking leadership styles, organizational climate, job resources, recovery processes, and multidimensional employee well-being outcomes.



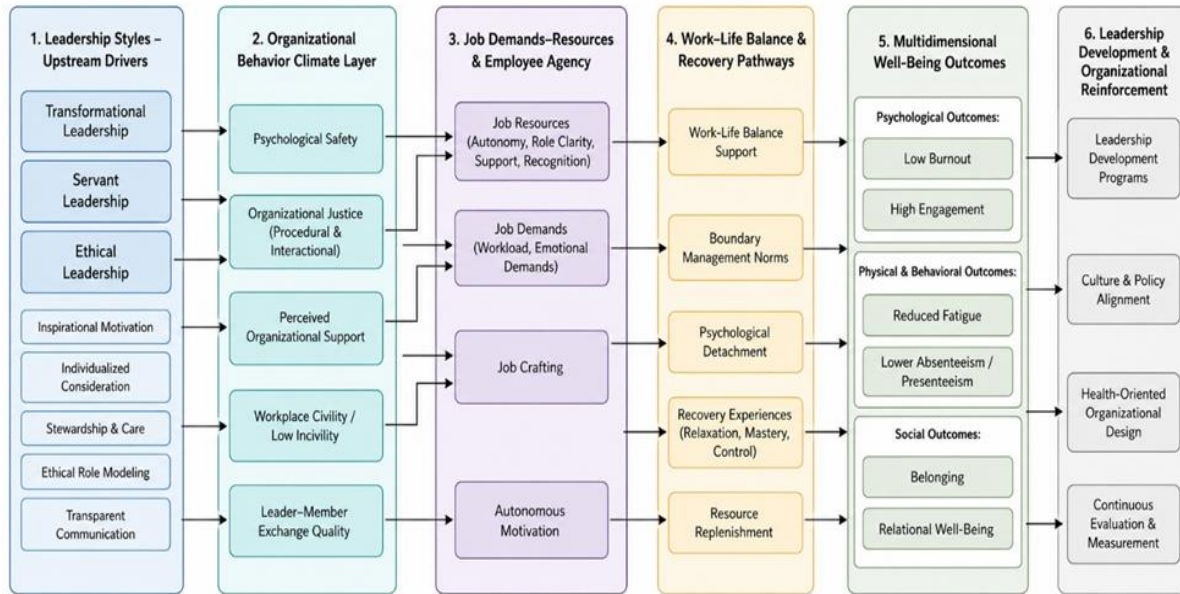


Figure 1. Integrated Leadership–Organizational Behavior Pathways Model for Multidimensional Employee Well-Being

Core Inputs and Processes

The core inputs of the framework include specific leader behaviors rather than broad leadership labels alone, because employee well-being is shaped by what leaders repeatedly do in everyday work interactions. Inspirational motivation, individualized consideration, servant stewardship, ethical role modeling, transparent communication, and relational consistency are expected to signal to employees that their work has meaning, their needs are recognized, and their dignity is protected (Arnold, 2017; Eva *et al.*, 2019; Lemoine *et al.*, 2019). These behaviors operate through mediating organizational behavior constructs such as psychological safety, perceived organizational support, interpersonal justice, civility, and high-quality leader-follower relationships, which together form the social climate through which employees interpret work demands (Frazier *et al.*, 2017; Kurtessis *et al.*, 2017; Newman *et al.*, 2017; Aggarwal & Mittal, 2021). The framework then links this climate layer to more proximal employee processes, including job crafting, autonomous motivation, psychological detachment, recovery experiences, and work engagement, suggesting that supportive leadership and healthy organizational behavior create the conditions under which employees can regulate energy and sustain well-being (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Sonnentag *et al.*, 2017; Oprea *et al.*, 2019; Sonnentag *et al.*, 2022). In this way, leadership is conceptualized not as a direct managerial force alone but as a relational and contextual mechanism that helps employees convert organizational conditions into healthier patterns of motivation, recovery, identity, and social connection.

Design Principles

The framework rests on three design principles: evidence-based synthesis, multilevel linkage, and dynamic development over time. Evidence-based synthesis requires integrating leadership, organizational behavior, job demands-resources, and recovery literatures so that employee well-being is explained through a combination of leader behavior, climate perceptions, resource availability, and recovery opportunities rather than through any single construct (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Inceoglu *et al.*, 2018; Bakker *et al.*, 2023). Multilevel linkage means that leadership should be understood as operating across levels: leaders influence dyadic relationships with individual employees, shape team-level psychological safety and justice climates, and contribute to broader organizational norms around support, civility, and work-life boundaries (Frazier *et al.*, 2017; Kurtessis *et al.*, 2017; Edmondson & Bransby, 2023). Dynamic development means that the framework should be examined over time, because leadership behaviors, daily work demands, recovery experiences, and employee well-being are likely to fluctuate and mutually influence



one another across days, weeks, and longer organizational cycles (Hetland *et al.*, 2018; Lindert *et al.*, 2022; Bakker *et al.*, 2023; Swanzy *et al.*, 2025). These principles make the framework actionable for leadership development, culture change, job crafting initiatives, and health-oriented organizational interventions by showing where organizations can intervene: at the leader behavior level, the team climate level, the job design level, and the recovery-support level.

Leadership Styles and Direct Pathways to Well-Being

Transformational Leadership and Employee Flourishing

Transformational leadership could enhance employee flourishing by providing meaning, vision, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Such behaviors would be expected to support autonomy, competence, and purpose, thereby shifting employees from depletion toward engagement (Arnold, 2017; Teetzen *et al.*, 2022; Bakker *et al.*, 2023). Daily and longitudinal perspectives further suggest that transformational leadership may be most important when examined as an ongoing relational process rather than as a static leadership attribute (Hetland *et al.*, 2018; Lindert *et al.*, 2022; Swanzy *et al.*, 2025). Within the proposed framework, transformational leadership functions as a resource-generating style that could reduce emotional exhaustion and foster sustained engagement through both direct motivational pathways and indirect climate-based mechanisms.

Servant and Ethical Leadership

Servant and ethical leadership are theorized to promote well-being through care, humility, integrity, fairness, and trust. Servant leaders prioritize follower growth and needs, which could enhance psychological safety, resilience, and perceived support in ways that protect against burnout (Eva *et al.*, 2019; Canavesi & Minelli, 2022; Wang *et al.*, 2022; Ahmed *et al.*, 2023a). Ethical leaders model fairness and principled conduct, which would be expected to reduce cynicism and psychological distress by making workplace expectations more transparent and morally consistent (Hoch *et al.*, 2018; Lemoine *et al.*, 2019). In the integrated model, servant and ethical leadership create a caring climate in which employees can interpret organizational demands as more manageable and interpersonal relationships as more reliable.

Leader-Member Exchange as a Resource Conduit

Leader-member exchange represents the quality of the dyadic relationship between leader and follower, and it can be conceptualized as a resource conduit within the well-being framework. High-quality exchanges could provide employees with socio-emotional support, role clarity, trust, and access to developmental opportunities, which would be expected to buffer job demands and enhance job satisfaction. Although this framework emphasizes transformational, servant, and ethical leadership as primary styles, leader-member exchange helps explain how leader behaviors become personally experienced by employees (Montano *et al.*, 2017; Inceoglu *et al.*, 2018). When relational exchange quality is strong, employees may be more likely to perceive leadership as supportive, organizational resources as accessible, and recovery-supportive norms as legitimate.

Organizational Behavior Mediators

Psychological Safety as a Critical Mediator

Psychological safety is a critical mediator because it explains how leadership behaviors become translated into employee voice, help-seeking, learning, and error recovery. Leaders who demonstrate openness, inclusiveness, humility, and respect could make employees more willing to raise concerns about workload, incivility, ethical tensions, or health risks (Frazier *et al.*, 2017; Newman *et al.*, 2017). As psychological safety matures within teams, it would be expected to protect mental health by reducing fear-based silence and enabling more adaptive coping with uncertainty (Edmondson & Bransby, 2023). In the proposed framework, psychological safety is therefore not merely a desirable climate feature but a central pathway through which leadership supports healthier workplaces.

Organizational Justice and Perceived Support



Organizational justice and perceived organizational support mediate the leadership-well-being relationship by shaping whether employees experience the workplace as fair, respectful, and concerned with their welfare. Procedural justice could influence well-being by making decisions predictable and legitimate, while interactional justice could reduce strain by ensuring that employees are treated with dignity during demanding work episodes (Kurtessis *et al.*, 2017; Aggarwal & Mittal, 2021). Perceived organizational support adds a broader interpretive layer, because employees who believe the organization values their contribution and cares about their well-being may experience work demands as less threatening. Together, justice and support help convert leadership behavior into organizational trust, affective attachment, and a climate more conducive to psychological health.

Job Crafting and Autonomous Motivation

Job crafting and autonomous motivation explain how employees actively participate in the well-being process rather than simply receiving leadership influence. Supportive and empowering leaders could encourage employees to redesign tasks, relationships, and work meanings in ways that improve person-job fit and increase engagement (Hetland *et al.*, 2018; Oprea *et al.*, 2019; Tummers & Bakker, 2021). Job demands-resources theory suggests that such crafting would be expected to strengthen resources, manage demands, and support motivational pathways that protect against burnout (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Bakker *et al.*, 2023). Within the integrated framework, job crafting serves as an employee agency mechanism through which leadership and organizational climate become translated into more sustainable work experiences.

Work-Life Balance and Recovery Pathways

Leadership Support for Work-Life Balance

Leadership support for work-life balance is a central pathway because supervisors influence the legitimacy of boundary management, flexibility, and recovery-oriented norms. Leaders who model healthy work boundaries, avoid unnecessary after-hours demands, and communicate respect for nonwork time could help employees detach from work and replenish depleted resources (Sonnetag *et al.*, 2017; Sonnetag *et al.*, 2022). In job demands-resources terms, these behaviors would be expected to transform work-life balance from an individual coping challenge into a shared organizational resource (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Tummers & Bakker, 2021). The framework therefore positions work-life support as a leadership-enabled climate condition that could reduce burnout risk while strengthening engagement and sustained well-being.

Recovery Experiences and Psychological Detachment

Recovery experiences, including psychological detachment, relaxation, mastery, and control during nonwork time, are essential mechanisms through which employees restore energy and protect psychological health. Leadership could influence recovery by shaping workload expectations, emotional tone, availability norms, and the perceived acceptability of switching off after work (Sonnetag *et al.*, 2017; Sonnetag *et al.*, 2022). When leaders encourage employees to disengage from work during nonwork time, employees would be expected to experience fewer depletion cycles and greater readiness to re-engage with work demands. Within the proposed framework, recovery is not treated as a private after-hours activity alone but as an organizationally shaped process embedded in leadership behavior and work design.

Burnout Prevention through Resource Replenishment

Burnout prevention requires sustained resource replenishment rather than episodic stress relief, because employee health depends on the balance between ongoing demands and available resources. Transformational, servant, and supportive leadership could contribute to replenishment by increasing meaning, autonomy, recognition, fairness, and relational support (Arnold, 2017; Eva *et al.*, 2019; Cai *et al.*, 2024). Job demands-resources theory suggests that these resources would be expected to interrupt depletion spirals and create motivational pathways toward engagement (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Bakker *et al.*, 2023). The framework therefore conceptualizes burnout prevention as a



continuous leadership and organizational behavior process in which climate, resources, recovery, and employee agency mutually reinforce healthier work experiences.

Employee Well-Being Outcomes: A Multi-Dimensional Model

Burnout and Engagement as Core Indicators

The framework treats burnout and engagement as core psychological indicators because they capture two central ways employees experience work: depletion and energetic involvement. Burnout reflects exhaustion and cynicism, whereas engagement reflects vigor, dedication, and absorption, making both constructs necessary for evaluating whether a workplace is harmful, supportive, or genuinely health-promoting (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Knight *et al.*, 2017; Lesener *et al.*, 2019). Leadership would be expected to shift employees away from burnout and toward engagement by shaping job resources, psychological safety, support, and recovery opportunities (Inceoglu *et al.*, 2018; Teetzen *et al.*, 2022). This multidimensional view avoids framing well-being as merely the absence of strain and instead emphasizes the presence of sustainable energy, meaning, and relational security.

Physical Health and Behavioral Outcomes

Employee well-being also includes physical and behavioral outcomes because psychological strain can be linked conceptually to somatic complaints, fatigue, absenteeism, presenteeism, and withdrawal intentions. Occupational health leadership research suggests that leader behavior could influence follower health by shaping stress exposure, emotional demands, and resource availability across time (Harms *et al.*, 2017; Montano *et al.*, 2017). Incivility and unsupportive climates may create additional health risks by increasing emotional labor and undermining social recovery at work (Kuriakose *et al.*, 2023; Kuriakose & Sreejesh, 2023; Hayat *et al.*, 2025). The framework therefore treats physical health and behavioral indicators as downstream signals of whether leadership and organizational behavior systems are sustaining or eroding employee well-being.

Organizational Interventions and Practical Implementation

Leadership development for well-being should cultivate behaviors that create psychological safety, fairness, work-life support, and resource-rich work environments. Coaching, reflective feedback, peer learning, and action learning could help leaders translate transformational, servant, and ethical principles into daily practices that support employee health (Kaluza *et al.*, 2020; Canavesi & Minelli, 2022; Jonker & Dube, 2025). Such development should emphasize relational consistency, respectful communication, boundary-sensitive management, and recognition of employee needs rather than only charisma or performance delivery. In the proposed framework, leadership development becomes a health-oriented intervention because it targets the social conditions through which employees experience work.

Figure 2 operationalizes the conceptual model by illustrating a multilevel intervention architecture through which leadership behaviors are translated into organizational systems, work design, and recovery structures that produce measurable employee well-being outcomes.



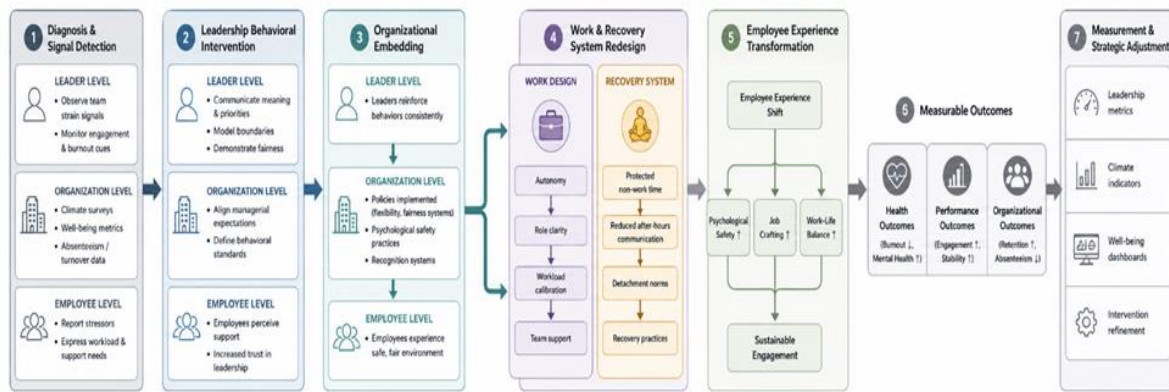


Figure 2. Multilevel Intervention Architecture for Embedding Leadership-Driven Employee Well-Being into Organizational Practice

A culture of health requires alignment between leadership behavior, organizational policies, manager accountability, and employee participation. Workplace resources, engagement interventions, and job crafting initiatives suggest that organizations could enhance well-being when they redesign work systems rather than relying solely on individual-level programs (Knight *et al.*, 2017; Nielsen *et al.*, 2017; Oprea *et al.*, 2019). Health-oriented climate surveys, participatory redesign processes, fair workload practices, and civility norms would be expected to reinforce the leadership-driven pathways in the framework. This cultural approach positions employee well-being as an organizational design concern that requires shared responsibility across leaders, teams, human resource systems, and employees.

Table 2 consolidates the multilevel mechanisms through which organizational climate, job design, recovery processes, and employee agency jointly produce sustained well-being outcomes.



Table 2. Integrated Multilevel Pathways Linking Organizational Climate, Job Design, Recovery, and Well-Being Outcomes

System Layer	Key Constructs	Functional Role	Mediating Mechanisms	Temporal Dynamics	Intervention Levers
Organizational Climate	Psychological safety, justice, perceived support, civility	Shapes interpretation of work environment	Reduces fear, increases trust, stabilizes expectations	Develops over team interactions and leadership consistency	Climate surveys, leadership behavior training
Job Demands–Resources	Workload, autonomy, role clarity, support, recognition	Balances strain vs. motivation	Demand buffering and resource amplification	Fluctuates daily and across tasks	Job redesign, workload management, resource allocation
Employee Agency	Job crafting, autonomous motivation	Enables proactive adjustment of work	Enhances person–job fit and engagement	Dynamic and individual-specific	Job crafting interventions, empowerment programs
Recovery Processes	Detachment, relaxation, mastery, control	Restores depleted psychological resources	Interrupts stress accumulation cycles	Occurs across daily and weekly cycles	Work-life policies, boundary management norms

Well-Being Outcomes	Burnout, engagement, physical health, social functioning	Reflects system-level effectiveness	Integrates psychological, physical, social states	Evolves longitudinally	Multi-domain well-being measurement systems
Organizational Reinforcement	Leadership development, culture alignment, evaluation systems	Sustains and scales well-being pathways	Embeds practices into organizational systems	Long-term institutionalization	Leadership KPIs, policy integration, continuous monitoring

Evaluation Strategy

Evaluation of the proposed framework should rely on validated measures that capture leadership styles, organizational behavior mediators, job resources, recovery experiences, burnout, engagement, and broader well-being. Instruments such as transformational leadership scales, servant leadership measures, psychological safety assessments, perceived organizational support measures, burnout inventories, and engagement scales could be combined to create a multi-domain well-being profile (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Frazier *et al.*, 2017; Knight *et al.*, 2017; Kurtessis *et al.*, 2017). Multi-source data would be especially valuable because leader ratings, employee self-reports, team climate assessments, and organizational records could each capture different parts of the pathway. This measurement strategy should avoid reducing well-being to a single score and instead examine how leadership and organizational behavior jointly shape psychological, physical, and social indicators.

Longitudinal and multi-level designs are needed because leadership and well-being relationships unfold dynamically across days, teams, and organizational systems. Daily leadership research suggests that leader behaviors may fluctuate and influence employee motivation, job crafting, and well-being processes over time (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Frazier *et al.*, 2017; Knight *et al.*, 2017; Kurtessis *et al.*, 2017). Multi-wave and longitudinal studies would allow researchers to examine whether leadership creates sustained resource pathways or whether healthier employees are more likely to perceive leaders positively (Lindert *et al.*, 2022; Swanzy *et al.*, 2025). The framework should therefore be tested using designs that account for nested data, temporal ordering, and reciprocal relationships between leader behavior, climate, recovery, and employee health.

Intervention evaluation should examine whether leadership development, culture change, and job crafting initiatives strengthen the proposed well-being pathways. Rather than focusing only on short-term attitude shifts, assessments should consider whether interventions improve psychological safety, perceived support, recovery norms, engagement, burnout risk, and broader health-related experiences (Knight *et al.*, 2017; Nielsen *et al.*, 2017; Oprea *et al.*, 2019). Controlled trials and quasi-experimental designs could be useful when ethically and practically feasible, but conceptual clarity is essential so that interventions target specific mechanisms rather than vague wellness goals. The framework would therefore guide evaluation by linking each intervention component to expected changes in leadership behavior, organizational climate, job resources, recovery, and multidimensional well-being.

Limitations

A central limitation of the literature is that many leadership and organizational behavior studies rely on cross-sectional designs, which makes causal ordering difficult to establish. Although reviews and longitudinal studies provide stronger conceptual grounding, it remains possible that healthier employees perceive leaders more favorably or that supportive climates emerge partly from employee well-being rather than solely producing it (Montano *et al.*, 2017; Inceoglu *et al.*, 2018; Lesener *et al.*, 2019). Future research should examine reciprocal pathways among leadership, climate, job resources, recovery, and well-being over time. The proposed framework should therefore be treated as a testable conceptual model rather than as a definitive causal map.

Leadership effects on employee well-being may vary across national cultures, industries, occupational groups, and work arrangements. Servant, ethical, and transformational leadership behaviors may be interpreted differently depending on power distance, professional norms, remote work practices, and the degree of job autonomy available to employees (Hoch *et al.*, 2018; Eva *et al.*, 2019; Lemoine *et al.*, 2019). Organizational justice, support, and psychological safety may also carry different meanings in high-risk, high-status, or highly regulated work



environments (Frazier *et al.*, 2017; Aggarwal & Mittal, 2021; Edmondson & Bransby, 2023). The framework therefore requires contextual adaptation so that leadership development and well-being interventions are aligned with local work demands, cultural expectations, and organizational constraints.

Conclusion

Leadership and organizational behavior can be conceptualized as co-drivers of multidimensional employee well-being. The framework developed in this review positions leadership styles as initiating conditions that shape psychological safety, fairness, support, job resources, work-life balance, and recovery processes. These pathways offer a systemic explanation of how healthier workplaces could emerge when employee well-being is embedded in everyday management and organizational practices.

The key strength of the framework lies in its integration of climate, resources, recovery, and leadership development into a single conceptual architecture. Rather than treating burnout, engagement, physical health, and social functioning as disconnected outcomes, the model frames them as interrelated expressions of the same workplace system. This approach gives organizations practical levers for designing leadership behaviors and organizational conditions that make well-being more sustainable.

Important challenges remain in establishing causal direction, adapting the model across diverse contexts, and measuring long-term improvements in employee health. Future research should examine whether leader behavior changes are sustained, whether climate improvements persist, and whether employees experience meaningful changes in recovery and well-being over time. These challenges require designs that capture dynamic, multi-level, and reciprocal relationships rather than relying on isolated snapshots of employee attitudes.

The next stage of research should involve large-scale, longitudinal intervention studies that test leadership development, culture change, and job crafting initiatives as connected well-being strategies. Organizations should also incorporate well-being indicators into leadership performance dashboards so that employee health becomes a visible and accountable management responsibility. A healthier workplace is most likely to emerge when leadership effectiveness is evaluated not only by what employees produce, but also by whether the work system enables them to remain psychologically, physically, and socially well.



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