A Research Proposal on Leadership and its Impact on Organizational Performance

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Abstract

Organization leadership has become a significant tool in managing and empowering growth within a company. Previous studies and publications have upheld the importance of this tool in driving organization operation and handling employees within an organization. However, it is important to note that there has been an array of leadership styles implemented by various managers within an organization. As much as leadership is attributed to organizational growth, the latter can also be a potential hindrance to organizational growth especially when negative styles are implemented within an institution. For instance, autocratic leadership styles are often top-down and rarely recognizing employees’ interest. The resultant effect in applying this leadership style is diminished interest and motivation by employees to work. When employees develop a feeling of non-recognition for their hard work, their performance is negatively affected and thus organization performance. On the other hand, servant leadership and transformational leadership are seen to have the potential of instilling motivation and interest among employees and thus improved work output. Consequently, through this style organization are likely to achieve their organizational goals and objectives. It is in this concern that the researcher sought to explore the impact of leadership on organizational performance. Subsequently, this research sought to investigate what roles do leaders play to motivate their employees as well as what leadership styles do they adopt within their organizations. In order to achieve this purpose, an exploratory qualitative research design adopting a phenomenological approach was used to explore how leadership impact organizational performance from the target group. The study was conducted from a sample of chief executives from various organizations and with adequate knowledge of leadership styles. Purposive sampling was used to select the chief executive officers that were interviewed by the use of an open-ended questionnaire guide. The results of the study illustrated that most leaders adopt a participatory/democratic type of leadership as well as laissez-faire type of leadership in controlling and directing their employees. In addition, part of leaders was also found to use authoritarian type of leadership in engaging with their employees. Some of the leadership traits such as adequate communication, responding to employee grievances and adopting good relationship with employees were some of the leadership traits found to enhance organizational performance.

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# Introduction

Effective leadership has become a key area of focus in enhancing organizational growth and performance. Leadership skills and styles differ from different leaders, and this reflects through how an organization performs and grows especially with increased competition from players within the same industry (Finkelstein et al., 1996). Finding and retaining a good and useful leadership style to step up organizational performance are critical needs of an organization.

Use of transformational leadership styles and principles can contribute an increase in work performance as well as accelerate organizational performance (Choudhary et al., 2013). It highly contributes to increased production from employees, enhances creativity making employees feel like part of the team leading to attaining the expected results (Aguinis & Bradley, 2015). Although research on organizational leadership performance and leadership styles can inform the industry, few leadership styles exist that specifically helps understand as to what it takes for leadership to impact organizational performance (Day & Lord, 1988).

The purpose of this phenomenological study of leadership and its impact on organizations performance fills this gap by examining various leadership styles used by different leaders within different industrial setups who have over twenty years of management experience across a broad range of industries. Six key areas emerged from all the interviews which include communication, individual leadership experience, employees verse leader’s relations, employee/work issues, trust as well as leadership monitoring (Appelbaum et al., 1998). However, despite many experiences of leaders with different leadership styles, they nevertheless demonstrate consistency with research on leadership and its impact on organizational performance. Other aspects of leadership within each theme are found to be unique in organizational performance such as directing employees where needed, developing effective practices for communicating with employees and the intentional use of practical leadership skills to increase organizational performance (Bryant, 2003). Recommendations for the extensive study includes research on leadership styles and their impact on organization performance, research on experiences of employees whose leaders use transformational leadership in which positive changes including organizational sustainability through improved leadership styles are expected.

## Background Information

Leadership is a critical core pillar within an organizational setup because effective leadership assists an organization in reaching its goals and objectives within the set timelines (Day & Lord, 1988). Adoption of good leadership styles is critical among organizations. While many leaders are born with specific leadership ability, anyone can learn to improve their leadership skills, through self-awareness and practical training which consequently assists leaders to boost their impact on their team which nevertheless results to tangible effects on performance (Dionne et al., 2004). Leaders have a choice to either become leaders or bosses. Good leaders give their employees clear directives and orders in which all are expected to be compliant concerning completing tasks. However, in some cases where organizations lead authoritatively, leaders may inadvertently impose fear on employees which may result in employees continuously being concerned about losing their job for a slight mistake (Dionne et al., 2004).

An effective leader is one who seeks to help employees find their internal motivation to ensure assigned tasks are completed. Where a boss views his employees as subordinates, a leader sees his employees as part of the team and seeks to empower them so that they can hone in on their capabilities and talents that will result in productivity (Finkelstein, 1996). Transformational leadership has been categorized as one of the best styles used by leaders who want useful results from employees. Even though different leadership styles are applied depending on the organizational structure, generally leaders who inspire and empower their employees have a greater ability to influence their team’s actions.

Ability to inspire and empower helps to build loyalty and trust which results in a healthy, productive corporate culture (Aguinis, & Bradley, 2015). Most researchers tend to present most of their findings as a combined group of managerial and non-managerial leaders; there exist few leadership styles that specifically equips leaders’ with what it takes to be an effective leader who can improve organizational performance. Therefore, a study into this arena could help leaders who desire to improve their organization's performance. Further studies could facilitate organizational competitiveness through the use of leadership styles aimed at employee motivation as well as improve organizational performance.

Growth in most organizations has been primarily due to a change in leadership. Such leadership changes enable employees to showcase their expertise, talent, contribute to the effective decision-making process and improve their work performance as a result of motivation (Aguinis & Bradley, 2015). Studies on leadership and its impact on organizational performance focus on the leaders’ ability to increase employees’ performance through motivation as well as making them part of the process rather than primarily having the work done. However, literature that studies leadership impact on performance is rare which is why a qualitative phenomenological study format that examines different leadership styles, various leaders and their leadership administration in enhancing effective performance is needed. This study could shed light on the impact of leadership towards organizational performance and what could facilitate the development of effective organizational competitive advantage while using leadership as a prerequisite.

## Research Statement

Effective leadership can be termed as the heartbeat of any successful organization (Hersey et al., 2007). Ability to influence employees within an organizational setup and ensuring that maximum results are achieved is crucial. This research tends to adequately define what leadership is, analyze different leadership concepts, theories, and various leadership styles. Interviewing leaders from different organizational setups will provide precise knowledge of leadership impact on organizational performance.

## Objectives

* To determine the leadership styles motivate employees to achieve sufficient work output.
* To determine the leadership styles mostly adopted by top managers within the selected organizations.
* To explore how the identified leadership styles contribute to employee performance within organizations.
* To determine how the identified leadership styles contribute to overall organizational performance.

## Research Questions

This study is set to determine the association that exists between leadership styles and organizational performance. Essentially this study primarily seeks to answer the question of **“How does leadership contribute to organizational performance?”** to solve this important question, there are various elements to be explored that are specific to a context of leadership, employee performance as well as organizational performance. It is therefore imperative to consider specific questions that can support in reaching this question and purpose of the study. These include:

* RQ1: How has leadership styles motivated employees to achieve sufficient work output?
* RQ2: what leadership styles are mostly adopted by top managers?
* RQ3: how have these leadership styles contributed to employee performance?
* RQ4: how have these leadership styles contributed to overall organizational performance?

# LITERATURE REVIEW

Organizational growth has been associated with leadership impact over a long period. Change in organizations can be tested through leadership styles adopted by leaders within different organizational setups (Graeff, 1997). The literature on leadership impact has focused primarily on leadership styles, nature of leadership, advantages, and disadvantages of different leadership styles to both employees and organization. This research, however, attests that leadership roles in organizational performance are nevertheless likely to impact performance due to the ability of leaders, managers, professionals or knowledge workers to work autonomously (Graeff, 1997).

Research shows that leaders who positively influence employees without necessarily exerting pressure on them, but rather through motivating and nurturing them through their capability and talent get better results thereby impacting on performance. This challenge exists in different multinational industries and organizations, across borders and in different sizes of organizations. Some research, however, suggested the use of transformational leadership style as a prerequisite to accelerate organizational performance (Dionne et al., 2004). Regarding this research, efforts will be made towards obtaining previous works related to the topic of this study and documented well for review purposes. Impact of leadership on organizational and employee performance as well as various factors affecting the choice of leadership styles and the general role of leadership on performance will be considered.

## Definition of Leadership

Leadership can be defined as the process of influencing others to work willingly towards achieving organizational goals and objectives characterized by a high sense of confidence (Finkelstein et al., 1996). Other research, however, defines leadership as the art of influencing people so that they will strive willingly towards achieving group goals. The concept of leadership expands to the willingness of employees to work with zeal and confidence. Leadership is the art of making things happen rather than letting things happen (Hersey et al., 2007).

Leadership exerts both intrinsic and extrinsic influences on employee and general organizational performances. Ideally, leadership is regarded as the most visible part of management as it primarily deals with people. It deals with management functions of commanding, guiding, inspiring, initiating as well as activating. Leadership has been defined differently by different authors to refer to the act of influencing people so they can strive willingly towards achieving organizational goals (Hersey et al., 2007).

Leadership necessitates a need to develop not only work ethics but have the willingness to go an extra mile with zeal and confidence. Additionally, leadership entails the use of authority, personal knowledge and wisdom in the decision-making process. Moreover, leadership can be associated with a leader’s ability to seek voluntary participation of employees to reach organizational objectives. Previous research closely links leadership with a leader’s ability to achieve organizational performance from employees through interpersonal behavior and effective communications (Hersey et al., 2007).

## Concepts of Leadership

Leadership is the process that ideally influences others to work towards organizational goals and purpose willingly. Leaders are expected to direct their efforts in ensuring that employees are motivated and feel confident in their task executions. The company’s success is highly attributable to organizational performance, employee job satisfaction and active employee commitment which however primarily depends on the type of leadership been used (Hersey et al., 2007). Additionally, if leaders wish to promote standards of quality in the professional development of employees, the use of effective leadership styles is necessary. Leadership has been expounded in terms of performance by executives both as individuals and as a group. This concept clarifies that the responsibility of a leader is to direct behavior into channels that highly promotes achievement of the organization as well as departmental goals.

The relational concept is yet another leadership concept which involves an agent and the person been influenced. This concept argues that without followers there can be no leader (Jones et al., 2000). Relational theory elaborates further that the factors which interact to produce an effective leader include not only the abilities, traits, and characteristics of the group a leader is directing but leader’s wisdom on how to effectively transition leadership styles to accommodate any given circumstance.

## The Concept of Organizational Performance

Organizational performance is the comparison of organizational goals and objectives with its actual performance through leadership influence, market performance and financial performance (Jones et al., 2000). Organizational performance is highly connected to the ideas of effectiveness and efficiency. Businesses (organizations) are required to produce the right things and must present them with various possible inputs, one being a strong leadership pillar to have effective organizational performance. Leadership is fundamentally crucial in that bad leadership affects the organization’s ability to retain and motivate employees, and thus this lowers morale and organizational productivity (Jones et al., 2000). “Bad” leadership, however, tends not to value communication with employees and more so it doesn’t factor employees’ contribution towards organizational success. This study aims at relating the two aspects which are leadership impact and organizational performance.

## Leadership and Teambuilding

How employees perform their work within an organization is determined by the nature of how they are motivated. Similarly, team building has become one of the most important aspects contributing to members’ motivation to take on specific tasks (Ammeter et al., 2002). In this case, it is essential to determine the role of leaders in contributing to effective team building within an organization. Furthermore, it has been noted that leadership styles are the main constructs to assess the extent of team building among members of an organization (Darling et al., 2010). How leaders use their innate to influence others is significant in organizational achievements. Most often, leaders lack this meaningful concept as they are unaware that their leadership styles may affect team building and therefore employee performance (Calloway et al., 2008). This topic is worth consideration to determine how leadership styles and characteristics change team building.

## The Role of Leadership Competencies in Innovation

Innovation is a powerful driver for organizational achievement. However, this concept is affected by the knowledge and competencies constructed in a leader (Gilley et al., 2008). In this case, leaders need to be responsible for the innovation as they make the latter happen within their organization (Graham, 2013). It has been noted that most leaders lack this concept, and therefore they fail to be the drivers of innovation within their organizations (Mendes et al., 2016). This, thus, becomes a topic worth researching to determine the role that leadership competencies play in driving innovation within their organizations (Prasad et al., 2016). Moreover, when leaders have the needed skill to stimulate creativity and innovation, members also become inspired thus making an organization have the capacity for achievements.

## Leadership Styles in the Building of an Organizational Culture

Organizational cultures are defined by the values, beliefs, and norms that guide an individual’s operation. In a weak organizational culture, individuals become confused about what they should do how to do it and when to do it. In essence, regulatory protocol becomes paralyzed meaning that the latter is bound to fail (McClellan, 2017). However, organization cultures are strengthened by leaders, and therefore they have to use their leadership styles and natural abilities to build cohesive organizational cultures (Satsomboon & Pruetipibultham, 2012). This aspect has been given minimal consideration as most leaders fail to strengthen their organizational cultures. Moreover, some leaders fail to adhere to organizational norms which in turn influence other members to do the same (Demir, 2015). Prompt research, therefore, is required to determine the effect of leadership styles in building organizational cultures.

# THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This research will, however, dig deeper into theoretical concepts which have been used to describe leadership. Among traits which researchers have critically analyzed includes the situation concepts and a combination of characteristic qualities. Situations concept is viewed to manifest itself into the dynamic group approach (Jones et al., 2000).

## Theory X and Theory Y

Theory X and Y are among the most referred leadership theories developed by Douglas McGregor who is commonly known for his impact within the study of leadership. According to his leadership style adopted by managers is reflected in two sets.

### *Theory X assumptions*

Theory X assumptions are that average human beings have an inherent tendency to dislike work and will do anything to avoid it as much as they can (Houghton & Yoho, 2005). Due to such human traits, people must be coerced, controlled, directed and furthermore be threatened with punishment to ensure they are effective and puts forth effort towards achieving organizational goals and objectives.

### *Theory Y assumptions*

Theory Y assumptions according to McGregor suggests that the use of both physical and mental efforts in work is as natural as play or rest. It discourages the use of external threats and punishments as a means of achieving organizational objectives (Kopelman et al., 2008). People will follow a leader’s direction and set control procedures to which they become committed. Employees can show commitment towards set objectives as a reward which is closely linked with their achievements (Kopelman et al., 2008). It assumes that average human beings can quickly learn, under proper conditions which does not necessarily impose threats, not only do they learn but furthermore seek more responsibility.

Through this theory, McGregor demonstrates some factors that influence managers in choosing a leadership style which is geared at impacting either positively or negatively on employees as well as the entire organizational performance. Theory X commonly aligns with autocratic leadership style while theory Y adopts a democratic leadership style (Kopelman et al., 2010). McGregor recommends that active managers should recognize the employee’s dignity as well as their capabilities while considering their limitations as well as adjusting their behaviors as demanded by the situation.

## Trait approach theory

This theory suggests that the person who emerges as a leader within a given group does so as one is seen to possess indeed admirable traits (Houghton & Yoho 2005). This forms the basis of the famous saying that “Leaders are born not made.” The trait approach suggests that effective leadership requires, a high sense of integrity, enthusiasm, been warmth in terms of listening, been accommodating, and the ability to stay calm when chaotic forces are presented.

## Situational Concept Approach

Situational approach as developed by Stogdill highly emphasizes on the importance of assessing the “situation” in determining who should become a leader within a group setup. According to Graeff (1997), the approach summarizes three main areas which are critical necessities in a group which are the need to achieve a common goal, to stay together as a working team, and understanding everyone is human (imperfections are present). Stogdill argues that leadership is vested in the function not in a person, that anyone who comes up with directives acceptable within a group is the leader of that moment.

## Contingency Approach theory

Contingency Approach Theory was developed by a group of researchers who argued that no single design is best for all situations They further explained that solutions to problems primarily depends on a particular location or immediate environment (Houghton & Yoho, 2005). Woodward who is recognized as one of the researchers theorized that a leadership situation assumes contingency upon position, power, and task structure as well as leadership member relationship.

## Theory by Mill Wdlemyns

Wdlemyns in his theory examines the importance of trust, power and the level of mentorship a leader can give to employees within an organization. It is significant to acknowledge that trust between employees and their leaders is substantial when looking at the success of an organization. Critically looking at this theory, it points out two critical theoretical frameworks under which this study was based. For instance, the communication accommodation theory determines how communication between leaders and employees can hamper an organization’s success or boost performance within organizations. As noted in theory, the study found a deficiency with communication practices that usually occur within the organization environment. For instance, there always exists distortion of information especially when employees communicate with their leaders and when their leaders report the same message to the top management. This is what can be referred to as in-group communication and out-group communication. The purpose of this theory also meant to denote that there might be a perceived good relationship between leaders and employees within an organization. However, the level of production outcome might not be of the magnitude as maybe one initially thought. For this reason, there is a need for an in-depth analysis to be performed to determine what might motivate employee’s performance with regards to their leader’s interaction.

Objectively, this theory was developed to illustrate the importance of leader-supervisee interaction, communication and organization performance. Similarly, this theory has been set to demonstrate that even though leaders might be right in their communication with employees, they might not be good mentors of employees as they might lack the socialization factor (trait) as demonstrated in the social identity theory. Finally, this theory is objected to illustrate the impact of in-group/out-group communication between employees and their leaders and the general trust that might exist between the two parties.

In a critical examination of the theory, the impact of communication between leaders and employees is evident and how these are related to an organization’s overall performance. Similarly, the main point can be seen arising that is correlated to the major themes as have been outlined in the document. For instance, a pattern of communication can be established between managers and leaders; however, these patterns of interaction can be triangulated to the communication accommodation theory (Soliz & Giles, 2014). This is major because the communication systems that usually occur between employees and leaders are that of the in-group/out-group system. Similarly, it can be pointed out that the communication system that exists between employees and their leaders can have a significant impact on the overall organization performance. For instance, misunderstanding and misinterpretation of information might reveal a perceived lack of trust on the side of employees. Lack of faith by employees to their leaders may hinder organization performance as illustrated in theory in that employees might not be motivated to give their best for the organization. Moreover, employees may feel less appreciated when they lose trust in their leaders or managers and thus limited effort in their jobs.

The use of a negative perceived communication pattern between managers and employees is another critical issue identified in theory. The observed negative pattern of communication arises when managers feel they are right and employees are wrong and in that case, they may not give an ear to employees. Similarly, negative perceived communication pattern also arises when managers fell to have an advantage over their followers (employees) due to their position or rank on the organization. In such cases, managers develop a negative perception of employees’ opinions and therefore, they tend not to listen to employees. While this takes place, employees may feel socially isolated within the organization and thus the filling of being belittled. This menace has been common in many organizations while it has not been given attention as one of the detrimental ways to an organization’s performance.

In accordance to the analysis of the theory, it can be said that organization performance cannot only be pegged on the organization culture, and management systems alone but the interaction between employees and leaders within the organization. The in-group/out-group communication systems between managers and employees have for some time been given minimal consideration as they are perceived minor. However, organizational strategies should also provide concern to communication accommodation theory and social identity theory. Both of these theories provide a guideline on how communication and inclusion of employees improve organization performance and thus should not be ignored. The communication accommodation theory outlines how positive communication between managers and employees can support the trust employees have on their employees. In turn, as positive connection builds their trust, employees become motivated to perform as they feel included in the organization. While at the same time managers should adopt the communication accommodation theory while interacting with employees, it is also important to listen to what employees are saying without having a negative perception. This also builds employees trust with their managers as they feel understood and included. The feeling of non-inclusion only comes when employees put forth their views, but they are not given an ear by their managers.

# RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

## Research design and methodology

### Design

This study will be explorative encompassing the use of the qualitative approach to gather information on leadership styles and their impact on organization performance. Data collected shall also inform on the role of organizational leaders in motivating employees and how this impacts work output among them. A qualitative approach has been adopted by many researchers globally and has been proven to be the most efficient methodology especially when considering exploratory study designs. In this case, the approach assists in examining subject insights and experiences while triangulating these with information gathered from literature and theories. A phenomenology approach will be used to support in understanding the whole leadership concept as well as acquire knowledge from leading experts. With this regard, this research will seek to explore insights from identified subjects about this topic of concern. The research design shall be participatory in that participants and subjects selected for the study will be given ample time to respond and tell their stories about this subject in concern.

The methodology shall mainly involve the use of individual interviews, document analysis as well as observations to gather information in answering research questions. Semi-structured interviews will be used to gain knowledge from chief executive officers selected from the identified organization within the study area. Semi-structured interviews will be the most appropriate interview approach in this research since it allows the researcher to explore respondent insights and experience through the use of follow up questions. In essence, the respondents will not be restricted through the interview but will be engaged in a discussion type of interview while the researcher will have the opportunity to add more questions to seek clarity on points that are not clear. Additionally, respondents shall not be closed or restricted to interview answers as is the case when using quantitative research methods. Observation checklist will also be used to examine components of leadership styles as adopted by the managers within the organization.

### Sampling

A section of the organization will be identified as the primary targets for the study taking into consideration the time factor as well as geographical location and resource convenience. The secondary targets for the research shall include chief executive officers within the identified organizations who shall be purposively selected to participate in the study. Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling where participants are chosen with a purpose. Generally, chief executive officers will be selected for this study because they have more knowledge of leadership styles as compared to other employees within an organization. Morgan’s table for sample size will be used to determine the number of CEOs to be included in the study. Krejcie and Morgan’s (1970) sampling table has been chosen as the most efficient since it ensures that the confidence level of information collected from the participant will be 95% accurate. Moreover, the table utilizes a +/-1% margin of error in sampling which leads to a total of 8 respondents to be selected for the study.

After the selection of a representative sample of organizations to be included in the study pendent on resource and geographical considerations, the researcher will approach the institutions and request their participation in the study. During this process research purpose and objectives will be explained in details to ensure that the target subjects are familiar with the study objectives and mission. Participants shall be approached and interviewed using an open-ended questionnaire as a guide.

This research will not recognize random sampling as an appropriate approach in selecting participants for this study as it is only effective for use in quantitative studies. Furthermore, it is only used when there is need to give every subject in the target population a chance to participate in the study which is not necessary for this study since the author will mostly use the knowledge of leadership as a judgment in selecting participants for the study.

### Interview guide

To adequately achieve adequate information to report on the research objectives the following will be a part of the study questions to be answered while conducting the study.

* What are some of the leadership styles you are familiar with?
* Of the leadership styles mentioned, which one do you practice best in managing employees within your organization?
* How has this mentioned leadership style improved employee performance within your organization?
* Generally, how would you rate organization performance owing to the leadership style you use in your organization?

## Data Collection Approach

Before commencing data collection, study tools were developed in consideration to the study questions, purpose and the specific objectives to be explored. Study instruments were open-ended questionnaires to allow for the exploration of major themes of the study. The tools also allowed for probing and use of follow up questions. Open-ended questionnaires were developed due to their advantage in allowing the researcher to explore participants’ insights and experiences on how leadership styles they have adopted have enhanced organizational performance.

### Procedure

Data was collected through participant interviews to allow for probing and using follow up questions to understand the participant responses adequately. Participant interviews will also enable the selected respondents to ask for clarity of questions as requested by the researcher in case the questions are not clear to them. It will also allow the researcher to adequately explain the study purpose, objectives and in the intended use of the study outcome. Moreover, this will significantly assist in winning the respondents’ trust and therefore minimizing refusal rates. Approvals will be sought from the appropriate authority to allow for the study to be conducted. In this case, approvals will be requested from the relevant internal review board to do the research. This will enable the researcher to acquire permission from the organization heads to do the study. Before engaging in the interview, the participants will consent, and their voluntary participation sought. Participants who shall permit to participate in the study will sign a consent form, one of which they will be allowed to keep for themselves.

Participants will be interviewed at a private location where they shall be free to answer the survey questions. Allowing participants to choose a secluded place where they feel free to answer survey questions will be to ensure confidentiality and minimizing the potential for interference from the third party. In essence, some respondents have been seen to provide survey answers as a result of influence from other individuals but not their knowledge. This explains why interviews will be conducted at a private place where respondents are free to answer questions.

Interviews will be conducted at the convenience of the participants. Additionally, participant schedules will not be interfered with. Participants will also be informed of the survey before the researcher commences on field data collection. This will be to ensure that the sampled respondents are available for the study at the set date. Similarly, the strategy of contacting the respondents before the commencement of the survey will be to briefly explain the survey purpose, aims, and objectives to acquire their consent before field visit. Participants who will not be available at the set date will be booked at a time that they feel convenient to them. On the date of the survey and after consenting, a participatory approach will be used while interviewing the respondents. In this case, respondents will be given ample time to give their responses without interruption. They will also be given time to ask questions on sections of the questionnaire that are unclear of which the researcher shall respond to adequately. This, therefore, means that the researcher is conscious of the need to make the research participatory and inclusive. Moreover, interviews will be conducted in a discussion form which will give participants the confidence to participate adequately.

## Assumptions and Consequences

This research is of importance to managers as they will understand their role as organizational drivers towards effective performance to both employees and the entire organization (Houghton & Yoho, 2005). Due to the lack of leadership knowledge, many corporate leaders do not understand how they can positively influence their employees towards achieving sustainable results. This research will provide leaders with access to leadership styles they can adapt depending on their respective organizational structure. At the end of this research, leaders should be able to determine values, culture, change tolerance as well as ways through which employees can be motivated.

## Scope and Delimitations

Having effective leadership within an organization is a challenging task; this is critical for organizational competitiveness and sustainability (Khan, 2010). While hiring a leadership team, organizations need to consider the talents and capabilities of leaders who will effectively influence employees towards the primary goal of an organization. Research on leadership sheds little light on leadership that positively impacts employees’ performance directly as well as organizational performance (Jones et al. 2000).

The key distinguishing factor differentiating leadership impact involves the responsibilities of a leader that requires interaction and guidance with the organizational team towards achieving desired goals and objectives. This research will select leaders who equally understand their role in an organization while excluding leaders who show the relatively minimal impact to their respective organizations, as the intention of the study is to know how leadership impacts organizational performance. Interview questions will be open-ended to spur leaders experience and their roles.

## Limitations

The limitation will affect the study transferability. While dealing with small size companies there will be limitations due to organizational size as well as the type of industries. Providing a high sense of clarity of context and more in-depth descriptions of the research setting in which participants operates will be of importance to readers. This will determine the applicability of this research study within their situational contexts. The research will be considered if the data collected will be dependable.

## Unit Analysis

The primary analysis of this study is to distinguish leadership role in organizational performance with leadership expert’s knowledge on the same area of research. Due to the fast-paced, rapid growth of businesses; this has continued to fuel the need to figure out leadership impact and competencies required to sustain the rapid growth of life in companies as well as key drivers of growth. Due to such growth, this research seeks to focus on a leadership role which can hence, thus, bring critical changes in behavior. The study aims at understanding how leadership impacts directly or indirectly on employees’ behavior and consequently drive performance in organizations. According to Jones et al., (2000) organizational performance is mostly influenced by variables such as leadership as well as employee commitment to the organization. This study hence will critically analyze leadership impact at an in-depth level.

# Findings and Discussion

## Introduction

This chapter outlines the findings of the study in light of the analysis of the qualitative interviews done. Interviews were conducted with a total of eight leaders and within their organizations. The questionnaires used were open-ended and allowed the respondents to provide their responses and eldership stories as they have experienced within their work environments. The questionnaire guide used was framed to provide insights to five key areas that of leadership that have been observed to support employee performance as well as organizational achievements. These included questions that targeted employee-supervisor relationship, motivational factors provided to employees to improve their performance, leadership styles provided to employees as well as the communication procedures used to pass information between the leaders and employees. Consequently, these aforementioned elements were also seen to be significant in answering the key four questions set to achieve the purpose of this study as well as the main objectives. The following sections outline the major findings of this study.

## Demographic characteristics

All respondents that participated in this study were in the leadership positions, with all of them being department heads within their organizations. In addition, it was revealed that all the leaders were aware of their roles and duties as the head of their various departments. This finding was reach when all the respondents interviewed showed that leadership indeed involves influencing, coordinating, directing and controlling those under their jurisdiction. This therefore means that all the respondents who were included in this study met the eligibility criteria as they had the required leadership knowledge for inclusion in the study.

## Supervisor-employee relationship

Relationship between employees and their supervisors (leaders) is vital in the viewpoint of improving employee performance within any organization. Poor relationship between employees and their leaders leads to a number of factors that at the end may hinder work output among the employees. Additionally, the resultant effect of poor work output is the reduced organizational performance for the organization may not have the potential of meeting its objectives. Through the analysis of the interviews, the respondents mentioned a number of factors that they use to improve their relationship with employees and those under them. Personal interaction is one of the most important elements that were observed to improve the relationship between employees and their leaders / supervisors. Personal relationship in this case referred to a kind of informal relationship that existed between employees and their leaders. This type of relationship is known to cement relationships between these two parties as it mostly bridges the life bond between any individuals involved. This finding was mainly echoed by respondent one when she indicated that;

*“I consistently check in with my employees on a professional and personal level. For I believe if they are not well in those aspects of their life then they fully can’t commit to the objectives of the organization. I remain reachable and approachable to all staff (R1)”*

Effective communication was also seen important in enhancing employee-supervisor relationship. Through the interviews, it was evident that most leaders used some kind of communication to pass information to their employees. The main objective of communication is to ensure that every employee is up to par in every detail within an organization. Consequently, time taken for the information to reach the employees is another important factor of consideration when this element is to be used specifically to build relationship between these parties of concern. In essence, when information reaches employees late, it becomes obsolete and out of date and thus it will have no positive effect on employees. On the other hand, if employees are provided with current information and on time, they feel valued and thus increasing trust not only with their leaders but with the organization.

Data collected revealed that all the participants communicated any change to their employees but in different modes. It was also observed that only one participant had the modern form of communication style to pass information to their employees. In this case, the participant mentioned that they largely use emails and websites to pass information on changes and policies to their employees. This was evident through the following sentiment by one of the respondents;

*“As changes come about, the employees are given notice of upcoming changes through emails and our weekly meeting that we have on Fridays to recap what right, wrong, and could use a revamp on during the week….. All employees have access to the homepage where employees are notified and given written notice of implemented changes just in case they did not come across it in their email……”*

Consequently, majority of the participants indicated the use of old/traditional means of communication to pass information to their employees. In essence, these leaders mostly used face-to-face meetings to pass information to their employees. This mode however understandable to be effective in fostering communication in an organization, it also appears to be slow and time unconscious. In short, it will take a significant amount of time to gather all employees and pass information as compared to the use of emails and internet as a means of passing information.

Mutual trust was also found to be an important element of fostering relationship between employees and their leaders. Similarly, it was also revealed that respect was a subsequent element that improved trust between employees and their leaders. This indicates that leaders that do not show respect to their employees will bring forth and breed a negative relationship between the two. However, mutual respect catalyzes trust among these parties and thus the existence of positive relationship between these parties.

In the analysis of the relationship between leaders and their employees, it was observed that the existing relationship was kind of professional and friendly. In essence, to some extent leaders engaged in personal relationships with their employees, while at some point they had to involve professional relationship to ensure objectives were met. This was echoed by respondent five when he indicated that;

*“The relationship is primarily professional. However, there are times when a personal approach is essential to overcome the matter at hand (R5)”*

Similarly, respondent one also specified that;

*“I would describe it as a professional and friendly relationship. (R1)”*

## Leadership and Motivation

As it is widely known, employee work performance cannot improve when there are marginal motivations provided. Motivation is essential as they make employees feel valued and recognized by the organization. This analysis observed that leaders (interviewed) provided an array of motivation to their employees. These also varied in accordance to the organization policies and regulations. Provision of awards was one of the motivating factors that were provided to employees as a means of improving their work performance. The awards were through bonuses and performance awards as outlined by one and two in the following sentiments;

*“There are various awards given out such as employee of the month, employee of the year, MVP employee award, and best employee performance award which all have time off incentives and monetary rewards attached to them…….. (R1)”*

*“……There is also, bonuses given at the end of the year for our top performers (R2)……”*

Awards were also provided to employees through recognition of their job performance. This was done either through congratulatory emails or recognition by names as pointed out in the following statement by one of the respondents;

*“To make sure they know that I care I send out emails weekly to congratulate the team on a job well done and recognize employees by names in this email who have contributed significantly that week…..(R2)”*

Awards were also provided through giving employee paid leave and off days. These are periods when employees are given rest hours and off work days, but are still paid. These awards give employees time to attend to their families. Consequently, it puts a notion that they are cared for by the organization and as such feel valued and thus the motivation to put more effort in their work to support achievement of organization’s goals and objectives. This evident was observed when one of the respondents indicated that; “…..*Everyone is recognized as valuable team players and when it is feasible I allow time off for the whole teams and special time off for those who have went beyond the call of duty…”* another respondent also indicated that “ *we motivate them through provision of* *Days off/free time……”*

Get together parties were also mentioned to be a significant motivational tool used by leaders to enhance employee performance. As outlined in the data collected, these are parties conducted at a period of time depending on organization policies. In this case, most participants outlined performing get together parties on Fridays or Mondays at the end of every month. This was evident through the following illustration; *“…..after our Friday meeting we have a standing get together for Happy Hour and on the first and last Monday of the month we do lunch potlucks…..(R1).”*According to the literature, get together parties are often conducted when an organization feel the need to congratulate their employees on a job well done over a period of time. It is also a means of reconciling employees and creating a cohesive familial atmosphere for employees. Often when these events occur, employees feel recognized, valued and motivated. It acts as a measure of retaining knowledgeable and experienced employees within a company.

Another form of motivation observed through the analysis was motivation through encouragement. This happened when leaders took the opportunity to encourage their employees to either aim higher in their career, embrace team work and enhance the spirit of “morale” among employee. Encouragement is an intrapersonal factor that makes an employee feel good that a leader thinks about him/her. Consequently, encouraged employees often put their best at work to ensure that they meet goals and objectives set for them. Motivation through encouragement was evident when respondent two mentioned that;

*“…..By challenging them to go beyond their initial thoughts of what they believe their capabilities. I motivate them by empowering them with courage…… Keeping the spirits and morale of the organization seems to work with getting the employees to cooperate…. (R2).”*

**Leadership Styles and Traits**

One of the core objectives of this study was to evaluate some of the leadership styles used by leaders to enhance performance of their employees and improve organization performance as well. Review of literature sources indicated that there are various leadership styles that have the potential of improving employee performance or hinder employee performance. Some of the essentially leadership styles largely known include authoritarian leadership, participative/democratic leadership and laissez-faire leadership. These leadership styles describe how leaders approach their employees and enhance their behavioral change. From the study, there were three main leadership styles that sufficed to be adopted by the interviewed leaders within their organizations. These were the participatory/democratic leadership, laissez-faire leadership as well as authoritarian leadership styles.

### Participatory/Democratic leadership

This is a kind of leadership where leaders give their followers opportunity to give their ideas about an issue that is affecting the organization. Brainstorming is participatory and employee ideas are also considered in the final conclusion. At times, one or more employees are engaged in the decision making process as representatives of the entire employees within the organization. Despite giving employees the opportunity to express their ideas, this type of leadership gives the supervisor or the leader a supreme authority to make the final decision regarding the issue at hand. From the study findings, this concept was seen to be used by a number of participants (the leaders who participated in the study). This was seen among participant three and four who mentioned that they allow their employees to have an opinion about an issue or strategic measures for the organization. This was respondent three response that was given;

*“……I allow them to have an opinion. My job is to oversee and enforce productivity but that does not require me to micromanage so I allow them to follow out their tasks with minimum interruption from me….”*

Similarly, respondent four also gave a similar opinion in the viewpoint of participatory / democratic type of leadership. In his opinion, he mentioned that;

“…..*I listen to everyone’s opinions and ideas and if I decide to go with their idea I will inform the team and if I decide not to go with their idea I will let him/her know why….”*

These opinions gave an impression that both participant three and four always involved their employees in the decision making process, despite having the authority to decide the final decision. Consequently, their opinions indicate that they value and respect their employees’ opinion. According to the literature review, it has been noted that using participatory/democratic type of leadership do not necessarily mean that these leaders are weak or something of that kind but it is an indication that such leaders acknowledges that their employees might have information that the leaders themselves may not have. It has been revealed that not every leader has the technical know-how in every discipline and therefore it is important to consult on certain fields that may be new. At times, leaders may have part of the information to solve a strategic issue within an organization but not the entire valuable solution. In this case therefore, it is important to seek other part of the information from the employees in so as to reach a valuable information that is sufficient for decision making. Leaders who were interviewed conformed to this concept when one of the leaders indicated that;

*“…..I allow my employees to give input and if feasible I will allow them to move forward with their ideas by putting them in motion. I hear all ideas and before a no is given, I will evaluate the situation….”*

In line with these findings it can be articulated that leaders who use participatory or democratic styles in the leadership processes have the capability of motivating their employees as they make their employees feel valued and their ideas respected. Just the art of involving employee ideas in decision making processes makes them feel part of the organization and therefore they feel more included. In essence, employees feel that they are also involved in deciding organization issues that also affect their operation. In addition, this leadership style also gives employees the opportunity to commend on how they can approach some activities within the organization thereby improving their performance and thus the organizational performance.

### Laissez-Faire Leadership

This was another leadership style observed to be used by some of the leaders who were interviewed. This leadership style was also revealed to be used in integration with other leadership styles such as the participatory or democratic type of leadership. However, those who mentioned to be using the authoritarian type of leadership were revealed to have minimal chances of adopting laissez-faire leadership style. As defined by some scholars, laissez-faire leadership style can also be referred to as the delegation leadership style as leaders give their employees the opportunity to make decisions over certain matters concerning the organization. This leadership style is known to be effective in situations where employees have analytical skills and are able to analyze certain situations and come up with sound decision. In this situation, employees have the mandate to determine what to be done and do the required as leaders perform other duties. This is why some leaders prefer integrating this kind of leadership with participatory or rather democratic type of leadership. However, this leadership style may be misleading especially if the leader has the notion that his/her employees have knowledge in a certain field, can make decisions and do the required work, when in fact the employees have limited knowledge in the field. In this case, employees might perform tasks that are opposite of organization strategies and therefore limit chances of achieving organization objectives. However, it is important to acknowledge that this type or leadership is quite viable in situations where leaders are certain that the employees have the knowledge in the subject area where they are required to make decisions.

As revealed in the study findings, one of the respondents mentioned that they use go-with-the-flow type of leadership in that they give employees opportunity to decide and they only oversee what employees have decided. Part of the participants indicated that they give their employees a chance to decide on strategic measures that will help in achieving organization objectives. This finding is evident through the following response as given by one of the respondents; “….*I pretty much lead with a go-with-the-flow type of attitude laisse-faire. I allow my employees to decide how they will meet the goals set forth for them…..”* to ascertain literature findings, another respondent also mentioned that he integrates participatory leadership with laissez-faire leadership in order to make things work for him; this is evident through the following response for one of the participants;

*“Democratic leadership and laissez-faire…….I allow them to have an opinion. My job is to oversee and enforce productivity but that does not require me to micromanage so I allow them to follow out their tasks with minimum interruption from me.”*

Respondent eight also pointed out the use of both participatory and laissez-faire type of leadership in managing his employees; in his response; he indicated that;

“…… *I often grab the youngest soldiers and ask what they want to do for training, and I have them plan with me on what they want because the training is essentially theirs, I am just the facilitator….”*

Through the lens of leadership styles and traits, it was evident that majority of leaders who were interviewed provided support to their employees/followers which is one trait that corresponds to democratic leadership styles. Additionally, the leadership styles that were used by most respondents (that is laissez-faire and democratic leadership) had the potential of improving employee knowledge in certain field as they all engaged in brainstorming what could work in certain activities.

### Authoritarian Leadership

Though most of the leaders that were observed used democratic and laissez-faire type of leadership, authoritarian leadership style also sufficed to be used by some leaders who were interviewed. Also known as autocratic type of leadership the leaders decide what is to be done and tell employees how to do it without seeking employee opinions on the same. As noted in the literature section, leaders who opt to use this style often do this when they are certain that they have all the information required to make certain decisions. In this case then, such leaders may see it unnecessary to seek employees’ opinion on how to handle tasks. Despite the hard nature of this leadership style, it was also revealed that this leadership trait may be viable for use especially when leaders are short of time and need to solve certain problems in a quicker manner. Often leaders tend to lack understanding of this leadership trait and at times treat it as “bossing people around” where leaders use demeaning languages, yell at employees and use threats to lead followers. This kind of behavior is abusive and is known to have no place in the leadership repertoire. It is recommended that when leaders have the time and commitment, they need to use participatory approach in making decisions.

Through the analysis, it was revealed that very few leaders use this approach in directing and controlling their followers. However, it was not revealved whether it was “abusive” style aforementioned or the style was just used to make prompt decisions on certain problems facing their organizations. However, the leader who mentioned to use this leadership trait mentioned that:

*“……If needed I will step in and redirect the employees which could easily make me enforce the authoritative leadership style…”* it can be said that this kind of a leader seldom used this trait while directing his followers and this was pegged on certain situations, assumingly when the leader need to make prompt decisions as was mentioned. Consequently, another respondent who mentioned to use this leadership trait indicated that; “….*I guess some would call it micro-managing in a sense, however this is due to the sensitive nature of the job….”* Analyzing this response gives a notion that this type of a leader often uses authoritarian type of leadership in consideration that the work environment was more sensitive which required this kind of leadership style.

Despite the nature of the work environment, it is imperative to denote that this leadership style bridges less relationships with employees as it creates fear and anxiety among employees. At times, the misconception of this leadership trait puts most leaders at the verge of losing their relationship with employees especially when they use the “abusive” styles mentioned earlier. In this case, employees feel less motivated and less valued as they are not even given the opportunity to present their ideas on how they can go about some tasks in the organization. For instance, one of the leaders who mentioned to be using this leadership trait indicated that; “….*I guess about 60% of the time I am away directly from the employees….”* which implies that this leader is less attached to the employees. In this case then, the leader finds it difficult to support employees directly or rather engage directly with the employees. The resultant effect in this case is low levels of motivation, team building and mutual support to employees. Employees find it difficult to present their grievances to their leader thus inadequate solution to employee grievances. In this case then, leaders who use this trait throughout tend to loose employee motivation and therefore poor work output. Consequently, this also leads to poor employee performance and thus the poor organizational performance.

## Leadership behavior and employee/organization performance

Even though leadership traits/styles are known to contribute to employee performance and organizational achievement, leadership behavior is also significant in achieving employee performance. Support from leaders provide to employees are also significant in empowering them as well as improving their performance. Through this study, leadership conduct was observed to understand what increases employee performance as well as organizational performance.

One of the leadership conducts that was seen to enhance employee performance was through handling employee grievances. In any institutions it is obvious that employees had to have some of the grievances that they require an organization to handle. Consequently, approaches taken by leaders to handle these grievances meant a lot to employees. They can either make employees feel embraced in the organization or at times they can make employees feel as if they are not heard in the organization. Through the analysis, it was found that most leaders followed up with their employees on matters of concern especially when they solved employee grievances. At some point, leaders gave direct supervisors an opportunity to solve issues with their employees thus allowing employees to come up with the solutions themselves before taking the matter to the top leaders. This was revealed when one of the interviewed leaders indicated that he often follows up with his employees after a resolution was given in certain demand that were put forth by the employees. In essence, leaders often take a quick survey to determine if the solution provided to the employee grievances was satisfactory or not. This was evident through the following response; “*I guess following up with the employee after a resolution has been given would be something to do in the future….”* Similarly, in this matter of concern, another participant also indicated that;

*I believe I handle all issues and concerns promptly and hopefully effectively. I cannot recall anytime where I felt that any situation was left unfinished. I guess to get an unbiased answer would have to come from the employees.*

Mode of communication is another leadership conduct that enhanced employee performance. In this case leaders ensure that they promptly inform employees on what is required of them in timely manner. Communication is important in communicating changes within the organization and thus the ability to enforce behavior change among employees.

## Summary of findings

The analysis of this study was able to determine the kind of leadership styles that are mostly used by leaders to enhance employee performance and the resultant organization performance. As have been observed through the analysis of this study, most leaders preferred using participatory/democratic approaches in directing, managing and controlling their employees. Similarly, it was also revealed that employees were also familiar with laissez-faire type of leadership in directing and controlling their followers. At some point it was also evident that leaders integrated both participatory and laissez-faire type of leadership in order to enhance their leadership approaches. In this case then, this study was able to answer research question one and two as was put forth to support in achieving the study outcome.

The third specific question was to determine how the leadership styles were able to improve employee performance. The findings in this study were explicit and revealed some of the leadership traits that supported in improving employee performance. These were aligned to the working environment, leader-employee relationship as well as leadership behavior that were explored. Most leaders who used participatory approach were found to have good working relationship with their employees and therefore the ability to directly motivate their workers. Additionally, participatory leaders were found to have some sufficient forms of communication with their employees and therefore they were able to influence behavior change among their followers. They were also able to provide solution to employee grievances and follow up on the level of implementation of these grievances. Through this, leaders were also able to determine the level of their employee satisfaction and the level of their work performance. On the contrary leaders who mentioned to use autocratic form of leadership were revealed to have minimal direct interaction with their employees which had a consequential negative effect on employee performance. As seen in the findings of the study, autocratic leaders had less interaction with their employees and as such they were unable to attend to employee grievances promptly. The end result was employee satisfaction with their work environment and thus reduced work output. This further affected organizational performance became less motivated to put more effort in their work and achieve organizational goals and objectives.

As employees become less motivated to put more effort in their work, the organizational performance significantly declined. In essence, reduced work output among employees have a negative impact on organization performance while increased work output among employees due to motivation leads to improved organization performance. In this case then, the study findings were able to answer research question three and four adequately.

## Recommendation for practical action

This study was explicit on how leadership styles impact employee and organization performance respectively. In this case then this study recommends leaders to sufficiently employ participatory/democratic leadership style in directing and controlling their followers. However, it does not mean that leaders should entirely forget about autocratic type of leadership but they are encouraged to use this type of leadership when necessary. That is when leaders have limited time and commitment to seek opinions form other parties to solve a problem at hand.

Additionally, leaders are encouraged to attend frequent trainings on leadership traits and know when to use a particular leadership style in place of the other. For instance, this study revealed that most leaders have a misconception of the autocratic leadership style and when to use it. This is why some leaders end up engaging in abusive and “bossing people around” with the notion that they are implementing autocratic leadership style when in the real sense they are not. Through sufficient trainings leaders will also be able to realize how they should be relating to their employees as well as how to communicate to the employees. It is important to note that behavior change among employees is an important factor that drives organizations forward. However, it is the leaders who have the mandate to drive behavior change among their employees and this is sufficiently done through proper communication. Essentially when employees are properly communicated, they become less rigid to change and thus smooth adoption of innovative ideas in the organization. Paradoxically, poor communication just enhances rigidity among employees and therefore minimal behavior change among these significant workers in the organization. To this end, leaders should adopt modern forms of communication such that they can be able to promptly communicate changes to their employees. Similarly, modern forms of communication will enable leaders to promptly communicate to employees on what is required of them in a timely basis.

It is important to note that leadership alone does not enhance employee performance if the working environment is not conducive enough. Issues such as safety measures at work place and security are some of the important factors that improve working environment and they go hand in hand with leadership traits in employee performance. In this case therefore, it is important for organization management to enhance facilities and infrastructure in order to reinforce safety at work environment as well as security or workers. Poor working environment triggers continuous demand from employees which may further force leaders to employ authoritarian form of leadership in order to achieve employee work output. However, this may lead to poor work performance among employees and thus insufficient work output. The end result will then be poor organizational performance.

Finally, this report recommends further research to be conducted in this field of concern so as to improve leadership skills among those in the top management in organization. As this research only adopted a qualitative approach in determining the impact of leadership styles in employee performance, a more rigorous study engaging a mixed methodology approach is recommended in order to have more evidence on leadership traits and organization performance in the contemporary institutions. Through a mixed method approach, scholars will have both descriptive and explorative information to back up the findings of the study in essence, researchers will be able to triangulate findings in the qualitative study with the findings from the quantitative study and provide findings that are robust.

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# Appendix 1: Interview Questions

**1.**As a leader what does your job entail?

2. What kind of work environment have you provided for the employees?

3. How often do you interact with the employees when carrying out daily routine activities in your organization?

4. As top leadership, how would you describe your relationship with your employees?

5. How would you describe your leadership style?

6. Explain how you notify changes to your employees when there is a need to implement change in the mission of the organization?

7. As leadership what tactics do you use to make employees feel as though they are a part of the organization and their ideas are valued?

8. How do you motivate your employees?

9. How do you handle grievances from employees? If anything, what would you do differently in your organization as a leader?

 10. What tools do you use to elicit cooperation from the employees?

# Appendix 2: Interview Transcriptions

**Leadership interview – participant 1**

**1. As a leader what does your job entail?**

*I am the Department head of the Registered Nurses in my unit. I manage 50 nurses for this hospital which entails me making schedules, giving required training, evaluating their work and job capabilities.*

**2. What kind of work environment have you provided for the employees?**

*Though a fast paced environment, it is a family oriented environment that promotes care not only for the patients but for the employees*.

**3. How often do you interact with the employees when carrying out daily routine activities in your organization?**

*Daily, the employees can find me walking around and interacting with them and their patients. I consistently check in with my employees on a professional and personal level. For I believe if they are not well in those aspects of their life then they fully can’t commit to the objectives of the organization. I remain reachable and approachable to all staff.*

**4. As top leadership, how would you describe your relationship with your employees?**

*I would describe it as a professional and friendly relationship.*

**5. How can you describe the leadership style of your supervisor?**

*I pretty much lead with a go-with-the-flow type of attitude laisse-faire. I allow my employees to decide how they will meet the goals set forth for them. However, if needed I will step in and redirect the employees which could easily make me enforce the authoritative leadership style.*

**6. Explain how you notify changes to your employees when there is a need to implement change in the mission of the organization?**

*As changes come about, the employees are given notice of upcoming changes through emails and our weekly meeting that we have on Fridays to recap what what right, wrong, and could use a revamp on during the week. Additionally, all employees have access to the homepage where employees are notified and given written notice of implemented changes just in case they did not come across it in their email.*

**7. As leadership what tactics do you use to make employees feel as though they are a part of the organization and their ideas are valued?**

*The main tactic that I use is that I allow my employees to give input and if feasible I will allow them to move forward with their ideas by putting them in motion. I hear all ideas and before a no is given, I will evaluate the situation.*

**8. How do you motivate your employees?**

There are various awards given out such as employee of the month, employee of the year, MVP employee award, and best employee performance award which all have time off incentives and monetary rewards attached to them. Additionally, after our Friday meeting we have a standing get together for Happy Hour and on the first and last Monday of the month we do lunch potlucks.

**9. How do you handle grievances from employees? If anything, what would you do differently in your organization as a leader?**

*Honestly, I believe I handle all issues and concerns promptly and hopefully effectively. I cannot recall anytime where I felt that any situation was left unfinished. I guess to get an unbiased answer would have to come from the employees.*

**10. What tools do you use to elicit cooperation from the employees?**

*I utilize my participative tools to ensure cooperation is given. I believe by me being personable, reachable and hands on with everyone builds trust which in turns leads to the employees cooperating.*

**Leadership interview – participant 2**

1. **As a leader what does your job entail?**

*As the Human Resource Department Director my job includes writing policy for the organization and making sure it is enforced and followed without waiver.*

1. **What kind of work environment have you provided for the employees?**

*This is without a doubt a stressful occupation. Making sure that employees follow the rules so that the organization will not be fined is a tedious task that has to be done. The employees are hard workers which allows me to get my job done effectively. So to answer your question, I think I have provided a work-hard, play-hard environment.*

1. **How often do you interact with the employees when carrying out daily routine activities in your organization?**

*The interaction between the employees and I vary. Some days I am able to get out and interact more than others. I guess about 60% of the time I am away directly from the employees.*

1. **As top leadership, how would you describe your relationship with your employees?**

I would say we have mutual respect for one another.

1. **How would you describe your leadership style?**

I guess some would call it micro-managing in a sense, however this is due to the sensitive nature of the job.

1. **Explain how you notify changes to your employees when there is a need to implement change in the mission of the organization?**

There are 42 managers in this organization.When changes are coming down the pipeline I notify the managers first so they can prepare their subordinates. The official implementation of the changes will be placed in the Plan of the Week that is distributed every Monday.

1. **As leadership what tactics do you use to make employees feel as though they are a part of the organization and their ideas are valued?**

*I hope that all employees feel they are of value here. To make sure they know that I care I send out emails weekly to congratulate the team on a job well done and recognize employees by names in this email who have contributed significantly that week. There is also, bonuses given at the end of the year for our top performers.*

1. **How do you motivate your employees?**

By challenging them to go beyond their initial thoughts of what they believe their capabilities. I motivate them by empowering them with courage.

1. **How do you handle grievances from employees? If anything, what would you do differently in your organization as a leader?**

Being that I have an open door policy for all questions and concerns I believe grievances are handled well. I guess following up with the employee after a resolution has been given would be something to do in the future.

1. **What tools do you use to elicit cooperation from the employees?**

Keeping the spirits and morale of the organization seems to work with getting the employees to cooperate.

**Leadership interview – participant 3**

**1. As a leader what does your job entail?**

*Working as the Lead in the Intelligence Department and I instruct and manage over 75 individual in communication and safety.*

**2. What kind of work environment have you provided for the employees?**

*The environment is a busy one. What we do can save or harm lives. The consensus seems to be either you love it here or hate it. I guess I would compare it to the stock market. Highs and lows on a wave.*

**3. How often do you interact with the employees when carrying out daily routine activities in your organization?**

*Effective communication is our primary objective. This requires me to be hands on all the time. The only time that I am not interacting with the employees is when I am not at work and I am always here.*

**4. As top leadership, how would you describe your relationship with your employees?**

*Friendly, respectful, and professional*.

**5. How would you describe your leadership style?**

*It highly is dependent on day and the needs of the organization. The majority of the time I classify my style is a mixture of Democratic leadership and lassie-faire.*

**6. Explain how you notify changes to your employees when there is a need to implement change in the mission of the organization?**

*Everyone is in the know here. When new instruction or policy is about to be implemented all are personally informed in the morning meetings. Upcoming changes and those that are already implemented are reiterated in all meetings to ensure everyone understands the new changes.*

**7. As leadership what tactics do you use to make employees feel as though they are a part of the organization and their ideas are valued?**

*I allow them to have an opinion. My job is to oversee and enforce productivity but that does not require me to micromanage so I allow them to follow out their tasks with minimum interruption from me.*

**8. How do you motivate your employees?**

*No hard work or efforts go unnoticed. Everyone is recognized as valuable team players and when it is feasible I allow time off for the whole teams and special time off for those who have went beyond the call of duty.*

**9. How do you handle grievances from employees? If anything, what would you do differently in your organization as a leader?**

*All grievances go through me. I like to know the people’s concerns and issues that I work with. However, I will allow initially the direct managers to come up with a resolution and follow up with them. Nothing I would consider doing different.*

**10. What tools do you use to elicit cooperation from the employees?**

I show respect always!

**Leadership interview – participant 4**

**1. As a leader what does your job entail?**

Influencing others to accomplish the mission by providing purpose, direction, and motivation

**2. What kind of work environment have you provided for the employees?**

Relaxed

**3. How often do you liaise with your supervisor when carrying out your normal activities in the organization?**

Daily

**4. As top leadership, how would you describe your relationship with your employees?**

*Pretty fluid, I garner an open door policy with my subordinates.*

**5. How would you describe your leadership style?**

Tactful

**6. Explain how you notify changes to your employees when there is a need to implement change in the mission of the organization?**

*I bring in the entire team and let them know what changes were made and how it effects our section.*

**7. As leadership what tactics do you use to make employees feel as though they are a part of the organization and their ideas are valued?**

*I listen to everyone’s opinions and ideas and if I decide to go with their idea I will inform the team and if I decide not to go with their idea I will let him/her know why.*

**8. How do you motivate your employees?**

*Days off/free time.*

**9. How do you handle grievances from employees? If anything, what would you do differently in your organization as a leader?**

*I handle grievances on a case by case basis, each situation is different but I handle each situation with a level of compassion.*

**10. What tools do you use to elicit cooperation from the employees?**

*No particular tools, I just give them the bottom line up front…this is what needs to happen for this purpose and by this time.*

**Leadership Interview – Participant 5**

**1. As a leader what does your job entail?**

*Primarily ensuring that the Operations here at FOB-N are coordinated with all Contingents and Civilians. As a leader specifically, it would be to develop the younger Soldiers/Leaders with the sharing of my knowledge and experience.*

**2. What kind of work environment have you provided for the employees?**

*An environment that allows them to seek guidance, and an open door policy to support that.*

**3. How often do you liaise with your supervisor when carrying out your normal activities in the organization?**

*Multiple times within the day, approximately three.*

**4. As top leadership, how would you describe your relationship with your employees?**

*The relationship is primarily professional. However, there are times when a personal approach is essential to overcome the matter at hand.*

**5. How would you describe your leadership style?**

Lead by example, be able to do and what you expect from your team.

**6. Explain how you notify changes to your employees when there is a need to implement change in the mission of the organization?**

*I ensure that I am fully aware of the changes and the requirements. Ensure that the message and guidance for the change is understood by all of those that must implement the change in the mission or organization.*

**7. As leadership what tactics do you use to make employees feel as though they are a part of the organization and their ideas are valued?**

*A very effective tool is recognition of the impact that the employee provides to the organization.*

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**8. How do you motivate your employees?**

*Sometimes, participation at the lower levels of the mission is welcomed by the employees. As such, providing them with support at this level provides interaction that develops trust and bonding.*

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**9. How do you handle grievances from employees? If anything, what would you do differently in your organization as a leader?**

*Grievances are unfortunate events that affect the production of an employee. As such, it is important to assist in all manners the facilitation of employee hardships.*

**10. What tools do you use to elicit cooperation from the employees?**

*Providing the feedback to them that their participation and ideas are important to the organization, and that their insights are welcomed*

**LEADERSHIP INTERVIEW – PARTICIPANT 6**

**1. As a leader what does your job entail?**

*· Responsible for all staffing and HR functions, training, resolving conflicts, and ensuring that the day-to-day operations of the local UMUC office (s) are of the highest caliber.*

*· Coach, monitor and evaluate productivity of employees through various channels including observations in employee’s environment as it pertains to student services and the needs of the installation.*

*· Develop high-level recruiting, retention and outreach strategies that target all categories of civilian and military students to include active-duty, veterans and family members.*

*· Create and implement a proactive, strategic approach to increasing efficiency, customer service, and overall enrollment numbers in the community.*

*· Collaborate with HQ and field offices on outreach events including Open Houses or Information Sessions at designated sites; manage regional marketing calendars to recruit new students and adjuncts.*

*· Interpret and analyze data in People Soft, Edwards and the CRM to support enrollment generating activities and business efficiencies.*

*· When needed, assist students and maintain solid Military Education Coordinator skills.*

*· Liaise with colleagues and peers, departments, faculty members, the Student Services Office and the Director’s Office as related to enrollment initiatives and other field related issues.*

*· Ensure regional operations meet policy standards from an academic, testing and contract perspective; perform random quality control checks and assist in the coordination of site visits for those checks.*

*· Manage and address student, faculty and staff issues to move toward an amicable solution; escalate to the appropriate offices when necessary.*

*· Represent UMUC Asia at community functions, to include recognition and award ceremonies; engage with community leaders.*

*· Assist in the planning and coordinating of the annual and term-specific hybrid and F2F schedule of classes.*

**2. What kind of work environment have you provided for the employees?**

*My philosophy is a support leadership mentality; therefore, allowing team members ownership of their prospective areas of responsibility.  By providing this type of environment, team members are able to flourish and own their actions.*

**3. How often do you liaise with your supervisor when carrying out your normal activities in the organization?**

*Daily through chat, emails or phone calls. Weekly through video conferencing.*

**4. As top leadership, how would you describe your relationship with your employees?**

*I maintain a support leadership approach including compassion for situations as needed.*

*.***5. How would you describe your leadership style?**

Supportive leaders train employees to deal with issues themselves, as they arise, relying on the manager when necessary but dealing with the problems themselves as much as possible.

**6. Explain how you notify changes to your employees when there is a need to implement change in the mission of the organization?**

*Full transparency in understanding the situation while earning their buy in.*

**7. As leadership what tactics do you use to make employees feel as though they are a part of the organization and their ideas are valued?**

*A very effective tool is recognition of the impact that the employee provides to the organization.*

**8. How do you motivate your employees?**

*Through incentive programs and pushing our internal career ladders..*

**9. How do you handle grievances from employees? If anything, what would you do differently in your organization as a leader?**

*I would not do anything differently.*

**10. What tools do you use to elicit cooperation from the employees?**

*Teamwork must become part of your culture. Provide teams with the resources they need to work together. Train employees and encourage ongoing learning. Encourage people to socialize outside of work. Clarifying roles and setting expectations. Review individual's talents. Resolve team conflict quickly.*

**LEADERSHIP INTERVIEW – PARTICIPANT 7**

**1. As a leader what does your job entail?**

*Currently I’m one of two critical care nurses apart of the DCST and am OIC of the Walking Blood Bank (WBB). In conjunction with providing care to patients I’m responsible for maintaining an active roster of prescreened blood donors in the event of a MASCAL.*

**2. What kind of work environment have you provided for the employees?**

*I hope I foster an environment where questions are welcomed and individuals have a drive to learn from me and my experiences.*

**3. How often do you liaise with your supervisor when carrying out your normal activities in the organization?**

*I interact with my personnel everyday with multiple tasks. We’re intertwined each other. It would be difficult to execute daily tasks without the support from one another.*

**4. As top leadership, how would you describe your relationship with your employees?**

*. I think I have a good working relationship with my counterparts. We constantly ask one another questions related to our work for clarification and expectations.*

**5. How would you describe your leadership style?**

I feel like I have an open door policy and hands on approach when it comes to my leadership style. I’m still learning how to be a good leader every day.

**6. Explain how you notify changes to your employees when there is a need to implement change in the mission of the organization?**

*If I need to make my team aware of changes I prefer to address the group verbally to make sure everyone has received the message. I’ll then send out an email and text as well.*

**7. As leadership what tactics do you use to make employees feel as though they are a part of the organization and their ideas are valued?**

*I’ll give personnel praise and appreciation to let them know they’ve completed a task either well or beyond my expectation. That praise comes verbally one on one and in a group setting.*

**8. How do you motivate your employees?**

*Through incentive programs and pushing our internal career ladders..*

**9. How do you handle grievances from employees? If anything, what would you do differently in your organization as a leader?**

*I would not do anything differently.*

**10. What tools do you use to elicit cooperation from the employees?**

*Teamwork must become part of your culture. Provide teams with the resources they need to work together. Train employees and encourage ongoing learning. Encourage people to socialize outside of work. Clarifying roles and setting expectations. Review individual's talents. Resolve team conflict quickly.*

**LEADERSHIP INTERVIEW – PARTICIPANT 8**

**1. As a leader what does your job entail?**

- It entails basically just doing the right thing and setting the example of how I want my subordinates to act.  Its really that simple, once everyone is on the same page, and htey can be counted on to do the right thing every time, the workload and the stress constantly decreases.

**2. What kind of work environment have you provided for the employees?**

- I try to establish a Leader - Leader environment, because a Leader-Follower environment I find to be extremely counter productive.  Creating a system of leaders at all levels who perform to the best of their abilities usually drives productivity because each person is accountable for a piece of the over all goal.

**3. How often do you liaise with your supervisor when carrying out your normal activities in the organization?**

-I try to talk to every single NCO at least once daily even if it is just a hello.  As for the E4s and below I try to find all of them and interact as well, however when there are times aI do not see a junior soldier for a week or two due to off cycle shifts I try to either go visit them on shift or to set an appointment and talk about life with them.

**4. As top leadership, how would you describe your relationship with your employees?**

*- I would describe my relationship as good, and more as an older brother who is serious but also likes to joke around.  I refuse to ever be an authoritarian leader.  I prefer to work with my guys, and have them want to do work for me and not work for me because they feel forced.  By working with them at this level based on appeasement and common goals work is a lot more successful.*

**5. How would you describe your leadership style?**

**-As above, I would describe in a way where people enjoy working with and for me so they want to go do good and want to succeed and I continue to foster that type of style.** I often grab the youngest soldiers and ask what they want to do for training, and I have them plan with me on what they want because the training is essentially theirs, I am just the facilitator.**It makes the guys happy to know that they are an E3 but yet there plan is what the entire company of 74 people is training on.**.

**6. Explain how you notify changes to your employees when there is a need to implement change in the mission of the organization?**

*-When something is broke instead of fixing it my self, I explain how its broken, why its broken, guidelines on what direction I think it should go to be fixed and often 1-2 suggestions to show where my mind is going in a direction, I then give it to the leaders and then they bring me a plan.  Often we go with the best plan that they provide and if it works great, if not, we go at it again and fine tune it, that way they are owners of it and want it to succeed because it is theirs*

**7. As leadership what tactics do you use to make employees feel as though they are a part of the organization and their ideas are valued?**

-Answered in question 5

**8. How do you motivate your employees?**

*- By allowing them to be in charge and that I always remain flexible.  I encourage failure.  The more we fail the more we learn.  I have not yelled at a single soldier in the 3 years I have been in command. I never will.  Everything they do right or wrong has value and something to gain from.  By never getting mad at them they never feel that oh shit CPT Drum is going to fuck us up because we screwed up. they are open to be creative and think out of the box, this has allowed us to be the most successful troop both in field exercises and administratively in our SQDN for the last 3 years.*

**9. How do you handle grievances from employees? If anything, what would you do differently in your organization as a leader?**

*- I take every grievance personally and do everything I can to improve it, every one of these guys has a wife, mother, father, brother, sister, ect... they all expect me to take care of there soldier. It is my job as a leader to make sure there lives improve, and I aim to do that.*

**10. What tools do you use to elicit cooperation from the employees?**

*-Ownership and trust, that's it. I have enough trust in all 74 of my guys that they will do the right thing and there for the have given them an extreme range of freedom to maneuver and execute their jobs with minimal supervision.*

# Appendix 3: Analysis Codebook / Memo

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Demographic characteristics** | *Department head of registered Nurses (R1)*  *Resources Department head (R2)*  *Lead in the Intelligence Department (R3)*  *Influencing others to accomplish the mission by providing purpose, direction, and motivation (R4)* |
| **Thematic Area 1: Supervisor employee relationship** | |
| Relationship through personal interaction | *Interaction I consistently check in with my employees on a professional and personal level. For I believe if they are not well in those aspects of their life then they fully can’t commit to the objectives of the organization. I remain reachable and approachable to all staff (R1)*  *I guess about 60% of the time I am away directly from the employees. (R2)* |
| Professional and friendly relationship | *I would describe it as a professional and friendly relationship. (R1)*  *The relationship is primarily professional. However, there are times when a personal approach is essential to overcome the matter at hand (R5)* |
| Relationship through effective communication | *Effective communication is our primary objective. This requires me to be hands on all the time. (R3)* |
| Relationship through mutual Respect | *I would say we have mutual respect for one another (R2)*  *Friendly, respectful, and professional (R3)* |
|  |  |
| **Thematic Area 2: Leadership and Motivation** | |
| Provision of awards | *There are various awards given out such as employee of the month, employee of the year, MVP employee award, and best employee performance award which all have time off incentives and monetary rewards attached to them (R1)*  *To make sure they know that I care I send out emails weekly to congratulate the team on a job well done and recognize employees by names in this email who have contributed significantly that week (R2)*  *There is also, bonuses given at the end of the year for our top performers (R2)* |
| Get together parties | *after our Friday meeting we have a standing get together for Happy Hour and on the first and last Monday of the month we do lunch potlucks (R1)* |
| Encouragement | *By challenging them to go beyond their initial thoughts of what they believe their capabilities. I motivate them by empowering them with courage (R2)*  *Keeping the spirits and morale of the organization seems to work with getting the employees to cooperate (R2)* |
| Provision of Days off / Leaves | *Days off/free time (R4)*  *Everyone is recognized as valuable team players and when it is feasible I allow time off for the whole teams and special time off for those who have went beyond the call of duty (R3)* |
| Increasing employees’ trust | *providing them with support at this level provides interaction that develops trust and bonding (R5)*  *I believe by me being personable, reachable and hands on with everyone builds trust which in turns leads to the employees cooperating. (R1)* |
| Working condition | *provides family oriented work environment that promotes care not only for the patients but for the employees (R1)*  *I think I have provided a work-hard, play-hard environment (R2)*  *Highs and lows on a wave (R3)*  *An environment that allows them to seek guidance, and an open door policy to support that. (R5)* |
|  |  |
| **Thematic Area 3: Leadership styles and traits** | |
| Participatory/Democratic leadership | *Democratic leadership and lassie-faire…….I allow them to have an opinion. My job is to oversee and enforce productivity but that does not require me to micromanage so I allow them to follow out their tasks with minimum interruption from me. (R3)*  *I listen to everyone’s opinions and ideas and if I decide to go with their idea I will inform the team and if I decide not to go with their idea I will let him/her know why. (R4)* |
| Laissez leadership | *I pretty much lead with a go-with-the-flow type of attitude laisse-faire. I allow my employees to decide how they will meet the goals set forth for them (R1)* |
| Authoritative Leadership | *If needed I will step in and redirect the employees which could easily make me enforce the authoritative leadership style (R1)*  *I guess some would call it micro-managing in a sense, however this is due to the sensitive nature of the job. (R2)* |
|  |  |
| **Thematic Area 4: Leadership and employee performance** | |
| Improved employee participation | *I allow my employees to give input and if feasible I will allow them to move forward with their ideas by putting them in motion. I hear all ideas and before a no is given, I will evaluate the situation (R1)*  *I hope that all employees feel they are of value here (R2)* |
| Attending to employee grievances | *I believe I handle all issues and concerns promptly and hopefully effectively. I cannot recall anytime where I felt that any situation was left unfinished. I guess to get an unbiased answer would have to come from the employees. (R1)*  *I guess following up with the employee after a resolution has been given would be something to do in the future (R2)*  *However, I will allow initially the direct managers to come up with a resolution and follow up with them. (R3)* |
| Communication styles and employee performance | *As changes come about, the employees are given notice of upcoming changes through emails and our weekly meeting that we have on Fridays to recap what right, wrong, and could use a revamp on during the week (R1)*  *Additionally, all employees have access to the homepage where employees are notified and given written notice of implemented changes just in case they did not come across it in their email. (R1)*  *When changes are coming down the pipeline I notify the managers first so they can prepare their subordinates (R2)*  *When new instruction or policy is about to be implemented all are personally informed in the morning meetings (R3)*  *I bring in the entire team and let them know what changes were made and how it effects our section. (R4)*  *Providing the feedback to them that their participation and ideas are important to the organization, and that their insights are welcomed (R5)* |