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INFLUENCE OF LEADERSHIP STYLES ON EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT IN MARSABIT COUNTY KENYA

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ABSTRACT

In the modern society, a lot of life activities is dependent on effective leadership in various aspects such as work function, community survival, organization performance and even development. The global arena has forced organizations to restructure in order to compete in the global economy that is driven by profitability, innovation and performance. Leadership challenges are global and affect all organizations across countries and sectors irrespective of size and complexity of operations. There's the myth that anybody who is highly educated and highly intelligent in a specialized discipline can naturally manage or lead counties. This study aimed at examining the influence of leadership styles on employee engagement in Marsabit county, Kenya. Specifically, the study focused on leadership styles identified as: autocratic, and transformational leadership styles and how they affect employee engagement in Marsabit county. The study was guided by the following theories: fielder's contingency theory, and Likert leadership theory, transformational leadership theory, and transactional leadership theory. The study used descriptive survey design where it targeted 182 representatives from Marsabit county. A sample of 125 respondents was administered with questionnaire. The study used questionnaire to collect primary data. Both descriptive and inferential analysis were done, a pilot study was done using 10% of the sample in Wajir County. The descriptive statistics showed that there is significance evidence to suggest adoption of the various leadership styles in Marsabit county. The inferential analysis showed that significant relationship between the various leadership styles and employee engagement. Autocratic, and transformational leadership styles were found to have positive significant influence on employee engagement though the influence was weak. The study concluded that all leadership styles are suitable dependent on the situation and the organization environment. Thus, the study recommended that county to try to balance all the leadership styles to ensure they improve on productivity. The study also recommends a similar study to affirm the current findings. The study findings will be useful to county assemblies, NGOs, government agencies and other private sectors.

Key Words: leadership styles, transformational leadership style, transactional leadership style, employee engagement

INTRODUCTION

Leaders significantly contribute greatly to organization effectiveness through various sources, the strength to implement changes comes from them or are dependent on followers and other stakeholders. Many organizations have invested in leadership courses on the idea that it will help leaders to increase the productivity of their employees (Athanasopoulou & Dopson, 2018) . The success of an organization is highly dependent on employee commitment, job satisfaction and performance in terms of achieving its goals, customer satisfaction and maximization of profits. Leadership is essential for good performance as it coordinates utilization of resources in the organization including the human resources. A good leader is a motivator of employees and when employees feel motivated, they increase job performance and are committed to the organization and thus the organization improves generally in performance and leads to profitability (NawoseIng'ollan & Roussel, 2019). Leadership is not only highly valued phenomenon but also complex. Its similarity with management in ways involves influencing and working with people.

Ologbo and Saudah (2017) opined that the leadership style of a manager as well as the support, considerably add value to employee engagement. Leadership is not "one size fits all" idea but often, a manager must adapt a style to fit to specific group or even a situation and thus a thorough understanding of different leadership styles is inevitable; after all, the more approaches familiar to a manager the merrier the tools available to be used effectively to lead others (Murray, 2018). In any organization, leaders are crucial in motivating and helping their employees to be competitive and committed to the achievement of the organizational goals and objectives by use of effective leadership styles. Consequently, the use of various leadership styles in an organization is meant to enhance standards of excellence in employee professional development. Effective leadership involves management, analytical skills, remuneration, motivation and inspiration of employees. When the effectiveness of leadership in an organization is enhanced, employee satisfaction increases, which in turn influences profitability, sales volume and customer satisfaction positively. (Gottfredson & Aguinis, 2017).

Vidyakala (2017) argued that, proper leadership style can persuade employees engagement by supporting employees in order to perform competently by creating a sense of belongingness and responsibility. According to Reilly (2018) there are three types of employee engagement. Engaged, not engaged, and actively disengaged. Engaged employees are the ones that take the organization in a positive course. Not only do they carry out the work but also take part in attaining the objectives and goals of the organization. Engaged employees have the will to apply their strength and talent on a daily basis and perform their duties full of excitement, shift the organization forward and drive innovation through performance.

The not engaged employees are just concerned on their duties but nothing to do with the goals and objectives of the organization. They lack the enthusiasm and energy with work that they do. The don't show any association that is supportive to the other employees and have little input towards achievement and organization development (Reilly, 2018). The actively disengaged employees are the ones that do not carry their duties appropriately and are not time conscious. The have insignificant contribution in development and accomplishment of the organization. They concentrate on looking at the work of others and are always unhappy. They affect the organization negatively and thus, making the organization to suffers in attaining its objectives and goals (Teshome, 2020).

Though engaged employees are known to be healthier, productive, safer, profitable, and unlikely to leave their employer, it is estimated that only 30% of the workforce globally are engaged (Wagner & Harter, 2018); while more than 60% goes to work, at best, ambivalent and emotionally uninvolved with their work (Shuck & Wollard, 2018). The engagement gap cost the United States economy more than $300 billion dollars a year in lost productivity. Unfortunately, employee engagement seems to be on a continued decline (Shuck & Wollard, 2018). Despite the low numbers of engaged employees, organizational leaders rate employee engagement among the top priorities of their organizations.

Employee engagement is a complex process and organizations ought to take time for its development. Through use of available tools to increase the level of engagement. Literature has shown that there are some behaviours that are more conducive while others are destructive. However, leaders have an important role as far as development of engagement is concerned through projection of ideals that are related to engagement which include providing vision and support. Organizations should develop strategies that are comprehensive to provide the necessary tools needed to develop skills for sharing vision building trust and creating an effective relationship between the organization and employees. Leaders should have an understand of the impact that they have on their employees and how important it is in building a vision with each employee for the future of the organization. In addition, leaders with self-efficacy and confidence like transformational leaders, foster engagement effectively than those with lower self-efficacy. The employees ought to be given a vision of the organization, the way they fit within it, beyond their motivation in completing tasks creates a workforce that is more productive (Samosudova, 2017).

Statement of the Problem

The promulgation of the Kenyan Constitution in 2010 and the introduction of a decentralized system of governance provided a strong legal basis for strengthening public participation at the local level. Article 196 (1) (b) of the 2010 Constitution of Kenya requires County Assemblies to facilitate public participation of the people as part of the national values and principles of governance. The constitution also provides that the marginalized and minorities have the right to participate fully in the integrated social and economic life of Kenya as a whole and the counties in particular. Article 10 of the Constitution of Kenya recognizes democracy and people's participation among the values of governance that bind state bodies, institutions and civil servants (Kanyinga, 2014).

Michieka (2016) observed that in Kenya today the impact of research into leadership has little influence on governance and leadership in the counties of Kenya especially the counties in the Northern Kenya inhibited by the minority ethnic groups. This may create major gaps in terms of leadership in the counties of Kenya. In relation to the above, the county government leadership needs to adhere to certain standards such as integrity, impartiality, accreditation, audit, proper oversight, proper training, transparency and accountability. It could be the manner in which leaders exercise their authority in the county that has led to lack of accountability, low integrity, lack of regulatory oversight, lack of motivation, corruption as well as lack of employee engagement. Since inception of devolution in 2013, the County Governments in Kenya have continuously reported a pattern of leadership failures like the nurses and doctors strikes in 2017 and 2019, Disengagement of employees with their work, late payment of salaries for the employee, lack of allowances for the employees, non-remittances of deductions of loans and insurances, challenges with gratuity and pension for the retired staff, poor coordination and staff

welfare when it comes to critical issue such as staff medical cover. In addition, public complaints about inefficiency, corruption, absenteeism of county officials and negligence are among cited occurrences in the counties.

According to Infotrak (2022) the county performance index stands at 44.4% in 2019/2020 which ranks 35 out of the 47 counties. Marsabit county has been for a long time having ethnic conflicts where even during elections people choose leaders based on ethnicity. It is sometimes referred to as the politics of violence. Ethnic conflicts and unrest has been the major concerns over the last few years. Despite being the largest county in Kenya, it still lags behind in development (Sanjir, 2017). It seems neglected by most regimes. The county is also faced with administrative challenges, nepotism, favouritism, inequality in distribution of resources and even mismanagement of funds. This all goes back to bad leadership. The lack of servant leadership and good governance is what is lacking in Marsabit county (Bulle & Ombui, 2016). The county government of Marsabit is faced with many challenges in its implementation of projects and provision of public services to its people (Sanjir, 2017).

Despite extensive research on the 'influence of leadership styles on employee engagement', there is a gap in the county governments in Kenya. Several studies by 'Otieno, Waiganjo & Njeru (2015)'; 'Detche and Mukulu, (2015)'; 'Ndethiu (2014)' and Michieka (2016); focused on leadership style or employee engagement or performance but none has focused on Marsabit county. Thus, the gap this study seeks to fill by looking at the leadership styles on employee engagement in Marsabit county.

Research Objectives

i. To determine the influence of transformational leadership style on employee engagement in Marsabit county, Kenya.
ii. To examine the influence of transactional leadership style on employee engagement in Marsabit county, Kenya.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Review

Transformational leadership Theory

The theory was developed by Burns in 1978. Bass (1985) in discussing the theory of transformational leadership in terms of how a leader gets followers to trust, admire and respect them. He identified three ways in which leaders change their followers: realizing the importance and value of tasks; Try to focus first on the goals of the team or organization rather than on your own interests; activate higher needs. In his proposal, charisma is seen as a necessary but not sufficient characteristic of a transformative leader. The lack of charismatic leadership can be attributed to the fact that a charismatic movie star may not be a good leader, although two important charismatic effects that a transformational leader achieves are to evoke strong emotions and to identify employees with leaders. This can be achieved through exciting appeals. This can also be done in a more silent way such as coaching or mentoring (Bass, 1990)

Bass recently said that true transformational leadership rests on a moral foundation based on four factors: idealized influence; inspirational motivation; intellectual stimulation; and individualized attention (Bass & Riggio, 2006). The three moral dimensions are: the moral character of the leader; the vision, clarity and ethical values embedded in the leader's agenda; the morality of the socio-

ethical decision-making and action processes that leaders and followers participate in and jointly enforce (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1998). Unlike Burns (1978), he saw transformative leadership as inseparable from higher values, while Bass (1985) initially saw a moral value in it and attributed transformational abilities to individuals such as Adolf Hitler and Jim Jones, but opinions changed after the conversation with Burns. Bass, made assumptions in his approach to the theory. He believed that recognizing the importance of tasks motivates people and that focusing on a team or organization leads to better work.

Critics to the theory argue that in transformational leadership there is a high likely hood of abuse of power when there is no moral responsibility for motivation. The transformation thus, must assume the moral responsibility and also to ensure there is oppression and dictatorship between the majorities and the minorities (Hay, 2006). Other scholars also believe that transformation leadership is difficult to train as it's a combination of various leadership theories. It is easier for the leaders to manipulate the followers and thus there is a likelihood of losing more than gaining (Juneja, 2022). Various scholars have debated what are the most important factors of transformational leadership influence employee performance, and there is no doubt that all factors matter. However, this study focuses on the impact of leadership style on employee engagement. The aim is to understand how transformational leadership affects employee engagement.

Transactional Theory

The concept of transactional leadership was first mentioned by Max Weber in his socio-economic reflections on organization. Twenty-seven years after his death and the publication of a reprint of his book, academic and professional audiences are accepting his definition of leadership (Weber, 1947). Weber's (1947) description of the transactional style of leadership and the underlying facts are also supported by Bernard Bass in 1981. Bass (1981) identified three types of leaders, bureaucratic, traditional and charismatic leaders. Transactional leadership is based on classical exchange principles with followers being part of interactions and therefore rewarded for meeting pre-defined standards and performance.

This form of leadership is also aimed at maintaining the status quo, so transactional leadership represents a traditional leadership approach. First Bass's research on transactional and transformational leadership led him to conclude that transactional leaders can be successful in a short period of time, but leadership must focus on change if they are to continue to maintain a leadership position. According to Bass and Avolio (1993), transactional leadership involves motivating and directing followers, appealing to their own interests. A leader's power comes from formal authority and responsibility in the organization. The main task of the followers is to respect the instructions of the leaders. The leader provides rewards and punishments in the organization of his legitimacy. Transactional leadership is basically oriented towards monitoring the organization, processes and results in the market.

The interpersonal relationships in transactional leadership, between leaders and followers have a four-dimensional approach: reward, as a result of well-performed tasks and achieved goals that followers are expected to successfully complete the process. Actively engaging leaders in managing, which followed the work of his followers, considers any deviation from established standards and procedures by taking corrective measures in case of errors. Passive engagement of leaders, where the leaders are involved in the process only when standards are not met, or performances are not achieved. Laissez-Faire dimension, which is a form of leadership that

provides the possibility of freedom in the choice of goals and behavior of organizational participants (Bass & Avolio, 1994).

There are some assumptions in transactional leadership theory: that motivation is through rewards and punishments; the leader gives directives that should be respected; there is no self-motivation, but rather controlled through the leader (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999). The transactional theory builds on transformational leadership in that through motivation employees are empowered to achieve organizational goals and objectives and ultimately high employee performance. Critics to the theory however argue that rewards don't work for each and every employee and thus this type of leadership can easily stifle the creativity of employees. This because the transactional leaders are more into rewards and motivation and lack the focus on the employee relationship and their working conditions. Further, there is no particular reward that motivates all the employees (McCandless, 2022). The essence of this research is to demonstrate the influence of leadership styles on employee engagement. The theory was useful in linking transactional leadership theory and how it influences employee engagement in Marsabit County.

Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework is a basic structure that consists of certain abstract blocks which represent the observational, the experiential and the analytical/ synthetically aspects of a process or system being conceived. The interconnection of these blocks completes the framework for certain expected outcomes (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2018). Figure 1

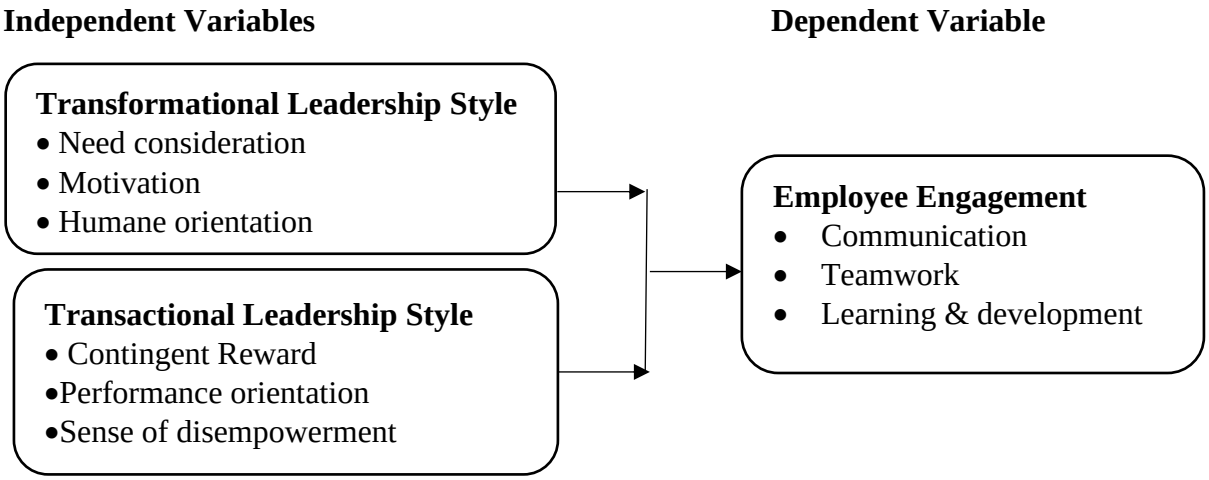

Figure 1: The Conceptual Framework

Transformational Leadership Style

Transformational leadership is a technique where a leader inspires and motivates to succeed. This leadership style is manifested through four perspective identified as inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, individual consideration and idealized behaviour (Bass & Avolio, 2006). An individual with transformation leadership style triggers ideas that stimulate team members' initiatives and inspires motivation that is unusual which enhance productivity. Idealized behaviour has two components which are attributes and behaviours.

Individual consideration tends to be optimists and are sensitive to the needs of subordinates and as well provide attention to the team members. They treat people with dignity and respect. they trust people and delegate responsibilities in order to assist in getting tasks accomplished in attainment of goals. These leaders have the willingness to stimulating and creating learning

experiences to their followers through delegations and treating each individual uniquely. These leaders have the accountability and capability to offer enhance the productivity of followers and their satisfaction through assistance, support job development, and being pleasant to their followers. Individual consideration ensures there is a sense of responsibility by providing leaning ability while still supporting the followers individually. They have attention to desire of their followers by making them feel appreciated and treated differently but fairly on an individual basis (Ali, Said, Yusof, & Mat, 2016).

Intellectual stimulation characteristic of transformational leader stimulates creative thinking, competent followers, and generate innovative ideas and teach others on how find alternative ideas. They encourage thoughtful problem solving with careful contemplation. These leaders are characterised as those who provide opportunity to their followers to rethink procedures in a traditional while observing the situation in a different perspective. They offer inspiration to others to try new ways of things i.e. to be innovative and creative. Intellectual stimulation promotes intelligence, rational, problem solving, and logical thinking. The follows of this type of leadership are always encouraged to have a good thought of problems that occur as well having possible solutions based on their own standards or beliefs (Yaghoubipoor, Tee, & Ahmed, 2018).

Inspirational motivation leader has the ability to use emotion to motivate others. They use clear and continuous stimulation to influence team members. They instil pride, optimism, enthusiasm through the use of motivation talks, building examples of whatever is expected and pinpointing positive results in the team to enhance productivity (Wagude, 2018). Inspiration or the charismatic leader are able to provide clear sense of mission which promotes a sense of commitment and loyalty from the followers. These leaders have a sense of vision and mission, inspire pride, trust and respect among group members. The leader is able to motivate employees towards the future success through challenges of team spirit, optimism, and enthusiasm. The inspiration leader guides the organization from where it is now to the future in three stages: assessing the current status, establishing of goals, and lastly develop techniques to achieve those goals (Yaghoubipoor, Tee, & Ahmed, 2018).

Transactional Leadership Style

A process where a leader makes use of social exchanges to make employees perform specific transactions. This leadership is based on extrinsic motivation for the employees to improve their productivity. A transactional leader stresses the need to achieve goals at all cost. Transactional leaders have the traits of charismatic leaders and effective in creating motivated teams. They are experts in making deals that motivate and are beneficial to organizations though their biggest challenge is about sustainability. Transaction leadership is dependent on 'trade' between followers and leaders where the followers get compensated for attaining goals or achieving targets of performance. The relationship between reward and performance is validated with an appropriate response as a way to encourage employees to improve performance. Transaction leadership is also referred to as managerial leadership and focuses on organization, supervisor, and performance of the group (Ariussanto, Tarigan, Sitepu, & Singh, 2020).

Transactional leadership targets identifying and classification of employees' roles and later provide rewards based on the performance of the individual. 'The main component of transactional leadership is the managerial activity of setting goals, consistent follow up and monitoring of progress towards achieving a goal, punishment and reward for the level of achieving the goal. There are three dimensions of transactional leadership. Contingent reward,

management by exception (active) and management by exception (passive). Contingent reward is based on the efforts of an employee exerted are accompanied by a reward'. There a substitute of rewards for superior performance or an attempt. The management by action (active) the leader monitors the activities closely to enable them take remedial action whenever there is deviation from the regular expectations. This dimension of transaction is about acting whenever there is deviation from the regular standards (Teshome, 2020).

Management by exception (passive) is based on the exchange between followers and leaders on prizes, reciprocity, punishments, interactions that are either physical passive, economic and interference. This dimension of leadership as the name suggests its passive i.e. it's about giving responsibilities to the followers as they wait for a problem to occur for them to interfere. Bass (1990) identified the transactional leadership style as that focuses on the achievement of project team's tasks. The members of the project team are motivated through contingent rewards for targets met while mistakes are punished through withholding rewards. Transactional leaders apply management by exception through taking of corrective actions whenever tasks do not follow the critical path that is planned. Some forms of transactional leadership lead to mediocrity whenever there is application of passive management by exception with the only intervention coming when process standards are not followed in completing of tasks.

In order to bring performance to standards, threats and disciplinary may be used by transactional leaders against team members. Such measures are ineffective and counter-productive in the long term. Bass, (1990) argued that whether the drivers of motivation in transactional leadership are the promise of reward or the avoidance of a penalty. He argues that the aforementioned element depends on whether the leader has any influence to determine rewards and penalties and whether an employee wants a reward or fears the penalties.

Employee Engagement

Employee Engagement refers to the intellectual and emotional attachment of an employee with the Organization. The organization must work to develop and nurture engagement, which requires a two-way relationship between employer and employee's. (Strom et al., 2014). The conceptualization of work engagement that is agreed upon indicates that it is here dimension construct that includes the components of behavioral-energetic also known as the vigour; the components of emotion also known as dedication and a cognitive component also known as absorption. Employee engagement can be influenced by leaders through changing work conditions and through connecting, inspiring, and strengthening employees (Schaufeli, 2015). In addition, several positive leadership styles have been linked to employee work engagement in other studies (Fletcher, 2016; Mehmood et al., 2016).

Armstrong and Taylor (2010) argued that, employee engagement is at the heart of any employment relationship and focuses on what people do and their behaviour in the roles they play and the reasons their action can further their organization objectives and their own objectives. Without meticulous planning, equipment and technology, engaged employees will not yield expected results for the organization. 'Engaged' employees are more productive, engender greater levels of customer satisfaction, are more likely to lead to organizational success and are key to ensuring that an organization wins the customer loyalty (Armstrong & Taylor, 2020). Employee engagement can have a significant impact on employee retention, company reputation and overall stakeholder value. At the same time, unengaged employees are detrimental to all aspects of an

organization, making it difficult to effectively implement the best customer service strategies and achieve employee engagement. (Hoffman & Tschida, 2007).

Kahn (1990) considered personal engagement to exist when individuals express themselves emotionally, cognitively, and physically when doing a task and that personal engagement was the harnessing of organization members' selves to their work roles. Kahn therefore viewed engagement (or disengagement) as a response to work environments (Huertas-Valdivia et al., 2018). Cheema, Akram, and Javed (2015) considered employee engagement as harnessing employees in their work roles while allowing them to express themselves cognitively, emotionally and physically.

Empirical Review

Overall results of a Pakistanian study by Rehman *et al.* (2012) show that both transformational and transactional leadership are positively related to organizational commitment. Lai *et al.* (2014) in their study in Malaysia found that transactional leadership had a significant positive impact on affective commitment only and not ongoing commitment and normative commitment. In a Nigerian study, Soieb, Zairy, Othman and D'Silva (2013) did an analysis of the relationship between leadership style and organizational commitment of the lecturers of State Universities. The study used a survey approach to collect data from 151 lecturers of State universities in Nigeria who continued study on post graduate program in some colleges in Malaysia. This study found that transactional leadership style has significant influence toward organizational commitment of the lecturers (affective commitment, continuance and normative commitment).

Ali et al (2016) 'examined transformational leadership style and job satisfaction at higher education institution in Malaysia.' The study targeted 175 'academic staff of Politeknik Sultan Mizan Zainal Abidin'. Intellectual stimulation, charismatic, individualize consideration, and inspirational, leadership styles were found to drive employees' satisfaction. Individualized consideration leadership was also found as the most important leadership in relation to job satisfaction.

In a South African study by Nyengane (2007), the correlation analysis indicated a weak, but significant, positive relationship between transactional leadership behaviours and continuance commitment . Transactional leadership behaviours had a positive relationship with continuance commitment and indicate a lesser variance than transformational leadership behaviours. This means that leadership behaviours, which involve ignoring problems or waiting for problems to become chronic before acting, explain only a little of the variation on how employees feel about needing to stay with the organization. However, no statistically significant correlation was found between transactional leadership behaviours and affective commitment as well as between transactional leadership behaviours and normative commitment. Ariussanto et al (2020) in a study on 'leadership style, employee engagement and work environment to employee performance in manufacturing companies' found that transactional leadership had a significant influence on work environment and employee engagement.

RESEARCH METHODOOGCY

The study adopted a descriptive research design. In this study the targeted respondents are in a total of 182 employees of Marsabit County as per Marsabit Human resource report of 2021 since these are the people involved in the day to day running and managing the county and thus, are well conversant with the subject matter of the study. In this study, Yamane formula (1967) was used to

determine the sample size of 125 respondents. Random sampling was used to select the employees from each category. Primary data was collected by administering open and close-ended questionnaire to the respondents. A 10% of the entire sample size was used. Pre-testing helps detect deficiencies like unclear directions, insufficient space to write response, wrong phrasing of questions, vague questions etc. The pilot helped to reveal if the anticipated analytical techniques are appropriate (Kumar, 2014).

Descriptive and inferential statistics were adopted for the study. The quantitative data was analysed by using descriptive statistics which includes frequency distribution tables and measures of central tendency (the mean), measures of variability (standard deviation) and measures of relative frequencies. The inferential statistics included a regression model which will establish the relationship between variables. Data was analysed by the use of a statistical software SPSS version 24. To measure the influence of leadership styles on employee engagement in Marsabit County, the study adopted the linear regression model and Pearson correlation.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

A total of 125 questionnaires were administered to respondents in Marsabit County where 111 were duly filled and returned giving a response rate of 88.8%. Mugenda and Mugenda (2018) argue that a response rate of 50% in a study is adequate while 70% and above is excellent. Thus, the response rate is adequate enough to make conclusive recommendations.

Descriptive Statistics

The section attempts to establish the influence of leadership styles on employee engagement in Marsabit County. A Likert scale was used where the responses were coded as follows: 1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Neutral, 4= Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree. The ranges for the mean will be as follows: Strongly Disagree (1-1.8), Disagree (1.9- 2.6), Neutral (2.7-3.4), Agree (3.5-4.2), and Strongly Agree (4.3- 5).

Employee Engagement

To understand the status of employee engagement in Marsabit county, the following descriptive statistics as shown in Table 1 were analysed and interpreted. Respondents were asked to respond to various parameters that measure employee engagement as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Employee Engagement

Employee Engagement Indicators	Mean	Stdev
Leaders in the county government of Marsabit inspire employees	3.00	1.183
The leaders in Marsabit county give encouragement	3.36	1.286
It is difficult to detach myself from my job	3.45	1.368
I do my job will a lot of enthusiasm	3.38	1.215
I always persevere in my job in all situations	3.30	1.165
I am mentally resilient in my job	3.64	1.433
I feel happy when I work intensely.	3.43	1.120
Average Employee Engagement	**3.37**	**1.253**

As shown in the results, respondents were not convinced that the leadership of Marsabit county inspires its employees as shown by the mean of 3.00 (std dev = 1.183). Further, the respondents were not sure of any encouragement from their leaders as shown by the mean of 3.36 (Std dev = 1.286). However, respondents slightly agreed that it's difficult to detach themselves from their jobs as indicated by the mean of 3.45 (Std dev = 1.368). The study also found that respondents

were undecided on being enthusiastic in doing their jobs as evident from the mean of 3.38 (Std dev = 1.215. In addition, respondents were not able to decide on whether they persevered in their jobs in all situations as indicated by the mean of 3.30 (Std dev = 1.165). The study also did not provide any significant statistical evidence to suggest that employees were happy when they worked intensely. However, the respondents agreed that they are mentally resilient in their jobs as supported by the mean of 3.64 (Std dev =1.433).

The general average of 3.37 for employee engagement shows that, there is no significant statistical evidence to suggest status of employee engagement in Marsabit county as it falls in the rage of neutral i.e. neither agree nor disagree. This suggest a divided opinion from the respondents on whether there is employee engagement or not. The standard deviation of 1.253 shows that the respondent's opinion did not have a much variation as it is less than 2. Employee engagement is the emotional and intellectual attachment that employees have with their organization. Schaufeli (2015) argues that, employee engagement can be influenced by leaders through changing the work condition, establishing connections, inspirations, considering employee welfare and even strengthening of the employees. Armstrong and Taylor (2020) argue that for an organization to yield expected results, engagement of employees, planning and use of technology is necessary. Thus, employee engagement is at the heart of any employment relationship and mainly focuses on what the employees do and their behaviours in the various roles they play to attain their own objective and that of the organization.

Transformational Leadership

To determine how Transformational Leadership style influences employee engagement in Marsabit county, respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with various parameters that measure Transformational Leadership style. The descriptive statistics are as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Transformational Leadership

Transformational Leadership Indicators	Mean	Stdev
My leader talks about his/her most important values and beliefs	3.78	0.972
My leader considers the moral and ethical consequences of decisions.	3.44	1.130
My leader instils pride in me for associating with him	3.36	1.286
My leader focuses on group interest not self-interest	3.00	1.323
My leader shows confidence and power	3.78	1.362
My leader talk's enthusiastically about what needs to be accomplished	3.36	1.302
My leader suggests new ways of looking at how to complete assignments	3.00	1.265
My leader focuses on individual ability rather than group performance	3.91	.944
Average Transformational Leadership	**3.45**	**1.198**

The results above indicate the leaders in Marsabit county talk about their important values and beliefs as supported by the mean 3.78 (Std dev =0.972). Respondents agreed that the leaders in Marsabit county exhibit power and confidence as indicated by the mean of 3.78 (Std dev = 1.362). The respondents also agreed that the leadership of Marsabit county focuses on individual performance rather than group performance as shown by the mean of 3.91 (Std dev = 0.944). However, the respondents did not provide any significant statistical evidence to suggest the moral and ethical consideration on the consequences of the decisions made by the leaders in Marsabit county as supported by the mean of 3.44 (Std dev = 1.130). In addition, no significant statistical evidence to suggest that the leadership of Marsabit county instils pride in employees for

associating with them as supported by the mean of 3.36 (Std dev = 1.286). Ali et al (2016) opine that, transformational leaders have attention to the desire of their followers as they make them feel appreciated and treat them differently though on an individual basis. Wagude (2018) explains that inspirational motivation leaders instil pride, optimism, and enthusiasm through motivation talks.

The study did not provide statistical evidence to suggest that leaders focused on group interest rather than self-interest as shown by the mean of 3.00 (Std dev = 1.323). The results did not provide supporting evidence to suggest that leaders in Marsabit county enthusiastically talk about what needs to be accomplished as shown by the mean of 3.36 (Std dev =1.302). Finally, no significant statistical evidence was provided to suggest that leaders suggested new ways of completing assignments in Marsabit county as shown by the mean of 3.00 (Std dev =1.265). Yaghoubi Poor et al (2018) posit that transformation leaders have a good thought of problems that occur and have possible solutions based on their own standards and beliefs.

The general average of 3.45 suggest some slight agreement on the influence of Transformational Leadership style on employee engagement. The standard deviation of 1.198 shows minimal variation in the responses. To some extent there is statistical evidence for transformational leadership style in Marsabit county. According to Bass (1985) in discussion of the transformational leadership, leaders get followers through trust, admiration and respect. This is achieved through change of focus of the followers by realization of the value and importance of tasks, focusing on team goals rather than individual interests and activation of higher needs. Bass (1990) further adds that lack of charismatic leadership is due to the fact that the charismatic individuals may not be good leaders though charismatic characteristic has two effects that a transformational leader achieves which is evoking strong emotions of individuals and identifying individuals with leaders. Critics of transformational leadership theory argue that, it is difficult to train and there is a high likelihood of losing than gaining. Ali et al (2016), and Breynha and Damoah (2016) found a significant influence of transformational leadership style on employee engagement.

Transactional Leadership

To assess the influence of transactional leadership style on employee engagement in Marsabit county, respondents were asked to respondent to parameters relating to transaction leadership style. The responses form the statistics in Table 2 below that was useful in explaining the influence of transactional leadership style on employee engagement in Marsabit county.

Table 3: Transactional Leadership

Transactional Leadership Indicators	Mean	Stdev
My leader provides supports in exchange for my efforts	3.45	1.508
My leader at work place expresses pleasure when I meet up expectations	3.27	1.421
My leader waits for things to go wrong before acting	3.67	1.286
My leader demonstrates that problems must become chronic before acting	3.28	.982
My leader focuses attention on irregularities, mistakes, exceptions and deviations from standards	3.48	1.214
My leader directs my attention towards failures to meet standards	4.00	1.000
My leader concentrates his/her full attention on dealing with mistakes, complaints and failure.	4.00	.894
Average Transactional Leadership	**3.59**	**1.186**

The results show that respondents slightly agreed that leaders in Marsabit county provide support in exchange for efforts of the employees. This evident from the mean of 3.45 (Std dev = 1.508). Ariussanto et al (2020) explain that transaction leadership is dependent on 'trade' between followers and leaders where the followers get compensated for attaining goals or achieving targets of performance. The respondents also agreed that their leaders wait for things to go wrong before acting as shown by the mean of 3.67 (Std dev = 1.286). The respondents also agreed that leaders in Marsabit county direct attention towards failures to meet standards. This is supported by the mean of 4.00 (Std dev = 1.000).

Further, respondents also agreed that leaders in Marsabit county concentrate their full attention on dealing with failure, mistakes, and complaints. This is supported by the mean of 4.00 (Std dev = 0.894). Bass (1990) identified the transactional leadership style as that focuses on the achievement of project team's tasks. The members of the project team are motivated through contingent rewards for targets met while mistakes are punished through withholding rewards. However, there was some slightly agreement that leaders focus on irregularities and deviation from standards as supported by the mean of 3.48 (Std dev = 1.214). The main component of transactional leadership is the managerial activity of setting goals, consistent follow up and monitoring of progress towards achieving a goal, punishment and reward for the level of achieving the goal (Teshome, 2020).

The descriptive statistics did not provide any evidence to suggest that leaders in Marsabit county express pleasure when employees meet up expectations. This is supported by the mean of 3.27 (Std dev = 1.427). Further, no evidence was found to suggest that leaders in Marsabit county demonstrate that problems must become chronic before acting on them. This evident from the mean of 3.28 (Std dev =0.982). Bass (1990) argued that transactional leaders apply management by exception through taking of corrective actions whenever tasks do not follow the critical path that is planned. Some forms of transactional leadership lead to mediocrity whenever there is application

The general average of 3.59 provides significant statistical evidence to show transactional leadership style in Marsabit county. The standard deviation of 1.186 further indicate that the responses did not differ greatly. Ariussanto et al (2020) in a study on 'leadership style, employee engagement and work environment to employee performance in manufacturing companies' found that transactional leadership had a significant influence on work environment and employee engagement.

Inferential Statistics

The study conducted inferential analysis regression, analysis of variance, and correlation analysis to determine the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variables.

Correlation Analysis

Pearson correlation coefficient (r) was used to determine the relationship, the direction of the relationship as well as the magnitude as proposed by Yount (2006).

Table 4: Coefficient of Correlation

Variables		EE	TSLS	TCLS
Employee Engagement	Pearson Correlation	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)			
	N	111		
Transformational Leadership	Pearson Correlation	.424**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001		
	N	111		
Transactional Leadership	Pearson Correlation	-.343**	. 423	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.007	
	N	111	111	

According to findings shown in Table 4 there is a significant positive correlation between transformational leadership style and employee engagement as depicted by a correlation value (r = 0.424, p-value = 0.001). However, the association is weak since r = 0.424 nears zero than 1. The study also found a significant negative weak correlation between Transactional Leadership style and employee Engagement (r = -0.343, p-value = 0.001). The findings are also in line with Breyah and Damoah (2016) who found a significant negative association between transactional leadership style and employee engagement. The negative association means as transaction leadership style is used, then employee engagement is reduced and vice versa.

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was carried out to estimate the robustness of the model and its fitness. The assumption at least one of the study variables is fit in explaining the change in employee engagement if the F-calculated is significant i.e. less than 0.05. from Table 5 below, the value for F-calculated (4, 106) was 16.731 and the F-critical is 2.457. Thus, F-calculated is greater than the F-critical, besides, the P-value was 0.000 which is less than the significant level of 0.05. This implies that the model was a good fit for the data hence can be used to show the impact of independent variables (Transformational Leadership Style, Transactional Leadership Style) on the dependent variable (Employee Engagement).

Table 5: Analysis of Variance

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
	Regression	442.039	4	110.510	16.731	.000[b]
1	Residual	700.13	106	6.605		
	Total	1142.169	110			

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Engagement

b. Predictors: (Constant), Transformational Leadership Style, Transactional Leadership Style,

Having found that F (4, 106) being significant (P-value = 0.000<0.05) that means at least one of the independent variables (Transformational Leadership Style, Transactional Leadership Style) is fit in explaining the change in employee engagement in Marsabit county. Thus, the variables were regressed.

Regression Analysis

According to Paul (2016), regression analysis helps one, understand how a typical value of a dependent variable or criterion variable changes when any one of the independent variables is varied, while the other independent variables are held fixed. Results from the ANOVA test in

4.6.3. showed that, at least one of the predictor variables in: (Transformational Leadership Style, Transactional Leadership Style) is significant and fit to estimate the Engagement of employees in Marsabit county. Thus, Multiple regression was carried out to determine relationship of the study model by predicting the Dependent variable in terms of the independent variables. Table 6 below shows the value for the coefficients.

Table 6: Regression Results

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	11.970	4.265		2.806	.006
Transformational Leadership Style	.048	.088	.090	.547	.031
Transactional Leadership Style	-.122	.131	-.079	-.931	.014

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Engagement

The regression results show that the constant for the study model was 11.970, the beta values for Transaction Leadership (β = 0.048, p-value = 0.031); Transactional Leadership Style (β= -0.122, p-value = 0.014). The Beta values for the study variable (Transformational Leadership Style) was positive but Transactional Leadership Style which was depicting a negative influence on Employee Engagement. All the variables were significant i.e. their p-values were less than 0.05. All the Beta values for the study variables were positive. The results also show that Transformational Leadership Style has the most influence on Employee Engagement in Marsabit county with standardized Beta 0.090, while Transactional Leadership style has the least influence on Employee engagement (standardized beta -0.079).

The model can thus be fitted as follows:

$$EE = 11.970 + 0.048\,TSL - 0.122TCLS + \varepsilon \ldots\ldots (ii)$$

Model summary

The coefficient of determination (r) was used to show the variation of the dependent variable (Employee Engagement) that can be explained by the independent variables (Transformational Leadership, and Transactional Leadership). The R squared was 0.387 and this implied that 38.7% of the dependent variable (Employee Engagement) could be explained by independent variables (Transformational Leadership and Transactional Leadership). Thus, leadership styles can only explain 38.7% of employee engagement in Marsabit county.

Table 7: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.0.622[a]	0.387	0.364	4.51264

a. Predictors: (Constant), Transformational Leadership, Transactional Leadership

Conclusion

Transformation Leadership has a positive significant influence on Employee engagement in Marsabit county. The study also confirms the findings of Ali et al (2016), and Breynha and Damoah (2016) who found significant influence of transformational leadership style on employee engagement. Transformation leadership style triggers ideas that stimulate team members'

initiatives and inspires motivation that is unusual which enhance productivity. They treat people with dignity and respect, they trust people and delegate responsibilities in order to assist in getting tasks accomplished in attainment of goals. These leaders have the willingness for stimulating and creating learning experiences to their followers through delegations and treating each individual uniquely. They offer inspiration to others to try new ways of things i.e. to be innovative and creative.

Transactional leadership has a significant negative influence on employee engagement in Marsabit county. The study also concurs with the findings of Breyah and Damoah (2016) who found a negative significant association between transaction leadership and employee engagement. However, the findings were contrary to Ariussanto et al (2020) in a study on 'leadership style, employee engagement and work environment to employee performance in manufacturing companies' who found that transactional leadership had a significant positive influence on work environment and employee engagement." Transactional leaders use threats and disciplinary measures to bring performance to standards. It is believed these measures are ineffective and counterproductive in the long term. transactional leader stresses the need to achieve goals at all cost. Transactional leaders have the traits of charismatic leaders and effective in creating motivated teams. They are experts in making deals that motivate and are beneficial to organizations though their biggest challenge is about sustainability.

Recommendations

The county government of Marsabit to ensure that it is rich with all leadership styles to improve on engagement of employees and improve productivity. Over reliance on autocratic leadership yields low productivity as employees feel unsecured and they cannot do anything unless they are directed. Though transformation leaders are good in motivating of employees, most of the time employees take advantage of that style to underperform knowing that the leader is understanding. Finally, a further study on the subject is needed especially in the county governments to understand the trend of leadership and their influence on employee engagement and productivity.

Suggestion for further study

In this study, leadership styles were limited to transformational, and transactional styles. The study established that the aforementioned styles only explain 38.7% of change in employee engagement. Thus, there are other factors beyond this study that account for the variation in employee engagement. With that in mind, the researcher recommends a similar study in a different county to ascertain the influence of leadership styles on employee engagement; a study with other leadership styles that were beyond this study.

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