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Conceptual Review on the Role of Leadership Style on Employee Motivation and Retention in an Organisation

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Abstract:
Organizations are very complex systems composed of many different levels of analysis including human activities. Likewise motivation as a tool of retaining dedicated employee for optimum performance. However, this cannot be achieved without a cogent Leadership style. The objective of this paper is to examine the concept of transformational leadership in terms of motivation and retention of employees' as a combined construct considering job engagement and employee satisfaction towards subordinate performance. The paper is a purely literary or library-based research work. Hence, its data are obtained from secondary sources only: textbooks, journals, reports, research thesis, project works among others. The findings of study established positive relationship between the twins constructs of Motivation and Retention with Transformational leadership style utilizing employee engagement and job satisfaction. The study can be replicated through survey research where data can be obtained in the field and analyzed to ascertain its validity to stand the test of time.

Keywords: Employee engagement, job satisfaction, motivation, retention, transformational leadership

1. Introduction

According to Chatura, (2018) Organizations are highly complex systems composed of many different levels of analysis including human activities. Therefore, the need to examine these human behavioral patterns and their possible implications to aid the development of any organization can be considered vital to all concerned.

Employee motivation is one of the complex phenomena, with individual differences, perception, needs, desires, motivation too differs base on individualism.

Be that as it might, Creating and maintaining a sustainable organization require an understanding of the role of leadership in harnessing and addressing the aims and objective of employees. This may include 'Happiness and Contentment' also meaningful life and subjective well-being is of utmost concern for all organizations. Meaningful life makes one's life purposeful and subjective well-being is about being happy; these are important dimensions of everyone's life, and people expect work organizations to contribute toward that effect.

To realize these objectives, leadership plays a critical role in that direction, hence, the styles of leadership exhibited by the leader determine to the large extend the commitment of the employee to the organization. This is in consonant to the study conducted by Nwokocha & Iheriohanma (2015) the study reveals that when management styles are considered repugnant by the subordinates, they undermine employees' performance and instigate their propensity to quit the organization, and vice versa. Therefore, the amelioration of growth within the business organizations requires a clear adoption of methods that can effectively attract efficient people and can be effectively retained as well (Chitra, N., & Munivenkatappa 2017). This means Leadership style is a powerful weapon that can be used to win the war of talents as well as their retention in order to reduce or avoid costs associated with replacing the employee. In this context, studies show that employees do not solely leave the organization; they rather leave poor leadership styles instead. This implies that there is a positive relationship between poor leadership style and employee sense of remorse towards the organization and eventually intention to leave the organization.

Against this backdrop, this study seeks to investigate the effect of leadership style to be adopted that will trigger employee motivation consequently their retention in an organization. Employee turnover are a costly phenomenon for any type of business and organizations ought to avoid it through improving employee retention (Hardy et al., 2010; Amankwaa & Anku-Tsede, 2015; Murari, 2015; Scully, 2015 in Udovita, 2020). This can be through appropriate leadership

style as argued by Ng'ethe, Namusonge & Iravo (2012) that, the role of leaders and their leadership styles are crucial in employee retention.

This assertion was based on the assumption that leadership style can either motivate or discourage employee base performance and the propensity for their retention in the organization (Rochelle, 2012).

However, to achieve the above objectives, this paper tries to examine the role of leadership style towards employee motivation as well as their retention in an organizational set-up.

The paper will be restricted on the overview of the Full Range Leadership Style with emphasis on the Transformational leadership style towards employee motivation and retention. The paper is a purely literary or library-based research work; thereby only secondary sources will be utilized.

1.1. Purpose of the Study

Significant number of studies have been conducted on leadership style by various scholars and writers; (Babatunde, 2015; Iqbal, Anwar & Haider, 2015; Mohammed, Yusuf, Sanni, Ifeyinwa, Bature, & Kazeem, 2014; Zumitzavan & Udchachone, 2014; Paracha, et al., 2012), however, due high pressure on businesses, the long working hours, stress, employees' lack of commitment, job dissatisfaction and high employee turnover in most of the organizations have intensified the need for effective leadership (Udovita, 2020). He further said, to maintain organizational growth and achieve higher objectives, the top management in the organizations needs to understand the problems and make strategies to satisfy, retain, and motivate employees to exert extra efforts. In a related development, a study conducted by Adeniji, Salau, Awe, & Oludayo, (2020) on the Leadership dimensions, employee engagement and job performance, he pointed out that the problems associated with performance in Nigeria apart from the dearth of supportive infrastructural facilities, it is still leadership dilemma bothering on deficient strategies in stakeholders' relationship management, which equally affect performance.

The Full Range of Leadership (FRL) model developed by Bass and Avolio (1994) stated that, the most effective leadership styles are transformational and transactional leadership styles, if adopted collectively, it will motivate subordinates, influence their behaviors and attitudes consequently improved performance and productivity. This leadership approach was referred as the - New Leadership. Consequently, due the organizational environmental changes and workforce, formed the need for leaders to become more transformational and less transactional if they were to remain effective (Bass, 1999). A similar conclusion has been made by Lai, Tang, Lu, Lee, & Lin, (2020) that transformational leadership are more likely to immerse themselves in the work, and, in turn, this is likely to result in better task performance and helping behaviours.

Interpersonal leadership (IL) is a relatively new term in the leadership literature, which has emerged as a higher order concept of transformational leadership (TL) combining the characteristics of Transformational Leadership and interactional justice (IJ) (Hansen, Byrne, & Kiersch, 2014). Both TL and IL are considered strong motivational tools for employee performance, as these leaders possessing these qualities are blessed with strong motivational abilities that positively influence their followers toward their vision for the future (Hansen et al., 2014)

Whereas, of recent researchers have been trying to explore and explain the transformational leadership in terms of its behavioural characteristics and consequences since its introduction (Habib, Awan, Naveed, & Akhtar 2020; Lin, Scott, & Matta, 2019). But the process as to how transformational leaders' influences subordinates and the followers react to their specific behaviour's needs further investigation (Habib, et al., 2020; Choi, Kim, Ullah, & Kang, 2016, 2017). Moreover, in determining the most effective and valuable leadership style writers came up with different dimension utilizing series of mediators/moderators to ascertain the best leadership style to be adopted. The common variables used include motivation, employee satisfaction, job engagement, commitment, organizational policy, performance, productivity among others, (Rafia, 2020; Akram and Chung, 2020). Most of these research/studies focused/used these variables as either mediator/moderator; however, none has studied motivation and retention as a composite construct and established its linkages with leadership style to enhance performance/productivity, hence the focal point of this study.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Organisational Behaviour

In organizational psychology, Complexity Leadership has thus emerged as one of the top leadership theories of the modern age (e.g., Bezler, Moneta, & Pheiffer, 2019; Dinh, Lord, Gardner, Meuser, Liden, & Hu, 2014). It has also become a complex and unpredictable area of concern despite several studies conducted across developed and developing countries (Babatunde, 2015; Iqbal, et al., 2015; Mohammed, et al., 2014; Paracha, et al., 2012; Zumitzavan & Udchachone, 2014) as cited by (Udovita 2020). This can also be associated with the differences in perception, setting and culture. Leadership is not the same thing across cultures (Bhagat & Steers, 2009) and leadership styles may be perceived differently in different settings Udovita (2020).

However, several theoretical concepts have been postulated and utilised concerning leadership styles. Prominent among them are the traits approach, the situational concepts, combinational concepts and contingency concepts approach. This paper will adopt the Full Range Leadership Model with emphasis on Transformational Concept.

Leadership has been considered vital and a focused area of study in present day organizational view, and also a topic of an academic research. Moreover, an area that no organization can function effectively without, this can easily be attributed to the fact that the need for efficiency in service delivery and organizational productivity is taking the Centre stage globally (Schwartz, 2019).

However, despite the challenges Leadership can be viewed as a prerequisite and a source of inspiration in every human endeavor. This could also be clearly deduced from the large number of studies that had concentrated on this area. From trait theory, through human relations school of thought, to contingency and or situational leadership research (Amankwaa & Anku-Tsede, 2015). However, as observed, still very little is known about leadership and much remain unexplained (Avolio, Walumbwa & Weber, 2009).

Early studies of leadership attempted in identifying the unique traits of leaders, based on the assumption that some people are 'born to be leaders' (Mohammed, et al. 2014). But recent studies show that leaders are rather made, developed to curtail, implement required skills and techniques under whatever situation to achieve an organizational goal without necessarily dislocating the positive motive of the employee (Vince Lombardi as cited in Schwartz, 2019). However, it's increasingly evident that the effectiveness of certain methods or styles differs based on the nature, activities and individuals involved.

Thus, leadership is generally defined simply as the art of influencing people so that they will strive willingly towards the achievement of common goals. This concept can be enlarging to include not only willingness to work but zeal and confidence (Ibrahim & Daniel, 2019). Sow, Ntamon, & Osuoha, (2016) also assert that leadership is the 'ability to persuade others willingly to behave differently'. While at organizational level, leadership concept can be considered as a managerial function, that play the role of directing the employees in one immediate chain of command and control toward the accomplishment of work activities (Osabiya & Ikenga 2015). Jagun (2015)) argue that leadership is a relationship which prevails by which a single person is capable to affect the behaviour of other people in which the leader is capable to utilize their human influence in order to make people obtain targeted goals. Leader motivates employees and motivated employees does not only increase his or her job performance and commitment within an organization, but also goes beyond the job requirements thus increasing the organization's general performance and making it more profitable (NawoseIng'ollan & Roussel, 2017). This implies that in the context of organization, leadership is all about motivating employees to put their best in attaining best outcomes or desired organizational goals (Sow, et. al., 2016). Schwartz also emphasized that, leadership is critical in determining the conduct of employees in attaining the goals of an organization. This is essential because the degree of leader's effectiveness will play a significant role not only in the organizational productivity but also in shaping the employees' sense of responsibility toward organizational commitment in coping with work environment complexity in this ever-evolving world of business (Schwartz, 2019).

2.2. Leadership Style and Its Effects on Employee Motivation and Retention

Several theoretical concepts have been postulated and utilised concerning leadership styles and its effects on employee performance, however, Burns, (1978) and Bass (1985) developed the transformational leadership theory, based on the assumption that people are not only motivated by instrumental motivation, but also by such factors as the need for self-actualization and belonging. The theory describes two leadership patterns: transformational and transactional leadership. The former focuses on instilling belief in one's ability and on generating positive emotions. The latter grants followers' rewards that satisfy immediate personal interests (Bass, 1999). Bass and Avolio (1994) developed the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) to measure the full range of leadership. It covers three leadership styles: transactional, transformational, and laissez-faire leadership. The full-range leadership model permits observation across the entire spectrum of behaviour's that can be expected from leaders (Bass and Avolio, 1990, 1994).

2.3. Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership was first conceptualised by James Macgregor Burns in 1978 as cited in (Nwokocha & Iheriohanma, 2015). Warrilow (2012) defined transformational leadership as the leadership that generates positive change for followers by taking care of one another's interests and acting in the interests of the whole group. Transformational leadership is the leader's ability to motivate followers to rise above their own personal goals for the greater good of the organisation (Bass, 1985, 1996). Bass (1985) theorised the transformational style of leadership that comes from deeply held personal values which cannot be negotiated and appeals to the subordinates' sense of moral obligation and values, as cited by (Chan, 2005). 'Transformational leaders go beyond transactional leadership and are characterised as visionary, articulate, assured, and able to engender confidence in others so as to motivate them to surpass their usual performance goals' (Schwarzwald, Koslowsky & Agassi, 2001). Also, there are four components of transformational leadership that are prescribed by scholars. These are: charismatic, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration (Bass, 1990 cited in Obiwuru, Okwu, Akpa. & Nwankwere, 2011).
Bushra, Ahmad and Asvir (2011) in Nwokocha & Iheriohanma, (2015), in their contribution, explain that modern leaders perfectly adopt an attitude that supports employees, provide them a vision, cultivate hope, encourage them to think innovatively, individualised consideration and broaden the communication. They describe all these factors as the main features of transformational leadership style leading to boost up organisational strengths and increasing level of job satisfaction and organisational commitment in workforce.

2.4. Transactional Leadership Style

Transactional leadership style on the other hand, is also known as organizational management, which tends to focus on supervisory, organizational and group performance roles (Moses, 2018). It can be described as a leadership style that encourages its followers' adherence through rewards and penalties (Adeniji et al., 2018; Odumeru & Ifeanyi, 2013). This may include among others, promotion, increase in wages, bonus/allowances, performance reviews, new responsibilities and so forth. Ojokuku, Odetayo & Sajuyigbe 2012, defined transactional leadership as the exchange of targets and rewards between the management and the employees. Alan (2013) as cited in Nwokocha & Iheriohanma,

(2015) sees transactional leadership as involving the organisation paying team members in return for their efforts and compliance. He posits that in this leadership style, the leader possesses the right to 'punish' team members if their works do not meet an appropriate standard. The transactional leadership style is an exchange process based on the fulfillment of contractual obligations.

2.5. Laissez-Faire Leadership Style

Gopal and Chowdhury (2014) stated that laissez-faire leadership is a separate type of leadership where employees are fully responsible for determining their goals, making decisions and also resolving problems on their own. This is also defined as non-leadership or the most passive leadership, since all authority or power is given to the employees and they must determine goals, make decisions, and resolve problems on their own (Swarup, 2013; as cited by Nwokocha & Iheriohanma, 2015). This leadership style is most likely to be effective when Individual team members are experienced, highly skilled, trustworthy, motivated and capable of working on their own.

2.6. The Conceptual Research Framework

The frame work use to show the hierarchical relationships progressing across groups of activities or information's to a desire state depicting starting point to a targeted destination. Hence, effective and efficient performance from employees, transformational leadership will be considered utilizing employee engagement by putting square peg in a square hole thereby making the employees having job satisfaction, this could lead employee's motivation, thereby dedication level of such employees invariably their retention with the consequential effect of tremendous performance.

2.7. Link between Leadership Motivation and Retention

To synthesis the literature discussed above, motivation is a fundamental instrument for regulating the work behaviour of employees (Olusola 2011). Also, the quality of Leader's relationship with an employee can also be considered as the most powerful element of employee motivation. It creates a professional, positive and respectful attitude and employees are more likely to adopt a similar approach at their work environment.

Nevertheless, in retaining valued and talented employees in organizations, the leadership styles of leaders are critical. This is posited on the fact that when leadership style of an organization is admired and considered favourable by the subordinates, it will endear them to be committed to the organization, thereby enhancing productivity, consequently their retention in the organization. Likewise, if the leadership styles of these leaders are viewed negatively by the subordinates, it will provoke their propensity to quit the organization (Nwokocha & Iheriohanma, 2015).

Many researchers have considered the well-being of people only from one perspective the (economic point of view). However, Rezvani (2016) found that providing right direction is the major factor in the increase of the well-being of employees. Nonetheless, Hu et al. (2007) stated that mental health is not the components of the well-being; it is the basis for better perception of other elements leading to it. Be that as it might, researchers consider the drivers of well-being, such perspective can be considered as a positive, as social life satisfaction became paramount.

Motivation to work; be it intrinsic or extrinsic, is critical in the lives of employees, because it forms the basis for working in life (Ololube 2006). Intrinsic motivation is regulated by personal enjoyment, interest or pleasure (Lai 2011) and it involves the performance of an activity for the inherent satisfaction of an activity. Extrinsic motivation refers to doing something because it is inherently stimulating or enjoyable (Ryan & Deci 2000).

Consequently, successful organizations use varied and positive strategies to motivate their employees to be able to compete in this global competitive terrain. It is against this backdrop that Manzoor (2011) reveals that if employees of an organization are not motivated to perform their duties, no organization can prosper or achieve success.

However, employee turn-over is costly to organizations, these might include expenses associated with new recruitment, training and other negative consequences such as increased workload on remaining employees, lowered moral, loss of intellectual capital, and loss of productivity. Conversely, successful employee retention improves sales, market value, profitability and customer services (Tlou, 2012). However, influencing employees' decision to remain committed and passionate within the organization even when other job opportunities exist outside the organization is the passive responsibility of the leaders/leadership style and sources of concern to any organization. It has been argued by Ng'ethe et al., (2012) that the role of leaders and their leadership styles are crucial in employee retention.

Despite the above mentioned variables (Motivation and Retention) as a tool and a sources of improve performance by leaders (Transformational Leadership), issues associate with job satisfaction and employee engagement can also be considered vital means of motivation as can be seen from the results of previous studies conducted (Rafia, Sudiro & Sunaryo, 2020; Prabowo, Noermijati, and Wirawan, 2018; Platis, Reklitis, and Zimeras 2015; Yang and Hwang 2014; Fu and Deshpande 2013; Miao and Kim 2010) & (Rafia et al. 2020; Alagaraja and Shuck 2015; Bedarkar and Pandita 2014; Anitha, 2013) all cited in (Rafia et al. 2020). Job satisfaction by perception is a pleasant or unpleasant emotional state in an employee looking at one's work compared to employee general performance (Prabowo et al. 2018). Whereas employee engagement, according to Anitha, (2013), can be regarded as a kind of commitment ones have and total involvement of an employee to the organization and its values.

When an employee is involved, aware of his responsibilities and the goals/objectives of the organization (Job Engagement) the feelings of belongings (Satisfaction) become apparent hence, a strong motivation consequently the employee retention in the organization. This is in consonant to the concept of We in an organization, as the concept was initially introduced by Kahn (1990), who presented it as a combination of the ideas of Maslow (1954) and Alderfer (1969). According to him, the engagement theory postulates that people require self-expression and self-employment in their work lives (Frey, 2019; Costantini, De Paola, Ceschi, Sartori, Meneghini, & Di Fabio, .2017; Tamta& Rao, 2017; in Habib, et

al., 2020). When the work of the author, Habib, et al., (2020) was reviewed it was discovered that' WE' involves high levels of personal investment in tasks (Newton, LePine, Kim, Wellman, & Bush,.2020) and mainly comprises enthusiasm, involvement, meaningfulness, and energy (Mostafa, & Abed El-Motalib, 2020; Newton et al., 2020; Chaudhary & Akhouri, 2019; Liu, Ye, & Guo, 2019; Costantini et al., 2017: all in Habib, et al., 2020).

3. Methodology

The researcher adopted a deductive approach where the explanations and arguments are supported by empirical evidences and associated theories. The paper is literally, a desk top analysis, relying on literature review as the main research tools, having brows some articles/ journals related to the topic under investigation, it becomes necessary to relate the two together (Motivation and Retention) in relation to employee performance-based leadership style to determine relationships.

This paper sought to examine: - factors to be considered relevant that will engender employee motivation and retention in an organization which is employee engagement and job satisfaction and its relationship with leadership style hence, increase employee performance.

The main objective of the paper is to determine if leadership style has any impact on employee's motivation as well as their retention in an organization consequently employee performance.

4. Discussion

A lot of research conducted has indicated a positive relationship between leadership styles particularly, transformational leadership and employees' performance through various variables including motivation, retention, engagement and employee satisfaction as captured in this study. However, some studies have also considered the importance of interactional justice as a mediator or moderator toward organizational performance and effectiveness. For instance, Carter et al. (2014) established the relationship between transformational leadership and organizational citizenship behaviour through interactional justice. Similarly, Gillet, Fouquereau, Bonnaud-Antignac, Mokounkolo, & Colombat, (2013) linked transformational leadership with the quality of work-life and engagement through interactional justice. Recently, Singhry (2018) has also studied the mediating effect of organizational justice in the relationship between transformational leadership and employee job satisfaction and found a positive effect. These studies suggest that combining the two concepts (transformational leadership and interactional justice) can be helpful for administrators to effectively resolve multiple employees' related issues. They also assume the relationship between the two concepts as useful in raising the employees' level of achievement, commitment, growth, intellectual ability, working life, and service delivery.

In the same vein, employee engagement and employee satisfaction has been strongly considered by various writers as a means of employee motivation which invariably led to retention and enhanced performance in organization (Akram & Juan, 2020; Iqbal, 2015; Rafia, et al., 2020;)

However, despite the significance of the concept of transformational leadership in terms of motivation and retention of employees' considering job engagement and employee satisfaction needs further study. As it can provide a useful framework for leaders to exercise and expect better results in terms of engagement, satisfaction, and retention and employee general performance.

Even though this article is purely a desk-top research analysis, the study can be replicated through survey research where data can be obtained in the field and analyzed to ascertain its validity to stand the test of time.

5. Conclusion/Recommendation

The values and other indices that exit in organizations can have significant effects on employees, same as combining the twin's variables (Motivation and Retention) as a tool to Transformational Leadership utilizing employee job engagement and employee satisfaction as a mediating/moderating can engender employee performance/ productivity in an organization.

Therefore, studying this topic as a combined construct with the aforementioned variables through survey or case study leading to collation and analysis of data in the field will either support/disagree or the findings be modified, hence, adding value to the body of knowledge.

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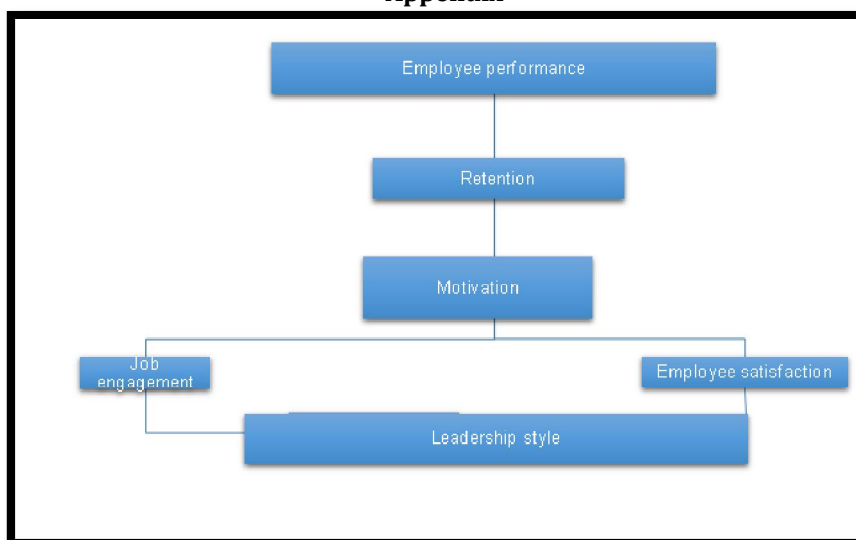
Appendix

Figure 1: Representing the Study Conceptual Frame-Work