

ASSESSING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LEADERSHIP STYLES AND EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION IN THE TANZANIAN PUBLIC SECTOR

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Article Info

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Abstract

This research study aims to explore the relationship between leadership styles and job satisfaction in the Tanzania public sector. Leadership has long been a subject of interest among scholars, who have sought to understand its effectiveness and the best approaches to leading people. Although various theories and perspectives on leadership have emerged, a universally accepted definition remains elusive. However, it is widely agreed that leadership involves the influence a leader has on their followers in achieving common goals. Furthermore, the choice of leadership styles within an organization significantly impacts the attainment of organizational goals and objectives. Effective leadership styles have been found to influence employee job satisfaction, stress levels, commitment, and productivity.

This study emphasizes the importance of positive relationships between leaders and their employees in achieving organizational success and recognition. Poor performance in many organizations has been attributed to ineffective leadership styles chosen by managers. Employees who are dissatisfied with their jobs are more likely to leave, leading to reduced productivity and efficiency. Therefore, selecting the appropriate leadership style is crucial for increasing job satisfaction among employees.

The Tanzania public sector has undergone several reforms aimed at improving public service delivery. To ensure the sector meets citizens' expectations, it is vital to enhance job satisfaction among public servants, as it directly impacts their performance and the overall organizational performance. Unfortunately, job satisfaction levels among staff in the Tanzania public sector have been consistently low and unsatisfactory, resulting in a high turnover rate. Therefore, this study seeks to uncover the relationship between leadership styles and job satisfaction within the context of the Tanzania public sector.

By examining this relationship, the findings of this study will provide insights and recommendations to enhance leadership practices and improve job satisfaction in the Tanzania public sector. This research contributes to the existing body of knowledge on leadership and its

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impact on employee satisfaction, particularly within the context of the public sector. The results will have practical implications for organizations aiming to optimize their leadership approaches to foster a positive work environment and increase employee retention and productivity.

1. Introduction

For decades, scholars have been developing interest in researching on leadership and leadership styles. Evolution of leadership theories shows a trend which proves that leadership scholars have been searching for what makes leadership effective and the best way of leading people. Although leadership theorists have presented leadership in different and contradicting perspectives, there is consensus that there is no single best way of leading people. As much as theorists present contradicting views on leadership, one acceptable definition of leadership has yet to be made. Bass (1981) argued that there are almost as many different definitions of leadership as there are persons who have attempted to define the concept. With difficultness in defining the concept, many scholars associate leadership with the influence that a person (leader) has to his/her followers in achieving common goals. Similarly, Koontz and O'Donnell (1984) regard leadership as a process that involves skills to influence others to strive towards achieving group goals. Consequently, achievement of organizational goals and objectives is a function of leaders and leadership styles exercised in a particular organization. By adopting the appropriate leadership styles, leaders are capable of affecting level of job satisfaction of employees, stress level, commitment and their productivity as well (Mwakasangula & Mwita, 2020; Voon, Lo, Ngui, & Ayob, 2011). Leadership is very important in the success of organisations in any industry. This entails that having a positive relationship between leaders and their people in an organisation is vital to ensure the organization gets better turnover and recognition (Nidadhavolu, 2018). Poor performance of many organizations has been linked to leadership styles that managers choose to use. It is believed that organizations with employees who feel unsatisfied with their jobs tend to lose employees who are productive and efficient. Moreover, one of the ways that may effectively help managers to increase job satisfaction among their employees is to ensure they use the right leadership style (Long, Yusuf, Kowang, & Heng, 2014). Arguably, leadership can be one of the reasons which may make an employee leave or stay in an organization (Mwita & Mwakasangula, 2018). Tanzania public sector has been undergoing various reforms from time to time with the focus of improving public service delivery (Lufunyo, 2013). To make sure that quality of service provided by the public sector meets citizens' expectations, it is important to make sure that public servants attain sufficient level of job satisfaction. This is because of the link that exists between employee job satisfaction on one side and employee and organizational performance on another side. Surprisingly, job satisfaction levels of staff in the Tanzania public sector are generally low and unsatisfactory (Jonathan, Darroux, & Massele, 2013; Mollel Eliphas, Mulongo, & Razia, 2017; Mwita & Andrea, 2019). This is proved by the fact that many public organizations are experiencing high rate of employees' turnover. Against this backdrop, it was necessary to conduct this study to unfold the relationship between leadership styles and job satisfaction in Tanzania public sector.

1.1. Research Hypotheses

The study intended to test the following null hypotheses:

HO1: There is no significant statistical relationship between transformational leadership style and job satisfaction in Tanzania public sector

HO2: There is no significant statistical relationship between transactional leadership style and job satisfaction in Tanzania public sector.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Definition of Key Concepts

2.1.1. Leadership

Although leadership has been universally desired, defining it has never been an easy thing to do (Klingborg, Moore, & Varea-Hammond, 2006). Although it seems difficult to define leadership, it does not mean that there

should be no definition for it. Leadership is the process of influencing others to achieve certain goals which normally goes with decisions on allocation and utilization of other resources. Most leadership experts agree that leadership has to do with an influence that leaders have and use it to inspire their followers to act and behave in a manner that produces positive outcomes including achievement of group goals (Antonakis, Cianciolo, & Sternberg, 2004). This article defines leadership as a process of influencing and inspiring followers to willingly use their knowledge, skills and expertise to achieve group or organisational goals.

2.2. Leadership Style

DuBrin (2001) defined leadership style as the relatively consistent pattern of behavior that characterizes a leader. This entails that consistent actions, thoughts and beliefs of leaders are what create leadership styles. Different writers have categorized leadership into various styles. As far as organizational leadership is considered, the most cited leadership styles are transformational and transactional style.

2.3. Transformational Leadership

Transactional leadership has to do with an inspiration that leaders create to their followers and as the result followers are influenced to act, behave and think in a manner that can help organizations to achieve their goals (Robbins, Judge, & Sanghi, 2009). Transformational leadership does not focus on what organizations and leaders provide as incentives for performance; rather, on creating an environment that inspires workers to use their potentials for betterment of organizational performance (Conger, 2002). The transformational leaders always look for motives and potentials that their followers have and transform them for superior individual and organizational performance (Korejan & Shahbazi, 2016). Moreover, Ghadi, Fernando, and Caputi (2013) opined that transformational leadership contains main facets which are idealized, inspirational, intellectual and empowerment. *Idealized influence* has to do with an ability that leaders have to help their followers to become more loyal and dedicated without focusing on the self-interest. *Inspirational motivation* on the other hand, refers to an ability of leaders in creating a vision which encourages their followers to impactful in their organisations. *Intellectual stimulation* has to do with an ability that leaders have to enhance innovativeness among their followers and make them risk takers. *Empowerment* involves an ability of leaders to coordinate well with their subordinates or creating top-down motivation for authority. This can be done by empowering the subordinates and giving them authority to make decisions.

2.4. Transactional Leadership

Transactional leadership relates to exchange relationship that exists between a leader and his or her followers. A leader rewards and punishes his or her followers in exchange of actions, behaviours and performance they offer. Transactional leadership can be demonstrated through supervision to ensure that employees meet expected standards. Through transactional leadership, leaders make sure followers comply through by either rewarding or punishing them (Odumeru & Ogbonna, 2013).

Bass and Riggio (2006) argues that transitional leadership has three main facets which are contingent reward, management-by-exception and laissez-faire leadership. *Contingent reward* is realized when leaders offer their followers incentives for efforts that followers demonstrate in relation to achievement of organizational goals. A leader who uses this kind of leadership agrees with his or her followers in advance on what is expected out of each part. *Management-by-exception* involves corrective criticism, negative feedback, and negative reinforcement. Management-by-exception may either be active or passive. A leader who uses active form looks for mistakes that followers make and takes corrective actions. On the other hand, a leader who uses passive form intervenes when followers have not met expected standards or when problems have arisen. *Laissez-faire* portrays a dominant role that a leader plays in the process of leading his or her followers since the decision making and other processes in an organization are entirely left to the followers.

2.5. Situational Leadership Theory

Prior to introduction of situational leadership models, management and leadership scholars used to believe that leaders' traits are the only determinants of successful leadership (Greenwood, 1996). Situational leadership theory changed what scholars and practitioners regard to be the leadership. Situational leadership relates to how leaders change their degree of supportiveness and defectiveness according to the given situation prevailing at a particular

moment and the motivation level of subordinates. Situational leadership theory was proposed by Hersey and Blanchard (1982) aiming at creating a theoretical framework for examining the leadership styles of managers. According to the theory, effective managers possess different styles that have to vary based on specific environmental variables encountered (Borget, 1986). The major three variables include: the amount of guidance and direction (*task behavior*) a leader gives, the amount of socio-emotional support (*relationship behavior*) a leader provides, and the readiness level that followers exhibit in performing a specific task, function or objective (Goodson, McGee, & Cashman, 1989). Further, the theory suggests that the use of a particular leadership style depends on maturity level of subordinates one is leading. The theory categorically identifies four levels of maturity that vary from M1 to M4. M1 includes subordinates who do not have sufficient knowledge, skills and willingness to perform tasks. M2 includes subordinates that are willing and enthusiastic but they lack an ability to perform tasks. M3 is a group of subordinates with skills and capability but are not willing to take responsibility. The last level which is M4 includes subordinates who are sufficiently skilled and are willing to complete their tasks.

According to the theory, in order to effectively lead these four groups, four leadership styles are needed. The first one is *telling* (S1) which implies telling people what and how to do. Another one is *selling* (S2) which requires leaders to sell (convince) their ideas to subordinates so that they can get involved in their tasks. The fourth style is *participating* (S3) which aims to let subordinates take an active role while a leader does less. The last style is *delegating* (S4) which allows followers to make most of the decisions and gives them autonomy in performing their tasks. To ensure appropriate use of these leadership styles, leaders are expected to use telling (S1) for M1, selling (S1) for M2, participating (S3) for M3 and delegating (S4) for M4.

2.6. Empirical Review

Jing and Avery (2008) argue that leadership is determined by different contexts. This entails that leaders have to be smart enough to understand a leadership style that suits particular people they are leading. Jerome (2018) investigated the relationship between leadership style and job satisfaction of library staff in Nigeria. The findings showed that the staff experienced low level of job satisfaction and it was realized that autocratic leadership style is more preferred than other styles. Further, the study found a positive significant relationship between leadership style and job satisfaction ($r = 0.028$, $p < 0.05$). The study of Voon et al. (2011) assessed the influence of leadership styles on employees' job satisfaction in public sector organizations in Malaysia. In their study, they examined how transactional and transformational leadership styles affect job satisfaction. The study found that transformational leadership style has a stronger relationship with job satisfaction. The study cited an implication that transformational leadership is deemed suitable for managing government organizations. A similar study was done by Idrus, Hamzah, Maupa, and Muis (2016) that assessed the effects of transformational leadership on job satisfaction of government employees in Indonesia. The study found a significant positive relationship between transformational leadership and job satisfaction. Long et al. (2014) assessed the impact of transformational leadership style on job satisfaction. Idealized influence, inspiration motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration were used as facets of transformational leadership. The study found that out of four characteristics of leadership, only individualized consideration was found to have significant relationship with job satisfaction. Also, Hanaysha et al. (2012) attempted to assess the characteristics of transformational leadership and how they affect job satisfaction of employees. The study revealed that individualized consideration and intellectual stimulation affect followers' job satisfaction. However, intellectual stimulation is positively related with job satisfaction and individualized consideration is negatively related with job satisfaction. Leader's charisma or inspiration was found to have no effect on the job satisfaction.

The literature informs that transformational leadership style is the most effective style when linked to job satisfaction in many cases. However, transformational leadership has been also seen to have a negative relationship with job satisfaction in some cases. Transactional leadership style has been also proven to be effective in some cases. This takes us to the general rule that there is no one perfect leadership style; hence, leadership is situational. Managers have to consider various circumstances when they decide on leadership style to use

including the nature of employees they are leading. This study attempted to address the relationship between leadership styles and job satisfaction in Tanzania particularly in public sector.

3. Materials and Methods

This study used Morogoro Municipal Council as a case study. The study had a population of 220 employees working for Morogoro Municipal Council Headquarters. The study intended to collect data from a total of 141 employees as per Taro Yamane formula ($n = N / 1 + N(e)^2$). From the formula, 'n' stands for sample size, 'N' stands for study population, and 'e' for acceptable sampling error. Simple random sampling technique was used to obtain a sample size of 141 respondents that was required for data collection as per the Yamane formula. A close ended questionnaire was distributed to 141 employees and 92 returned filled questionnaires. Therefore, the study attained a response rate of 65.3%. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2012), a response rate of 50% is adequate for analysis and reporting, a rate of 60% is generally good while a response rate of above 70% is excellent. This gives an implication that the study attained a good response rate for data analysis and reporting. The study involved both descriptive and inferential statistics.

Validity and reliability of research instrument were taken into consideration. Validity refers to the extent in which the concept in a study is accurately measured (Heale & Twycross, 2015). It describes how well one can legitimately trust the results of a test as interpreted for a specific purpose (Cook & Beckman, 2006). To ensure that the instrument is valid, 2 experts were given the instrument to examine whether it could capture the right information and whether it was fit for the study. The comments offered by the experts were used to improve the instrument. Moreover, a pilot study that included 15 respondents was carried out prior to an actual study. The study helped to improve some few questions in the questionnaire that were not easily understood by the respondents. Reliability denotes how consistent an instrument is (Heale & Twycross, 2015). If a measurement device or procedure consistently assigns the same score to individuals or objects with equal values, the instrument is considered to be reliable (Bajpai & Bajpai, 2014). To check for reliability, cronbach's alpha was calculated and the values were found to be 0.783 for transformational leadership, 0.872 for transactional leadership, and 0.792 for job satisfaction as summarized in Table 1. The literature informs that when *alpha* value is above or equal to 0.7, the instrument is reliable for data collection.

Table-1.

Coefficients of Cronbach's Alpha.

Variable	No. of items	Cronbach's Alpha
Transformational leadership	12	0.783
Transactional leadership	6	0.872
Job satisfaction	10	0.792

4. Study Findings

4.1. Demographic Data

Out of 92 respondents who were involved in this study, 47(51.1%) were males and 45(48.9%) were females. The study categorized respondents in four age categories. Those falling in 23-33 years were 66(71.1) which had majority of the respondents which implies that the study was dominated by young respondents. In a category of 34-44 years, there were 4 respondents (4.3%), the age of 16 respondents was between 45-55 years and 6 (6.5%) respondents were over 55 With regard to educational level, respondents 14 (15.2%) fell in the category of certificate level, 49 (53.3%) fell in diploma level, 27 (29.3%) in the bachelor's degree category and 2 (2.2%) in the postgraduate category. Table 2 below gives the summary of this information.

4.2. Descriptive Analysis

The study found that job satisfaction was average among the respondents with mean value of 3.04. Comparatively, transactional leadership mean value was higher (Mean=4.14) than that of transformational leadership (mean=3.28). Table 3 captures this information accordingly.

Table-2.

Demographic data.

Characteristic	Category	Frequency (%)
Gender	Male	47 (51.1%)
	Female	45 (48.9%)
Age	23-33 Years	66 (71.7%)
	34-44 Years	4 (4.3%)
	45-55 Years	16 (17.4%)
	Over 55 Years	6 (6.5%)
Education level	Certificate	14 (15.2%)
	Diploma	49 (53.3%)
	Bachelor's Degree	27 (29.3%)
	Postgraduate	2 (2.2%)

Source: Field Data (2021).

Table-3.

Descriptive statistics.

Variable	N	Mean
Transformational leadership	92	3.28
Transactional leadership	92	4.14
Job satisfaction	92	3.04

4.3. Correlation Analysis

4.3.1. Transformational Leadership and Job Satisfaction

The results in Table 4 shows that job satisfaction is positively correlated with affective commitment ($r = 0.219$, $p=0.036$). This means that there is sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis and conclude that transformational leadership has significant positive effect on job satisfaction. However, the relationship between transformational leadership and job satisfaction was found to be weak ($r=0.219$).

Table-4.

Correlation between transformational leadership and job satisfaction.

Variable		Transformational leadership	Job satisfaction
Transformational leadership	Pearson Correlation	1	
	Sig. (2 tailed)		
Job satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	0.219*	1
	Sig. (2 tailed)	0.036	

Note: *Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table-5.

Correlation between transformational leadership and job satisfaction.

Variable		Transactional leadership	Job satisfaction
Transactional leadership	Pearson Correlation	1	
	Sig. (2 tailed)		
Job satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	0.568**	1
	Sig. (2 tailed)	0.000	

Note:

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Transactional Leadership and Job Satisfaction

The results in Table 5 show that transactional leadership is positively correlated with job satisfaction ($r = 0.568$, $p=0.000$). This means that there is sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis and conclude that transactional leadership has significant positive effect on job satisfaction.

4.4. Multiple Regression Analyses

4.4.1. Model Summary

Correlation coefficient value, $r = .571$ shows that transactional and transformational leadership are good predictors of job satisfaction. Moreover, $r^2 = .726$ suggests that 72.6% variation in job satisfaction is explained by the leadership styles (transactional and transformational leadership). This implies that 27.4% is explained by other factors that were not included in the model. This is well summarized in Table 6 below.

Table-6 Model summary

Model	R	R square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the estimate
1	0.571 ^a	0.326	0.323	0.37793

Note:

a. Dependent Variable: Job satisfaction.

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

4.5. Goodness of Fit Test

The goodness of fit test in Table 7 shows that the model was a good predictor of self-job satisfaction, $F(2, 89) = 21.499$, $p=.000$

Table-7

Goodness of fit

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
	Regression	6.141	2	3.071	21.499	0.000 ^b
1	Residual	12.712	89	0.143		
	Total	18.853	91			

Note:

a. **Dependent Variable:** Job satisfaction.

b. **Predictors:** (Constant), Transformational Leadership style, Transactional leadership style.

4.6. Estimated Coefficients

As it well shown in Table 8, regression coefficients confirm that both transactional leadership style ($\beta=.585$, $p=.000$) and transformational leadership ($\beta=.032$, $p=.001$) are significant predictors of job satisfaction. This implies that each leadership style increases with job satisfaction.

Table-8

Regression Coefficients.

	Unstandardized	Coefficients	Standardized		
Model	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
Constant	1.482	0.399		3.718	0.000
Transactional	0.585	0.097	0.552	6.056	0.000
Transformational	0.032	0.053	0.055	0.600	0.001

Note:

Dependent variable: Job satisfaction.

5. Discussion of the Findings

The study found that leaders at Morogoro Municipal Council prefer using transactional leadership style to transformational leadership style. The answer to the question about the appropriate leadership style to use in an organization has been respectively answered by different researchers. It is generally agreed that although leadership is one of important driving forces of organizational success, there is no single best and acceptable leadership style; rather, the choice of leadership style depends on various number of factors, and that is why leadership is considered to be situational just as the study guiding theory stipulates.

The study found that both transactional and transformational leadership styles have positive association with job satisfaction. However, transactional leadership style was found to have stronger relationship with job satisfaction than transformational leadership style. This might seem as a surprising finding since transformational leadership style is given more weight by management scholars with regard to job satisfaction. Voon et al. (2011) have probably a more convincing argument on why transactional leadership style has very strong relationship with job satisfaction in this study. According to their observation, transactional leadership style is more preferred in public organizations than private organizations. This argument is also confirmed by the study of Lee (2017) who studied about influence of leadership style on leaders' transition from private to public sector. He found that leaders' transition from private organisations to public organization was easier to leaders who were practicing transitional leadership style frequently in private sector because that is a normal practice in public organizations. Further, the study informed that transactional leadership style is frequently used by leaders in public organizations because it is obvious that governments exert more control than private enterprises.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

Both transformational and transactional leadership styles are used in the public sector by leaders with more preference to transformational leadership. Both leadership styles were found to have significant positive relationship with job satisfaction although transactional leadership style had stronger association. With reference to situational leadership theory, it is empirically incorrect to conclude that transactional leadership style is better than transformational leadership style; rather, the situation which prevails where this study was conducted made transactional leadership style to have a stronger association with job satisfaction. It should be noted that in some cases it is okay to use the combination of different leadership styles for a purpose of suit the particular situation and the type of people that one is leading.

Provided that this study was conducted using a case study that represented many public organizations, it is recommended that more studies have to be done in Tanzania public sector by including more organisations with different characteristics to confirm or disapprove the findings of this study. The fact that this study is inconsistent with other empirical studies on preference of transactional leadership style and its influence on job satisfaction, leaders are argued to consider the nature of their followers before deciding on a particular leadership style to use.

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