

COLBOURNE COLLEGE

ASSIGNMENT COVER PAGE

UNIT 16: RESEARCH METHODS FOR STRATEGIC MANAGERS

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CAMPUS: KINGSTON

STUDENT ID NUMBER:

COURSE TITLE: RESEARCH METHODS FOR STRATEGIC MANAGERS

COURSE UNIT: 16

IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF: PEARSON L7 DIPLOMA IN STRATEGIC

MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP

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DATE: DECEMBER 08, 2015

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LEARNERS DECLARATION:

I Certify that the work submitted for this assignment is my own and research sources are fully acknowledged.

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BTEC ISV	ISV Name & Signature:	Date:

AC 1.1 Select a research question

What is the role of leadership in improving organizational performance?

AC 1.2 Factors that contribute to the process of successful research question selection

Global Health Research (2014) postulated that choosing a research question is of fundamental importance and should be approached as such. They further stated that not all questions chosen by a researcher can necessarily be construed as a good selection. However, as a guide it is advisable that the chosen question, should provide an opportunity to be reasonably and rationally answered utilizing academic methodologies such as qualitative and/or quantitative analysis.

Sheffield Hallam University (2013) listed the following five points which are considered fundamental to selecting a good research question.

The research question should be:

- 1. Relevant.**
Researchers should establish a clear purpose for the research in the chosen field. The question should be of academic interest in the researcher's field of study.
- 2. Manageable in terms of research and the researcher's academic abilities.**
Researchers need to be realistic about the scope of the project. It is advisable to select a question that creates a balance between challenging the researcher's introspective capabilities, yet within the scope of his/her ability to complete.
- 3. Substantial and with original dimensions.**
The question chosen should be original within reason and give sufficient scope to develop into a dissertation. This shows the researcher's imagination and ability to develop research issues.
- 4. Consistent with the requirements.**
The question should provide the researcher with the scope to satisfactorily accomplish the learning outcomes of the research.
- 5. Interesting.**
It is very important that the research question be interesting to readers. It is also of fundamental importance that the researcher is equally interested in the research area. The reason for this is; the research needs to intrigue and maintain the researcher's interest throughout the project. The importance of proper question selection cannot be overstated. However, the importance of selecting a question that the researcher/researchers have a real, grounded interest in is also extremely significant. Once this process has been satisfactorily

completed, then the researcher can utilize qualitative and/or quantitative research to substantiate the findings with academic and intellectual debate.

University of South Carolina (2012) also listed three factors to consider in the successful research question selection process.

The research question must:

1. **Be based on a compelling topic**

The question chosen must be important to the researcher and readers. It should also be a question that motivates the researcher to address it.

2. **Support multiple perspectives**

The general rule of thumb is that a good research question is one that creates varying objective perspectives from an audience comprising rational people.

3. **Be researchable**

It is advisable to choose a research question that can be supported by resources available to the researcher.

AC 1.3. Justify the choice of research question selection

Researches that aren't targeted can be extremely time consuming and in some cases end up being a total failure (Alberts, 2013). Given the time constraints and limited financial resources for carrying out this research, the researcher will strategically employ a targeted approach aimed at maximizing the results. This targeted approach will see the researcher focusing on companies within the appliance/electronic sales sector.

A research should be beneficial to not just the researcher, but readers and other interest, it should state clearly the areas that the research will be focusing on and the researcher should offer justification. It should also highlight the persons, group, organization or sector that could benefit from the research (The Guardian, 2010 cited by Evuarherhe, 2014). Having reviewed the literature, the researcher has ascertained that there are contrasting views on the impact of leadership on organizational performance. For instance, Gallup (2004) argued for a positive impact, while; (Meindl & Ehrlich, 1987) discredits this impact. The researcher therefore seeks to bridge this gap and provide an empirical basis for making a conclusion on this matter. To achieve this objective, the researcher therefore finds it necessary to conduct further research to investigate the role of leadership in organizational performance. This will be accomplished through a meticulous analysis of the primary and secondary literature listed further on in this research.

The researcher will also seek to:

1. Explore the link between effective leadership and performance.
2. Day and Lord (1988) theorized that leadership can be directly attributed to as much as 45% of an organizational development and performance. With this in mind; the researcher will be exploring the following leadership styles to determine their effectiveness in improving organizational performance:
 - Transformational leadership
 - Transactional Leadership
 - Laissez-faire Leadership
 - Participative Leadership
3. Provide an opportunity for ventilation of new ideas on the research topic. Jankowicz (1995) emphasized the importance of research, by stating that it provides an opportunity for a researcher to become more informed. He elaborated further by explaining that a well investigated research provides validation to the researcher. It gives the researcher some validity to inform readers and business associates through the thorough analysis of the literature review.
4. Supply the information contained in the research findings and recommendations to various managers within the private and public sector for their perusal. This could be extremely important tool for management and supervisory personnel within these organizations desirous of improving productivity, performance and development.

AC 2.1 Conduct research to find literature relevant to the research question

Introduction

The researcher will utilize a wide variety of tools to source; pertinent information to the research question. What is the role of leadership in improving organizational performance and development? The role of leadership in organizational development and performance has been a topic of extensive discussion, research and debate. The literature in this research will be sourced from, primary and secondary sources. This information will be used to identify the relationship between the variables presented in this research.

Research Theses Statement

Effective leadership can positively influence organizational performance.

Definition of Key Terms

Leadership: is the art of making sound decisions that maximizes the potential of others, which ultimately motivates and inspires them to perform well (Buffett, 1998).

Organizational Performance: is a forensic analysis of a company's performance, this is done by comparing its failures or achievements with respect to set targets, goals and objectives (OPM.gov, 2013).

Finding Literature Relevant to the research question

Gamble (2012) emphasized the importance of the literature review by stating that it does the following:

- It displays the originality, significance and relevance of the research problem.
- It justifies the methodology utilized.
- It demonstrates the researcher's preparedness to the research completion

As stated above, the researcher sourced the information relevant to the literature review utilizing the following methods:

1. Primary literature search: Jcu.edu.au (2014) emphasized the importance of including primary literature sources in a research paper. It was further explained that where possible an extensive and exhaustive search should be conducted to find primary literature. Taking this into consideration the researcher decided to utilize all the resources and tools available to source this material. The primary literature in this research was sourced from the websites of companies within the electronic/appliance sales sector and through a non-disclosure agreement. The researcher was given access to company materials, including: internal company memos, performance review documents, unpublished minutes of company meetings and conferences, unpublished surveys, written and electronic internal communication.

2. Secondary literature search: Columbia.edu (2011) underlined the importance of having credible sources in a research, indicating that to some extent this will assist readers to determine the validity of a research. The secondary literature search involved a thorough review and quality based analysis of multiple pieces of published literature that included: journals, newspaper, books, online literature, dissertations, magazines and internal company reports. This information was obtained from multiple online databases such as Harvard, Columbia, Princeton, Global Health Research, government databases such as the United States Office of Personnel Management, online e-books utilizing Google Scholar and through various library searches for pertinent literature. The information retrieved was informative and provided useful insight that clarified many ambiguities. It also provided validation on the indelible contribution that leadership plays in organizational development. This was recognized and highlighted by; (Kotter and Heskett, (1992) who postulated that performance and development can be enhanced through effective leadership. The section below (AC 2.2) provides an analysis of the primary and secondary sources that were found and utilized during this process.

AC 2.2 Undertaking a critical review of the key literature for inclusion in a research proposal

“Throughout the world, leadership rather than management has been identified as one of the keys to a high performance in an organization. It is regarded as a critical factor in the initiation and implementation of the transformations in organizations” (Richard, 2014).

This research investigated and explored the role of leadership in organizational performance in companies within the electronics sales industry. The objective was to ascertain; what effect, if any, does leadership have on organizational performance. The literature was reviewed on four distinct leadership styles. These were: Transformational leadership, Transactional Leadership, Laissez-faire Leadership and Participative Leadership.

Almansour (2014) theorized that “Leadership style in an organization is one of the factors that play a significant role in enhancing or retarding the interest and commitment of the individuals in the organization. Messick and Kramer (2005) concluded that “the degree to which the individual exhibit leadership traits depends not only on his characteristics and personal abilities, but also on the characteristics of the situation and the environment in which he finds himself. Since human beings could become members of an organization in order to achieve certain personal objectives, the extent to which they are active members depends on how they are convinced that their membership will enable them to achieve their predetermined objectives. Therefore, an individual will support an organization if he believes that through it his personal objectives and goals could be met; if not, the person’s interest will decline.” Glanz (2002) however, focused on the importance for managers and supervisors to identify and ultimately hone his/her individual leadership style.

The literature on the impact of leadership on organizational performance has opposing viewpoints: O’Connell and Doverspike (2002) researched into the works of (Peters and Austin, 1995) and (Lieberson and O’Connor, 1999) all three concluded that leadership plays a fundamental role in organizational performance and development. This, however, was challenged by (Meindl and Shamir, 2007) in their book entitled “Follower-centred perspectives on leadership.”

During a review of company literature from Courts Jamaica Limited (Singh, 2008) devised a strategy to determine the most effective leadership style and their respective effects on improving performance and development within Courts stores. To achieve this objective, he selected four managers from the twenty-nine stores island-wide who had four different leadership styles and research was conducted to ascertain the most effective leadership style in improving performance. The four leadership styles explored were:

- **Transformational leadership:** “is defined as a leadership approach that causes change in individuals and social systems. In its ideal form, it creates valuable and positive change in the followers with the end goal of developing followers into leaders. Enacted in its authentic form, transformational leadership enhances the motivation, morale and performance of followers through a variety of mechanisms. These include connecting the follower's sense of identity and self to the mission and the collective identity of the organization; being a role model for followers that inspires them; challenging followers to take greater ownership of their work, and understanding the strengths and weaknesses of followers, so the leader can align followers with tasks that optimize their performance” (Langston University, 2013).

- **Transactional Leadership:** “focuses on results, conforms to the existing structure of an organization and measure success, according to that organization’s system of rewards and penalties. Transactional leaders have formal authority and positions of responsibility in an organization. This type of leader is responsible for maintaining routine by managing individual performance and facilitating group performance. This type of leader sets the criteria for their workers, according to previously defined requirements. Performance reviews are the most common way to judge employee performance. Transactional or Managerial Leaders works best with employees who know their jobs and are motivated by the reward-penalty system. The status quo of an organization is maintained through Transactional leadership” (St. Thomas University, 2014).
- **Laissez-faire Leadership:** “Loosely translated from its French origins, laissez-faire means “let it be” or “leave it alone.” In practice, it means leaders leave it up to their subordinates to complete responsibilities in a manner they choose, without requiring strict policies or procedures. From a laissez-faire leader’s perspective, the key to success is to build a strong team — and then stay out of the way. Laissez-faire leadership is based on trust. People who enjoy a wide degree of latitude in making decisions and working on projects autonomously are often most comfortable with laissez-faire leaders. At the opposite end of the spectrum, people who work well in a rigid environment with clear directives and routine goals typically prefer authoritarian leaders” (St. Thomas University, 2015).
- **Participative Leadership:** “The participatory leadership paradigm is based on respect and engagement. It constructively focuses energy in every human to human encounter. A more advanced, more democratic and more effective model of leadership, it harnesses diversity, builds community, and creates shared responsibility for action. It deepens individual and collective learning, yielding real development and growth. Participatory leaders are, typically, post conventional leaders. Their action logic uses every organizational interaction to make meaning, life purpose, grow self, others and transform organizations. Participatory leadership is a sustainable and empowering way to create successful organization development and change” (Fisher et al., 2001).

Singh (2010) in a letter to the various store managers stated that after reviewing the performance of the stores which utilized the above mentioned leadership styles. The statistics showed that over a one-year period performance improved in all four stores improved. The following improvements were recorded:

- **Transactional Leadership:** Resulted in a 20.5% improvement at the store where the manager utilized this leadership style.
- **Transformational leadership:** Performance improved by an astounding 72% in the store that this leadership style was utilized.
- **Laissez-faire Leadership:** Facilitated an increase of 12% in the store that this leadership style was utilized.
- **Participative Leadership:** Performance in this store also grew by 52% where the manager utilized this leadership style.

Singh was, however quick to point that since the process was not monitored, the results could have been slightly manipulated by the inclusion of other factors such as incentivization and/or motivated by friendly rivalry.

In this scenario, it is shown that though each leadership style is different in approach, if used effectively each style can result in improving performance and development.

The researcher in presenting a balanced proposal has to highlight the potential for inaccuracies, flaws and misinterpretation as this survey was not monitored. Conducting a un-monitored survey in most cases brings into question the credibility of the survey and ultimately the results.

Cummings and Schwab (1973) and (Hellriegel, Jackson and Slocum, 2005) during their study of the effectiveness of the same four leadership styles and their positive impact on performance, productivity and development also came to the same conclusion as Singh, that Transformational leadership proved to be the most effective in improving performance and development.

Kaplan (2011) believes that effective leadership can be extremely vital to improving performance. He, however, emphasized that is a process requires frequent evaluation to determine that the fundamental goals and targets set for the business is being met.

Bass and Riggio (2006) through a thorough review of literature available to them at the time concluded that Transformational Leaders set realistic, short term and long term goals, then provide clarity and rational on the importance of the goals and benefits to achieving them. They then inspire and motivate people to achieve these goals.

Bono and Judge (2003) did an evaluation on these four leadership styles to determine to what extent, if any, the leadership styles impacted the performance of persons within the manufacturing sector. They came to the conclusion that teams or organizations that were led by transformational leaders displayed higher levels of productivity and performance. This conclusion aligned perfectly with that of (Nemanich and Keller, 2007) and (Piccolo and Colquitt, 2006) who believed employees that were led by Transformational leaders performed significantly higher when compared to their peers that were led by managers that displayed: Transactional Leadership, Laissez-faire Leadership and Participative Leadership.

Judge and Piccolo (2004) utilized a modified online variant of the widely recognized MLQ quantitative method devised by (Bass, 1985) and further enhanced by (Stacks, 2010) which is used to effectively gather information from respondents. In their study a total of eighty-seven workers was polled by the researcher who asked strategically structured questions on the various leadership styles. The results confirmed what many researchers had previously concluded that not only was effective leadership instrumental in improving performance, but that Transformational leadership was more effective in achieving the desired improvements. Participative leadership was a distant second in this particular research.

Almansour (2014) concluded that “There are a number of different styles of leadership and management that are based on different theories. The individual’s style will be used based on a combination of their beliefs, values and preferences, as well as the organizational culture and norms which will encourage some styles and discourage others.”

AC 3.1 Evaluate techniques for use with quantitative data in a research proposal

Archive.learnhigher.ac.uk (2015) defines quantitative data analysis as: “A systematic approach to investigations during which numerical data are collected and/or the researcher transforms what is collected or observed into numerical data. It often describes a situation or event; answering the 'what' and 'how many' questions you may have about something. This is research which involves measuring or counting attributes (i.e. quantities)”

Faraht (2009) defines quantitative data analysis as “A business or financial analysis technique that seeks to understand behaviour by using complex; mathematical and statistical modelling, measurement and research. By assigning a numerical value to variables, quantitative analysts try to replicate reality mathematically.”

Sommers, Deane and Hunter (2015) examined previous research done by (Bps.org 2015) and concluded that quantitative data can be collected in a multiplicity of ways including the most popular method listed below:

Questionnaires/Surveys:

This is generally a carefully structured group of questions which provides an avenue for obtaining relevant information from respondents.

Some advantages of Questionnaires/Surveys

- Libweb.surrey.ac.uk (2014) theorized that it provides an excellent opportunity to collect a significant amount of data from a significant amount of respondents in a very short time period.
- Can be done by the researcher or a designate and this in most cases does not affect the validity/reliability of the results.
- Provides for easy quantification of the results.
- Is considered one of the easier forms of research tools to be analysed.
- Can be conducted in person, via mail, phone or online.

Some disadvantages of Questionnaires/Surveys

- It's often categorized as a method that is incapable of communication information that is often times pertinent to a research proposal. These may include changes of mood, emotion or behaviour.
- Respondents are generally limited to the answers they provide.

Structured Interviews

Structured Interviews are a quantitative research methodology often utilized in a number of researches globally. The purpose of this methodology is to ensure that every interview is conducted with precisely

the same questions in the same order. This increases the opportunity for answers to be reliably collected and that examinations can be made with some level of confidence (OPM.gov, 2013).

Advantages of Structured Interviews

- Provides an excellent opportunity to get feedback from a large amount of respondents.
- Questions are structured and asked in the same format which provides for an easier interpretation of the results.
- Provides flexibility as it can be conducted in person or electronically.
- They are generally very inexpensive and can be conducted in a very short period of time.

Disadvantages of Structured Interviews

- If questions are not validated, it is often times extremely difficult to obtain reliable data as it relates to opinions, values and attitudes.
- The interviewer needs to have very good communication skills which will be critical in initiating the interview.
- Results from interviews can at times be affected by the “interview effect” this is usually where the personality of the interviewer may influence the responses provided by the interviewees.

Validity Concerns

There is no way to ascertain if a respondent is telling the truth, or knowing whether the respondent gave careful consideration to each question. The respondent also may give responses based on his/her personal biases which are often times hard to identify.

Ethical Considerations

Faust (2014) researched into the works of (Best and Kahn, 2006; Field and Behrman, 2004; Trimble and Fisher, 2006) and concluded that “Ethics has become a cornerstone for conducting effective and meaningful research. As such, the ethical behaviour of individual researchers is under unprecedented scrutiny.” Fortune, Reid and Miller (2013) further expounded that “In today’s society, any concerns regarding ethical practices will negatively influence attitudes about science, and the abuses committed by a few are often the ones that receive widespread publicity. The researcher will be ethically guided throughout the entire process of this research. The focus of the researcher is to deliver a balanced research paper which investigates and appreciates all the pertinent information available. An ethically guided research is generally more widely accepted. It also; in most cases assists the researcher in gaining the respect of his/her peers and readers. Faust (2014) explained this in vivid details when she wrote: “While ethical considerations may initially be viewed as roadblocks to beginning a study, they are clearly integral to the process. Attention to the ethics of an investigation requires extra thought and effort, but the payoff for a study that is both methodologically intact and ethically sound is extremely exhilarating.”

AC 3.2 Evaluate techniques for use with qualitative data in a research proposal

BusinessDictionary.com (2013) defined Qualitative Data as; “data that approximates or characterizes but does not measure the attributes, characteristics, properties, etc., of a thing or phenomenon. Qualitative data describe, whereas quantitative data defines.”

Css.neu.edu (2013) defines Qualitative research as a type of research methodology that involves an investigation with the intent to:

- Seek answers to a question
- Systematically uses a predefined set of procedures to answer the question
- Collects evidence
- Produces findings that were not determined in advance
- Produces findings that are applicable beyond the immediate boundaries of the study

Qualitative research shares these characteristics. Additionally, it seeks to understand a given research problem or topic from the perspectives of the local population it involves. Qualitative research is especially effective in obtaining culturally specific information about the values, opinions, behaviours, and social contexts of particular populations.

Qualitative data are useful in providing an explanation of complex numerical information found in quantitative data. It's also very fundamental in the highlighting the human element such as behavioural patterns and opinions.

Qualitative Methods

There are an unlimited variety of methods that can be utilized in the collection and interpretation of qualitative data however (Trochim, 2015) highlighted 4 of the most commonly utilized methods which are:

Participant Observation

This is regarded as the most often utilized methods in Qualitative Data Collection (QDC) with respect to participant observation. This observation method is also extremely time consuming. For this method to be effective it requires the researcher to participate often times as a subject being observed. This method generally requires the researcher to invest a significant amount of time to reap the maximum benefits. In this scenario, this would not be a method that could be utilized in this research given the time constraints.

Direct Observation

Trochim (2015) further postulated that “Direct observation is distinguished from participant observation in a number of ways. First, a direct observer doesn't typically try to become a participant in the context. However, the direct observer does strive to be as unobtrusive as possible so as not to bias the observations. Second, direct observation suggests a more detached perspective. The researcher is watching rather than taking part. Consequently, technology can be a useful part of direct observation. For instance, one can videotape the phenomenon or observe from behind one-way mirrors. Third, direct

observation tends to be more focused than participant observation. The researcher is observing certain sampled situations or people rather than trying to become immersed in the entire context.” The time period to complete this method is significantly shorter when compared to participant observation.

Unstructured Interviewing

This method involves a “direct interaction between the researcher and a respondent or group. It differs from traditional structured interviews in several important ways. First, although the researcher may have some initial guiding questions or core concepts to ask about, there is no formal structured instrument or protocol. Second, the interviewer is free to move the conversation in any direction of interest that may come up. Consequently, unstructured interviewing is particularly useful for exploring a topic broadly” (Trochim, 2015). The information gathered using this method is in most cases extremely hard to evaluate because of the manner in which the interview was done, there is no structure or strategically structured questions, this method has been regarded in some cases as a “researcher’s nightmare” This is because; information obtained from unstructured interviews present a mountainous task to evaluate, especially when synthesizing between subjects.

Case Studies

This is generally an in depth study of specific individual for a particular purpose. In conducting a case study, a researcher is generally given extensive latitude which can become extremely useful. The researcher may choose to utilize one or a combination of the methods listed above in the completion of a case study.

As mentioned above, the researcher will be utilizing a combination of Quantitative and Qualitative methodologies. The same ethical considerations listed above will be appropriately followed.

4.1 Evaluate appropriate research methodologies in terms of the research question

4.2 Choose an appropriate methodology in terms of the research question

4.3 Justify the methodology selected in terms of the research question

There are two methods utilized in data collection they are, Quantitative and Qualitative methodologies. These two methods provide an excellent avenue for data analysis and interpretation. Depending on the nature of the research being conducted a researcher may choose to utilize either quantitative or qualitative methodologies. Each methodology has its advantages and disadvantages and this has resulted in many researchers opting to use a mix method to complement each other. This research also chose to utilize a mix methods approach. The use of quantitative data allowed for full interpretation of concepts. This was done by utilizing a questionnaire to gather employee feedback on the impact of the various leadership styles on their performance within the organization that they are employed.

Advantages of Mixed Methodology

According to (Wall et al., 2012) Mixed Methodology has the following advantages:

- Provides the ability to counterbalance the shortcomings of both quantitative and qualitative methodologies when used independently. Case in point, quantitative methodology is frail in comprehending the context in which individuals behave, something that qualitative methodology compensates for. Qualitative methodology is often seen as inadequate because of the possibility of biased interpretations by the researcher and the trouble in summing up discoveries to a substantial gathering. Quantitative methodology does not have these shortcomings. Combining both methodologies allows for the compensation of the shortcomings of each method.
- "Provides a more complete and comprehensive understanding of the research problem than either quantitative or qualitative approaches alone."
- Provides an excellent opportunity for creating context specific research instruments.

Disadvantages of Mixed Methodology

Wall further explained that as with any methodology, there are bound to be disadvantages. He highlighted the following disadvantages that a researcher should take into consideration when exploring the idea of utilizing a mixed methodology.

- Takes considerably more time, assets and resources to effectively utilize this methodology.
- It might be extremely hard to plan and execute any one methodology by exploring the findings of another.
- It might be indistinct how to resolve inconsistencies that emerge in interpreting the findings.

The researcher considered the advantages and disadvantages of using the mixed method and found that it provided the best method when compared to the use of a single (quantitative or qualitative) method.

Methodology for this Research

The correlation between leadership and employee performance requires a detailed investigation and analysis. As mentioned above both methodologies have their pros, cons and benefits, the researcher, however, supports the view of (Curral, 2013) who postulated that “combining the unique richness of detail that is characteristic of Qualitative data with the hypothesis testing advantage and numerical/statistical advantages of Quantitative data” presents an overwhelming advantage and provides a unique perspective that could have been missed by researchers due to potential limitation of using qualitative or quantitative data as a stand-alone method

The quantitative research instrument utilized was derived from the widely recognized Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) developed by (Bass, 1985) and further enhanced by (Stacks, 2010). Scholars globally recognize this instrument as the most effective tool available that enables a researcher to measure the correlation between leadership styles and performance. Many versions and variants have been developed since its inception, however the version used in this research has been the MLQ Form 5x-Short which has been adapted and amended for this particular research.

The advantages and disadvantages of both methodologies were explored by (Hammer, 2013) who investigated the works of (Jick, 1979; Larsson, 1993; McCall and Bobko, 1999; Miles and Huberman, 1994; Stevenson and Cooper, 1997) and all concluded that both quantitative and qualitative are excellent methods of data collection, however, depending on the nature of the survey being conducted, utilizing a single method may result in major data collection limitations for a researcher. (Hammer, 2013) also shared an earlier theory where “Phenomenologists state that quantitative research is simply an artificial creation by the researcher, as it is asking only a limited amount of information without explanation.” He further explained “There is a level of researcher imposition, meaning that when developing the questionnaire, the researcher is making their own decisions and assumptions as to what is and is not important...Therefore, they may be missing something that is of importance”

Deaton (2011) postulated that “by mixing both quantitative and qualitative research and data, the researcher gains in breadth and depth of understanding and corroboration, while offsetting the weaknesses inherent to using each approach by itself. One of the most advantageous characteristics of conducting mixed methods research is the possibility of triangulation, i.e., The use of several means (researcher, methods and data sources) to examine the same phenomenon. Triangulation allows one to identify aspects of a phenomenon more accurately by approaching it from different vantage points using different methods and techniques. Successful triangulation requires careful analysis of the type of information provided by each method, including its strengths and weaknesses.”

Mixed methodology is a useful for gathering, investigating and incorporating quantitative and qualitative data. This method is extremely helpful when this integration gives a potentially better investigative option and appreciation of the research question when compared to the individual use of either methodology.

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- 5.1 Record findings on a research question, literature review and methodology**
 - 5.2 Summarize the findings using suitable methods**
 - 5.3 Present the findings using suitable methods**
 - 5.4 Critically analyse the findings**
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Research Methodology, Summary, Findings & Critical Analysis

Methodology

This research sought to identify the impact of leadership on organizational performance. This required an extensive review of primary and secondary data in relation to the research question. Having conducted an extensive search and review of pertinent literature the researcher has found the impact of leadership on organizational performance has been examined by many researchers who have often times arrived at opposing conclusions. Given the time constraints and the resources available to the researcher it was of critical importance to ensure that the research was targeted. Four companies within the Electronic sales industry were randomly selected from a group of 8 businesses within the industry in Jamaica. Five respondents were randomly chosen from each of these 4 businesses which produced a sample size totalling 20 respondents. This represents a 50% sample size from a total of 40 employees. This was distributed to 20 employees to gain pertinent information about how leadership and the various leadership styles have impacted performance within the organization that they work.

These 20 questionnaires were distributed during a period facilitated by management; however, the managers were not present while the questionnaires were completed. The sample questionnaire is attached in appendix 1. The researcher was present to clarify any issues raised by the respondents during the completion of the questionnaire. This perhaps played a significant role in all 20 questionnaires being returned properly completed. The questionnaire primarily includes close ended questions and statements that provided an option for responses using the five-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The researcher made it clear to the respondents that completion of the questionnaire was voluntary and that all information provided would be treated with the utmost confidentiality. After the questionnaires were completed, they were then thoroughly examined for plausibility, integrity and completeness. All 20 questionnaires were found to be useable and appropriately completed. Demographic information such as length of time with the company, gender and the name of the company was also recorded.

Summary, Findings and Critical Analysis

In an effort to provide an answer to the research question, the researcher had to forensically examine confidential company documents to find information pertinent to the research question. A significant amount of information was identified in the resignation letters of past employees. It highlighted the fact that several employees who (based on performance reviews) had a significant amount of potential. These employees, however, left the company because of lack of guidance and motivation from managers and supervisors. Further analysis revealed that most, if not all the managers that were in charge of those employees who resigned for those reasons were managers who practiced laissez-faire leadership. This research and past research referenced above identified that while some employees are capable of working

on their own initiative, others require motivation and guidance to perform optimally. This is perhaps the reason why transformational leadership has proven to be so effective.

The findings of this research support the position of (O'Connell and Doverspike, 2002; Peters and Austin, 1995; Lieberson and O'Connor, 1999) in confirming that transformational leadership has a significant impact on organizational performance. It has the potential to impact the employee's perception of his/her manager and by extension the organization. Transformational leaders provide a feeling of empowerment and direction to employees. Some employees perform better when they feel they are a valued member of an organization with a shared vision and manager they can look up to as a role model (Aldoory and Toth, 2013). Transformational leaders promoted cohesive teamwork, they foster collaboration, recognize the importance of maintaining a good working relationship with employees and put the necessary mechanisms in place to ensure the employee's welfare are treated as priority (Rita Men, 2010). Schaubroeck, Lam and Cha (2007) who examined previous research done by (Castro et al., 2008; Yukl, 1999; Rafferty & Griffin, 2006) and their conclusions were all in line with the findings of this thereby rejecting the findings of previous research performed by (Meindl and Shamir, 2007) who had concluded that leadership styles had no impact on improving organizational performance.

According to (Chiles and Zorn, 1995) employees that are led by transformational leaders tend to be more contented and thereby more competent at their jobs. Transformational leaders offer an inclusive model of leadership that allows employees to feel appreciated and recognized. This ultimately increases employee satisfaction which can lead to an improvement in performance.

Chaudhry and Javed (2012) opined that Laissez-faire leadership has the potential to positively influence organizational leadership. Their rationale for this, was; employees would potentially perform better when allowed to work on own initiative without managerial supervision. The findings of this research categorically contradict that finding. In this research, 94% of the respondents were convinced that Laissez-faire leadership had an overwhelmingly negative impact on organizational performance. This finding was supported by (Barroso Castro, Villegas Perinan and Casillas Bueno, 2008) who examined previous research done by (Dowling, 2004; Fombrun et al., 2000; Helm, 2005) they all concluded that Laissez-faire leadership plays a very inconsequential role in improving organizational performance and productivity.

The researcher examined a significant amount of data from a wide variety of sources to include: websites, journal, books, and multiple tertiary online databases such as Harvard, Columbia, and Princeton. This provided a wealth of information to the researcher such as the identification of 4 leadership styles which has the potential to positively or negatively influence organizational performance.

When the four leadership styles identified were examined, the researcher uncovered following:

Laissez-faire leadership: The findings suggest that this leadership style is characterized by avoidant leaders who are content with “managing from a distance” whilst hoping that employees will make sound decisions. This leadership style is associated with sub-performance and ineffectiveness. As determined by the descriptive statistics this Leadership style was present within the organizations that made up the sample.

Transformational Leadership: This was the most popular leadership style and also proved to be the most effective in improving organizational performance. This could potentially be correlated to the leader’s ability to motivate, influence and encourage employees to go the extra mile and to consistently strive to become better at what they do. These leaders are considered to be “leader creators” as they inspire employees to strive for excellence, to think critically, to develop innovative problem solving skills and to help others to become as good as or even better than themselves.

Transactional leadership: The findings suggest that this was the second most effective leadership style in improving performance within an organization. This style of leadership which is often referred to as the “carrot or a stick” approach to leadership was determined to have some level of effectiveness for employees who may lack or are afraid to act on their own initiative. Based on the feedback from employees this style was also very effective in highly competitive organizations where employees strive to outperform each other knowing fully well that a reward or promotion is contingent on performance.

Participative leadership: The findings show that there is a level of uncertainty with respect to the ability of these leaders to motivate their subordinates to perform. Participative leaders provide a great amount of latitude and freedom to use initiative. Trust is a critical component of this leadership style. This could prove to be either beneficial or detrimental to the company, which is perhaps the reason the responses was equally divided in respect to the positive or negative impact of this leadership style on organizational performance.

Here is a snapshot of the results of the questionnaire:

Demographic Analysis

Table 1: Demographic profile of the sample (Number (N) = 20)

Item	N	Percent
Gender		
Male	10	50
Female	10	50
Length of time at the company		
1-3 Years	2	10
3-6 Years	2	10
6- 10 Years	8	40
10+ Years	8	40

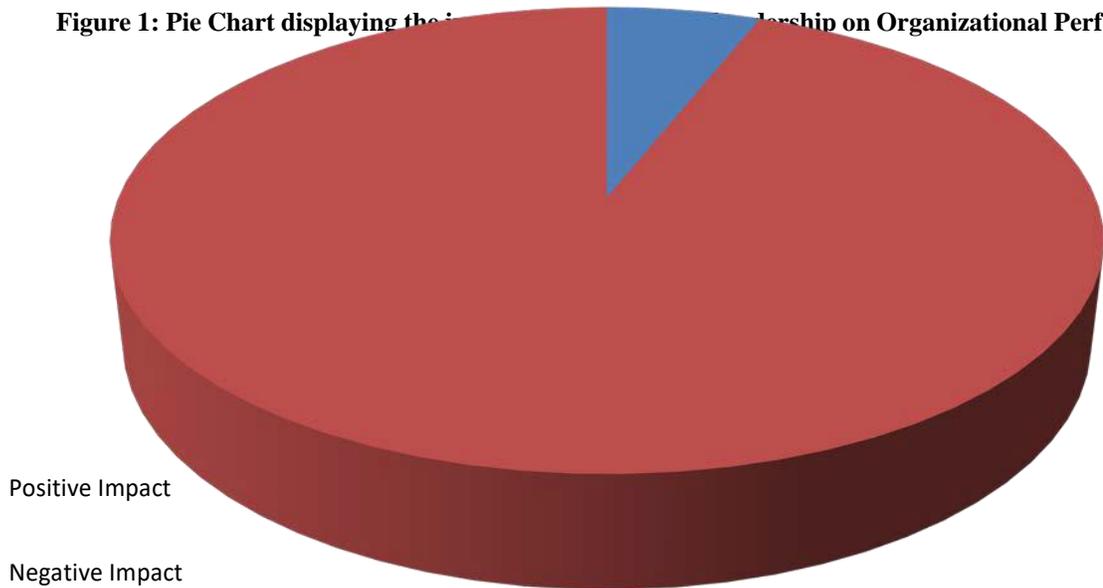
Table 1 above indicates that of the 20 employees’ interviewed, 50% were males. It also shows that eighty percent of the sample worked in their respective entity for over 6 years. The remaining 20% was also equally divided among respondents that worked for the company in the 1-3 & 3-6 years’ category.

Table 2: Displaying Employee Feedback on the impact of each Leadership Style on Organizational Performance

Leadership Style	N	Mean
Transactional	20	3.10
Transformational	20	4.90
Participative	20	2.60

Table 2 above represents the responses to the question; “What is the impact of Leadership on Organizational Performance?” To get an accurate answer the term leadership was dissected and examined as four unique leadership styles. This assisted the researcher in identifying which leadership style was most effective and whether any of the styles examined had the potential to positively or negatively impact organizational performance. The table shows that Transformational leadership had the highest mean (4.90) and the Laissez faire had the lowest mean (0.90) value. Since a higher mean signifies a more significantly positive impact, the results show that the participants felt that transformational leadership has the greatest impact on staff performance while the Laissez faire style has the less positive impact on performance. The result supports the findings of (Bono and Judge, 2003) who opined that teams or organizations that are led by transformational leaders displayed higher levels of productivity and performance.

Figure 1: Pie Chart displaying the impact of Leadership on Organizational Performance



When the variables were looked at individually and compared to organizational performance, the results show that laissez-faire leadership style has an overwhelmingly negative impact on organizational performance. As illustrated in Figure 1 94 %% of the respondents indicated that the Laissez-faire Leadership style had a negative impact on Organizational Performance.

As previously mentioned the researcher opted to utilize a mixed methodology for this research. With this in mind a qualitative interview was used as a follow up methodology to ascertain why some employees considered a particular leadership style as more effective at improving organizational performance. The respondents when asked why they felt that laissez-faire leadership had a negative impact on organizational performance highlighted the following: Employees indicated that it is sometimes a refreshing change to be able to work with little or no supervision, however, there are times when guidance or motivation is needed and they are working with a manager or supervisor who are often lackadaisical or complacent they find themselves developing those tendencies where they start settling for mediocrity. This they pointed out was detrimental to performance and productivity within an organization.

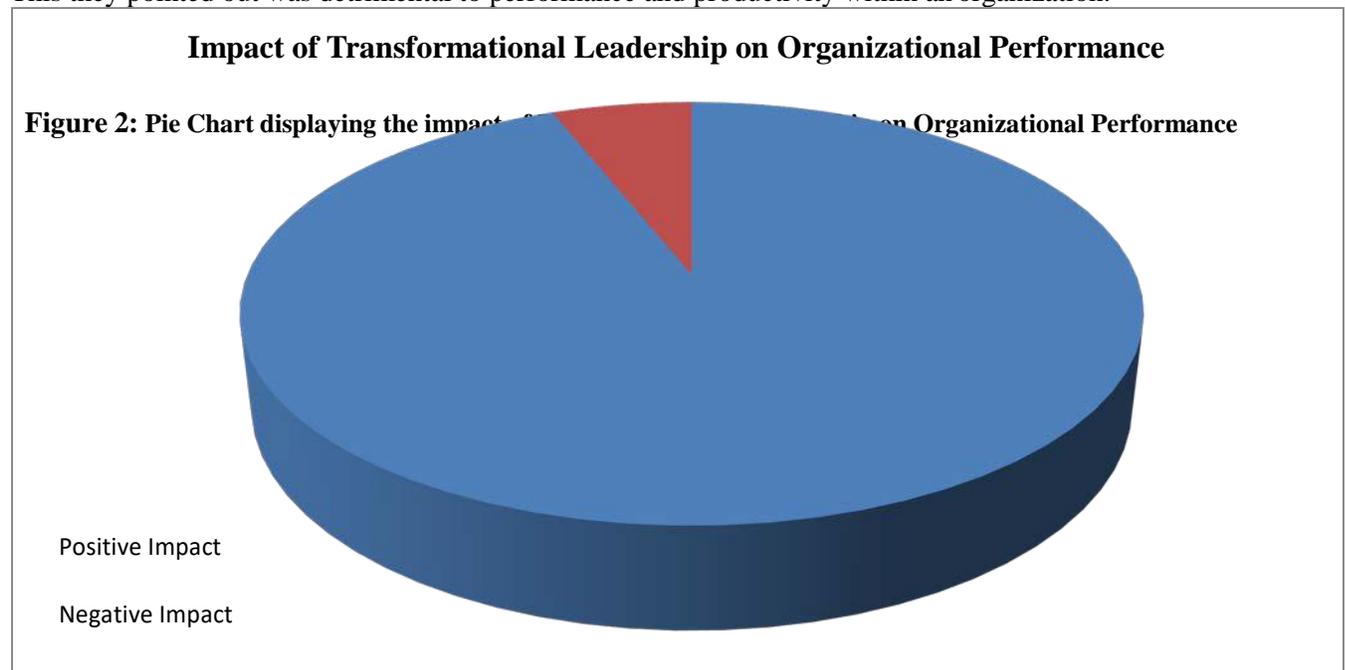


Figure 2 above provided an answer to the question; what is the impact of Transformational Leadership on Organizational Performance. As displayed in Figure & Table 2, Transformational Leadership plays a significant role in organizational performance.

The qualitative interview that was conducted revealed that employees chose this particular leadership style as the most effective because these managers offered motivation and pushed them to always strive for excellence. The employees further highlighted that while working for transformational managers, they feel like they are part of a team, their voices are heard, they feel valued and their welfare is taken seriously. They also pointed out that a leader that strives to be on time motivates them to improve their

time management capabilities. Respondents indicated that transformational managers are supportive, even in situations which is not work related and this creates a feeling of admiration and respect where employees indicated that they often times felt bad when they were sick or forced to be absent.

Impact of Transactional Leadership on Organizational Performance

Figure 3: Pie Chart displaying the impact of Transactional Leadership on Organizational Performance.

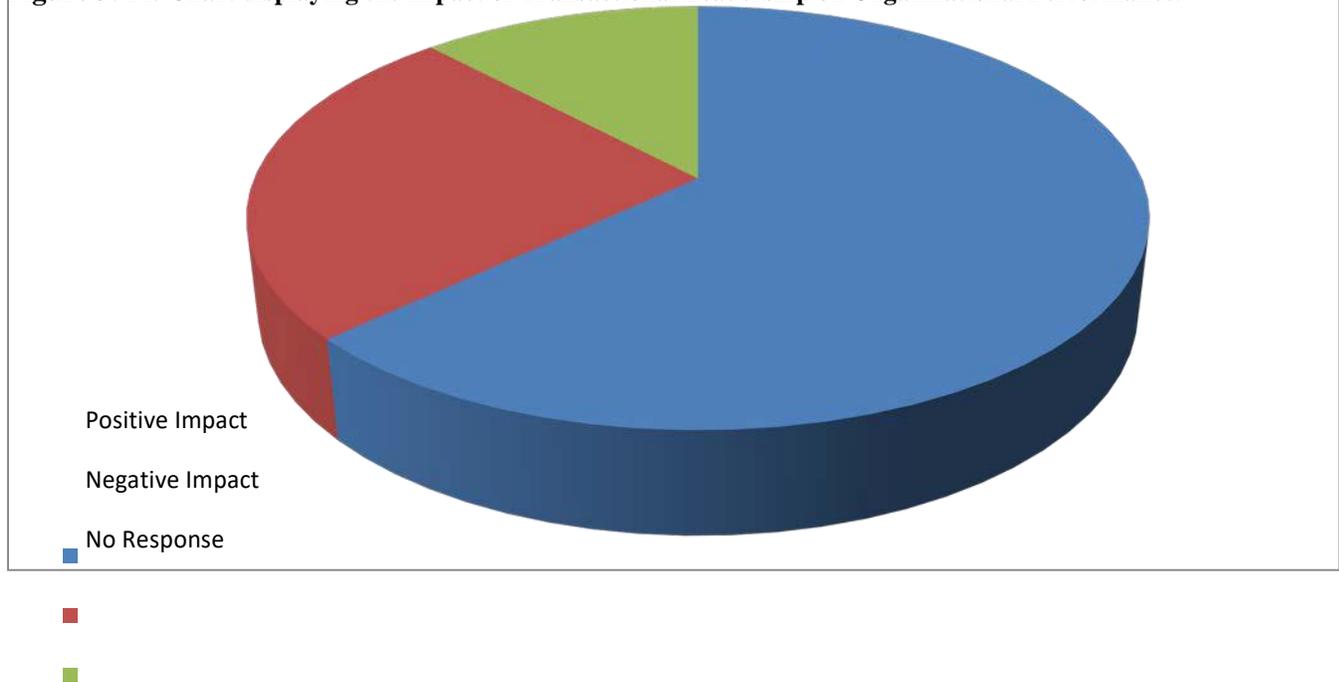
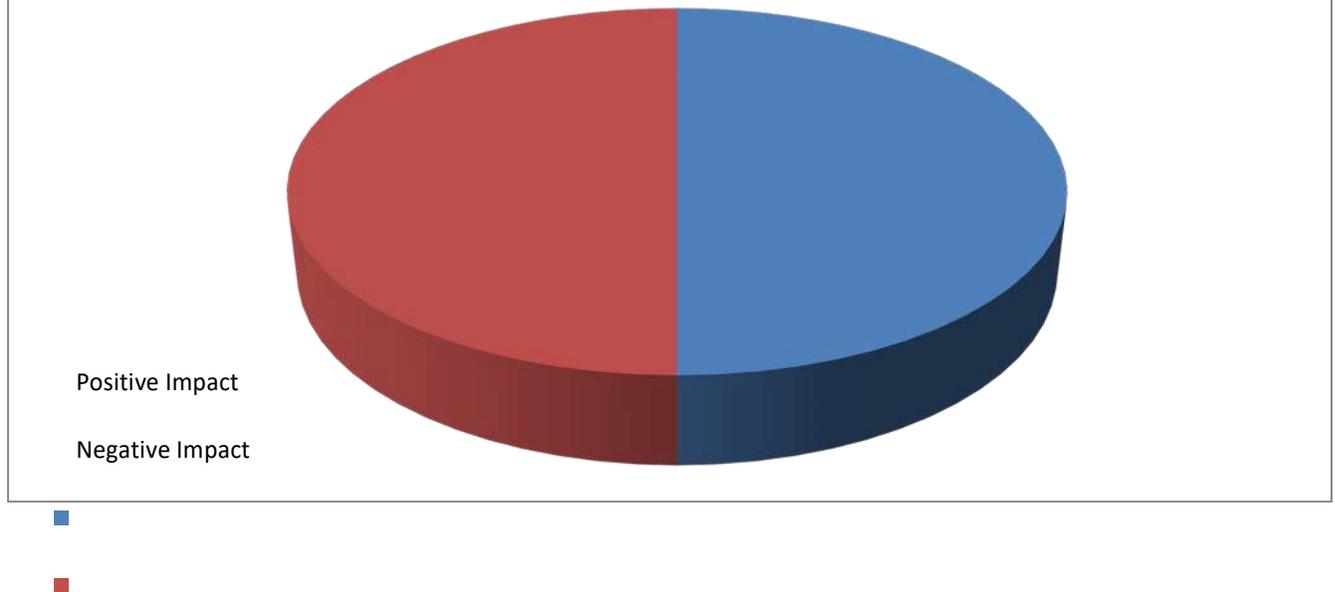


Figure 3 in answering the question; “What is the impact of Transactional Leadership on Organization Performance?” shows that 63% of the respondents believe that leaders who utilized Transactional leadership style contributed positively to organizational performance.

A qualitative interview revealed that some employees believed that this leadership style has the potential to improve organizational performance. However, one major concern that was highlighted by employees, even amongst those that were pro transactional leadership; was that often times they felt threatened or intimidated. These employees pointed out that sometimes they are afraid to express themselves because of the rigid nature of these leaders. They are afraid to use initiative because of the very thin line between the two options offered by these leaders (reward or punishment).

Impact of Participative Leadership on Organizational Performance

Figure 4: Pie Chart displaying the impact of Participative Leadership on Organizational Performance.



Responses to the question; “What is the impact of Participative leadership on organizational performance?” were evenly split. The findings indicate that this style affects the respondents equally as half of the respondents indicated that this style of leadership impacts organizational performance positively.

The qualitative interview provided some clarity as to why the quantitative returned the findings above. Employees working for participative leaders indicated that these leaders offer very little motivation. The ability to use their initiative is strongly promoted, however, the essential guidance, inspiration and motivation that are presently in Transformational leadership is absent from this leadership style. Employees were quick to point out that they are most times extremely happy when their opinions are sought on major decisions, however, it can be frustrating and counterproductive to be called to constant meetings to get feedback on making simple decisions. They further pointed out that they believed that their appearance of getting employee feedback is a mere facade because the managers often disregard recommendations and make the decisions they intended to make prior to the meeting.

Namusonge and Koech (2012) recommended that research such as this which is considered exploratory in nature should have the data further examined and analysed and as such the Bivariate Correlation Test (BCT) was used. The BCT method was used to ascertain how one variable correlates or impacts the other. Namusonge and Koech further explained that; in the BCT model the values (r) that fall between the range from 0.10 to 0.29 is considered weak, while 0.30 to 0.49 is generally considered to be medium and 0.50 to 1.0 is considered strong.

The researcher will now further examine the data collected using the BCT examination model.

Table 3: Impact of Leadership Style on Organizational Performance

Leadership Style	Score	Mini	Maxi
Transformational Leadership	*0.98	0	1
Transactional Leadership	0.58	0	1
Participative Leadership	0.49	0	1
Laissez-faire Leadership	**0.12	0	1

* Impact of leadership style is on organizational performance is considered extremely high.

** Impact of this leadership style on organizational performance is considered inconsequential.

The BCT examination illustrated in Table 3 above confirmed what has been previously identified by (Gallup, 2004; Bono and Judge, 2003; Nemanich and Keller, 2007; Piccolo and Colquitt, 2006) that Transformational Leadership can significantly improve organizational performance. Participative and Transactional Leadership styles have a medium impact on organizational performance, while Laissez-faire Leadership has little or no impact on organizational performance.

Limitations of the Research

- The research was conducted without management present; however, on completion it was pointed out that there was audio/recording equipment present in at least one of the rooms that was utilized for the completion of the questionnaires. This could adversely affect the research findings as these respondents potentially could have answered the questions in the way they did because they were aware that actions were being recorded and the questions were being asked about the managers. In another instance, one manager only permitted the use of the employee's lunch time for the questionnaire completion. This could also potentially impact the research findings as employees may rush through the questionnaire just so they can go to lunch without spending the requisite time to appropriately read and answer the questions appropriately.
- Insufficient primary literature: Some managers are understandably unwilling to entrust sometimes confidential or proprietary documents/information to persons outside of the company. This limits the researcher's ability to sometimes very little primary literature sources.
- Time constraints of the research: Proper time management is crucial to the success of all research. (Princeton.edu, 2014). The researcher endeavoured as much as was possible to maintain effective time management, however, there were still some issues that resulted in a significant amount of time being wasted during the period of data collection. Some managers are keen on performance and will not facilitate this been done during regular business hours. There is also the flip side where the researcher attempts to collect the literature immediately after work. However, some personnel were not very accommodating during that time period. The researcher had to employ creative solutions to include monetary incentives to ultimately get the required information. Providing any form of monetary compensation could have also adversely affect the validity of the research findings as employees may opt to complete the questionnaire exclusively to get the compensation and may not necessarily answer the questions truthfully.

Conclusion

In answering the research question; “What is the role of leadership in organizational performance?” As with everything we do when utilized properly, it has the potential to be very rewarding. When used in an abusive or ineffective manner it tends to have the opposite effect. This is also true of leadership; the findings of the research have confirmed that effective leadership can significantly improve organizational performance and productivity. Transformational and Transactional leadership styles which researchers such as (Sing, 2010; Gallup, 2004; Bono and Judge, 2003; Nemanich and Keller, 2007; Piccolo and Colquitt, 2006) have concluded to be effective forms of leadership. Such leadership style has the potential to significantly improve organizational performance. The findings of this research can be correlated with information from previous research into effective forms of leadership. The findings of both past and thus research are aligned in highlighting that transformational leadership has been proven to improve morale, inspires performance, and improves the employee's perception of the company. Transformational leaders as identified in this and previous research can be instrumental in developing a motivated and cohesive workforce. Such a workforce is vital if an organization is to be productive. While participative or transactional leadership may have the potential to minimally improve organizational performance the findings of this research has concluded that transformational leadership is the most effective form of leadership. In conclusion, the role of leadership in organizational performance is dependent on the type of leadership. If utilized effectively it can result in a significant improvement in organizational performance, however, if it's used in an effective manner the results could be catastrophic. There are a variety of leadership styles which are utilized on a daily basis in many organizations. While a particular leadership might be effective in a particular organization, it might prove to be ineffective in another. Leaders should explore leadership styles such as transformational or transactional to determine which is most effective in improving performance within the organization that they are tasked to manage.

Recommendation

- All the examination methods concluded that Transformational leadership was the most effective leadership style in improving employee performance. Is therefore recommended that organizations institute programs that instil the qualities of transformational leaders. This is to ensure that managers and senior executives try to, where possible to establish and maintain a positive relationship that is based on mutual respect. Managers and supervisors should also endeavour to set good examples and aspire to inspire the employees under their command. If managers and supervisors set good examples and become role models for members it has been proven that this can significantly improve employee performance and productivity. This approach is very useful in helping employees to develop the confidence to use their initiative, develop creativity and work cohesively as a team.
- Companies should consider offering managerial training programs geared at improving the quality of service provided by Managers and Supervisors. As listed above in this research and referenced in previous research Transformational Leadership has proven to be an effective form of leadership. The researcher therefore recommends that this leadership style be strongly promoted. If the managerial training programs are successful and managers become more

effective in their roles, then this will motivate staff members to work harder. This will ultimately lead to an increase organizational performance.

- Incentivisation is often an effective tool to increase performance and productivity. Organizations that are serious about improving performance could explore options such as offering incentives to managers and supervisors that display leadership characteristics that have been proven to improve organizational performance. This kind of motivation can play a crucial role and provide managers and supervisors with an extra drive to adopt more effective leadership styles.
- Similar to having a reward/recognition program for staff members. Companies should consider creating a program that allows employees to vote on the managers that they believe has the necessary leadership qualities to improve organizational performance. This again could prove to be critically important. In the spirit of friendly rivalry and gaining recognition, managers would strive to hone their leadership skills and explore more effective forms of leadership that will provide the recognition that they desire.
- Companies should also consider quarterly performance evaluations for managers. This will allow the organization to identify managers who utilize an effective leadership style such as transformational leadership and get ineffective leaders who utilize laissez-faire to get on board with a leadership style that has been proven to be effective in improving organizational performance.
- Laissez-faire leadership, based on previous research which are highlighted above and further confirmed by the findings of this research is a rather ineffective leadership style which based on the findings of this and previous research makes no significant contribution to organizational performance. It is therefore recommended that this leadership is not promoted. Managers and supervisors who utilize this form of leadership should consider exploring other leadership options which has the potential to improve performance and productivity within the organization that they work.
- The results also highlighted that transactional leadership is the second most effective form of leadership. This also highlights that a well-executed rewards/recognition can significantly improve employee morale and ultimately employee performance. It is therefore recommended that managers formulate and implement a program geared towards recognizing and rewarding those employees that take the initiative and go above and beyond the call of duty.
- Participative leadership is dependent on how and where it is utilized can either have a positive or negative impact on organizational performance. Based on the findings of the research, it is recommended that participative be utilized with caution and should be confined to employees and situations where it can be most useful, such as; with employees with a vast amount of experience and are competent at what they do. It can also be useful in situations such as evaluations and department planning meetings.

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