



An Evaluation of Leadership Styles and Workforce Performance at Pathfinder Hotels, Ado-Ekiti, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this research was to determine the effect of leadership styles on the performance of employees. A simple research design was adopted for the purpose of the research. Employees of the pathfinder hotels in Ado-Ekiti, Ekiti State was used. In the course of this study, 25 respondents from the hospitality outfit were chosen. Each of the respondent attested to have worked in the establishment for between 0-15years. A Likert scale from 1-3 was utilized to roll up data, questionnaire was used to test for its face, content and construct validity side by side with the reliability of the construct. A sample size of 25 respondents was used using non-probability favorable sampling method. Regression analysis was conducted to analyze the data gathered using SPSS 21. Results from the analysis shows that the autocratic and democratic leadership style has no significant impact on performance of employees. Same was discovered with the laissez-fair leadership style that it also has no significant influence on employee performance. This implication of this is that leaders with extremely dynamic styles will have more influence on the performance of employee.

Therefore, leaders are advise to adopt a more innovative strategy using suitable leadership style that was not studied in this work like the transactional, transformational and others so as to achieve work performance at a better level as well as to attain a sustainable success based on whatever fits the organization and the various situational demands of the sector and organization.



Keywords: Leadership style, autocratic, democratic and laissez-fair, employee performance

INTRODUCTION

This research attempts to focus on determining the effects of leadership patterns on workforce performance. An empirical perspective of leadership indicates that recently leadership is utilized as a strategic management tool when managing organizations that are bigger in sizes (Iqbal, Anwar & Haidar, 2015). The gradual phasing out of personnel administration with human resource management has an effect on the migration of leadership styles into effective employee management.(Iqbal et al, 2015). This demands that leaders must adapt themselves to the continually changing situation when situation arises in order to ensure that an effective leadership (Heresy & Blanchard, 1988). When it comes to the administration of an organization, the leadership scenario and employee performance are not so connected and are usually separately established individually (Iqbal et al, 2015). This has led to poor employee performance owing to the lack of clear path and strategic leadership in managing regular work. It is imperative to note that employee performance in any organisation is dependent on the management strategies at place in the organization. it is also key to note that the leadership styles used in directing the affairs of the employees are key to the attainment of organizational goals.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Previous studies has examined leadership and the various factors affecting employee performance. Key amongst issues that have been discussed in previous researches were leadership styles like the participative, autocratic, and democratic styles (Iqbal et al, 2015). Similarly several other researches were carried out to examine performance and how it was influenced by various leadership styles. Many of the studies lacked sufficient data, especially in the areas of workforce performance and leadership style in the commercial settings. Three leadership styles were considered as the most dominant in previous literatures, although there lacks sufficient studies conducted in the hospitality sector to examine the extent of the style of leadership on employees.



1.3 Research Objectives

To achieve the aim of this study, the following objectives are formulated.

- I. To investigate the effect of autocratic leadership style on employee performance,
- ii. To investigate the effect of democratic leadership Style on employee performance,
- iii. To investigate the effect of laisses-fair leadership style on employee performance.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This research will be of significance to various stakeholders. The Pathfinders hospitality group in Ado Ekiti in particular will derive enormous benefits from this research as it provided insights on the most beneficial style of leadership that will be applicable in their organization. Considering the strategic roles that leadership plays in an organisation, it is expected to serve as a guide for management at all level on how to deploy certain leadership styles in effectively sustaining of an organisation. Key players in the hospitality industry will also find the outcome very useful. So also are opinion molders and policy makers who will be better enlightened on the proper leadership patterns to be deployed in their respective businesses. Scholars undertaking similar studies will also find this paper very useful in terms of reserve and knowledge bank when gathering empirical literature. The study will make modest contributions to the theoretical discourse surrounding leadership styles and workforce performances. The findings of the research will be of relevance both to the leadership literature and to the hospitality businesses.

Scope of the Study

Leadership as an important part of human resource management is quite vast and dimensional due to its variation from industry to industry and situational demands. However, this study is restricted to the evaluation of the effects of leadership styles on workforce performance at Pathfinders hotels, Ado Ekiti, Nigeria.

Literature Review

This section of the literature review presents works both empirically and theoretically, which are relevant to this very study.



The Concept of Leadership

Leadership as a concept happens to be the most investigated of organizational variables, this is because leaders possess a very great impact on employee performance (Cummings & Schwab, 1973). Leadership is described as a procedure which a person employ influence over other people thereby inspiring them, motivating them, and directing their activities to assist in the achievement of group goals (Jones & George, 2004). Leadership is basically also described as a process where one individual or often times a group of individuals determine the efforts of others towards the achievement of organizational goals (Cole, 2005).

Vigoda-Gadot (2007) opined that, leaders in their various organizations practices one particular leadership style or the other and these styles are often referred to as sets of behavioral patterns. Leadership is a regular occurrence during any organizational work and leaders are practically known through leadership. If the manager of an organization cooperate very well with the employee, the result of this leadership style will have a significant impact on the confidence of the employee. Subsequently it was discovered that the self-esteem of an employee has a significant impact on its performance. Jago (1982) is of the opinion that good leaders are usually made, and not born as being postulated by some. It has been observed that whoever has the zeal and passion to become an effective leader, he or she can become an effective one (Jago, 1982). Leaders that are good and different are developed through an endless process of personality study, training, education, and vastness (Jago, 1982). A respected opinion about leadership defines it as an individual who through the influence of other people achieves a common objective (Northouse, 2017). Zeitchik (2012), in a study described leadership as the aspiration and encouragement of others to trail a particular vision till it becomes a collective effort used to achieve the vision. A research by Ibrahim (2004) discovered that leadership styles have close relationship with the performances of employees in a work organisation. This is because, employee performance has observable features of the actions of an employee and its employers. These observable features and its outcomes has its own way of contributing to the effective achievement of key organizational goals. Ibrahim (2004) also noted that leadership as it relates to workforce performances is one of the major



challenges that a modern day organization is confronted with and this in turn greatly contributes to its success and failures.

Previous studies literatures like that of Swarup (2013) and Gordon (2013) established that the three dominant style of leadership that exists in contemporary organisations are the autocratic, the democratic, and the laissez-faire style of leadership. These various styles of leadership has their links with employee performance. Swarup (2013) made arguments in favor of the autocratic style of leadership and described it as a restricted style of leadership that fits most work organisation. The manager is regarded as the most powerful person in a business entity and he or she is the major decision maker. This style of leadership can be ascribed to the traditional believe that all leaders are good managers who direct the affairs of his group members hence the autocratic leadership style should feature in the attributes of a leader. This contradicts the assertion and points of Mullins;2007 that opines that autocratic leaders have too much of exclusive rights of decision making in an organization which has the capability of inflicting serious damages on an organization beyond repairs as they have an habit of coercing subordinates into the implementation of reforms and rendering services in a streamlined manner. Autocratic leaders lack the ability to incorporate collective vision and motivation in their dealings. Commitment, creativity and innovation are totally discouraged by autocratic leadership.

Similarly, Lewin et al, 1938 asserts that a democratic leader is that leader that values the inputs and commitments of an employee through effective participation and that leader who pays attention to both the good and bad suggestions. Equally, Smith (1998) suggests that the democratic leaders are leaders that maintains a cordial relationship with their employees and it is believed the effectiveness of this style will improve employee performance. This is not different from the views of Anderson (1991) that described democratic leaders as leaders that consider others while making decisions and opines that democratic leadership style has a strong correlation with high morale. Daft (2014) in a study buttressed the point of Smith;1998, Andersion;1991 and argued that the delegation of authority to subordinates in order to encourage them and give them more knowledge of the work is an integral attribute of a democratic leader.



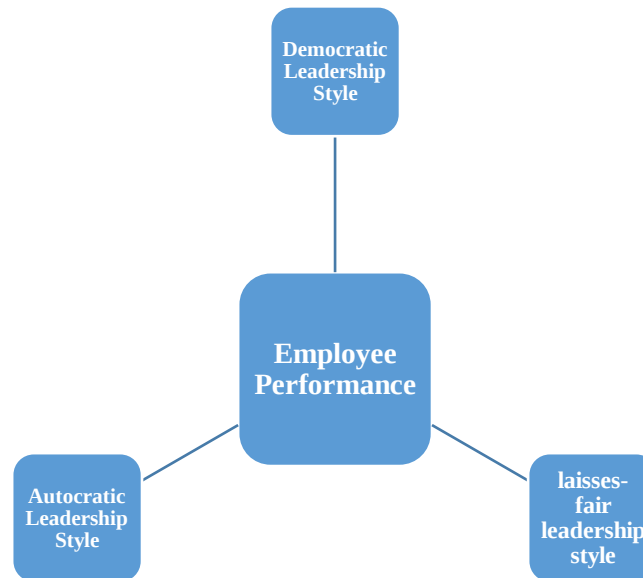
Leaders that practices the laissez-faire leadership style have little or no control over subordinates and gives subordinates the freedom to execute their assigned tasks without any direct input (Wu & Shiu, 2009). Leaders with this attributes hardly gets themselves involved in the administrative processes of the organization and gives extreme freedom to subordinates (Karip 1998). Laissez-faire leadership delegates totally and hands-off to enable group members to make their own decisions. Mullin (2007) in his own view opined that laissez-faire leaders knowingly decides to pass power to subordinates thereby allowing them unhindered freedom of actions. Chen et al (2005) discovered that this form of leadership style often has a negative resultant outcomes. They are of the opinion that laisses-fair is not really an important style that adds to the motivational level of workers when compared to other leadership styles.

2.2.1 Employee Performance

The number one goal of any organization is to improve the job performance of its employees for the purpose of its survival in a highly competitive atmosphere. Performance is a multidimensional concept and a very vital requirement that determines either the success or failure of an organization. .According to Prasetya and Kato (2011), the performance of an employee is his or her resultant behavior on a task which can be ascertained and evaluated. They held the views that employee performance is the input made by an individual towards the accomplishment of organizational goals. Meaning the result of patterns of action carried out to satisfy an objective according to some laid down standards are the attributes of that mental actions or products such as answers or decisions, which result in organizational outcomes in the form of attainment of goals. Performance can also be defined as as the quality and quantity of work done by an employee, particularly efforts geared towards the actualization of organizational goals through the utilization of knowledge and skills. Thus, it can be seen to be a strategic key to the achievement of organizational goals (Altindag and Kosedagi, 2015). An employee is said to have performed when key organizations are achieved. When it is otherwise, they are tagged non-performer.



Conceptual Framework



Source: *Author's Conceptualization (2021)*

The conceptual framework clearly shows the link between the independent variable (Leadership Styles) represented by the democratic, autocratic and laisses-fair leadership style while the dependent variable is represented by employee performance. The framework also illustrates that employee performance is determined by the various leadership styles discussed in this study.

2.3 THEORETICAL EXPLANATIONS

There are several organizational leadership theories, for the purpose of this study, all theories are applicable and shall be explained. They are as follows:

Behavioral theory: This theory emphasizes on the behavior of leaders and based its assumptions that leadership traits can be copied. The theory at times is referred to as style theory, it believes that leaders are not born ready-made, but can be birthed



though direct learning and adaptation of behaviors. Behavioral theories of leadership lays emphasis on the conduct of leaders. This theory suggests that the best way to be a leader is by the close observation of one. Action are valued more than qualities in the behavioral theory. Patterns of behavior are closely observed and termed as leadership style in this theory. Associated with this styles of leadership include task-oriented leaders, people-oriented leaders, country club leaders, status-quo leaders, dictatorial leaders, and many more. The success of this theory largely depends on the behaviors of the leader.

Contingency theory: The contingency leadership theory often referred to as situational theory, focuses on the context of a leader. It takes critical look at the situational effects surrounding the success and the failure of a leader. The effectiveness of a leader is determined by whichever situational context he or she finds itself. While the personality of a leader contributes lesser input to their success, the most significant factor is the context and situation of the leader. The theory takes the particular leadership style and suggests that good leaders can manipulate their style situationally. It also postulated that the right kind of leader can only be found in a specific situation.

Great Man theory: The great man theory of leadership which also referred to as the trait theory, believes that good leaders are born. It believes that they possess inbuilt traits and abilities that makes them great, and that they are attributes that can never be learnt or studied. Leaders are believed to be in certain positions due to the special traits they possess. The trait theory has drawn great criticisms on the argument that leaders are either born or not and that it means that one does not need to put any efforts to work before one can be a leader. The arguments in favor of this theory cited Abraham Lincoln, Alexander the Great, Queen Elizabeth 1, and many others as clear examples of people with the great man theory.

Management theory: this is called transactional leadership at times, and focuses on supervision, organization, and group performance. Transactional leadership is a system of rewards and punishments, and transactional leadership is regularly used in some organizations. It believes that when subordinates attains success in their duties and tasks, it is good for the managers to have them rewarded and when it is failure,



they deserve punishment. The transactional rewards and sanctions are given based on the notion that workers really carry out task for the reward. Scholars have argued that this theory psychologically does not allow human beings to do things out of goodness, but rather because of the reward promised. Even though this style has been found to be very effective it has however drawn some knocks that it looks like a business relations. Consequences and punishments leads to downward slide of morale in an organization and impacts negatively on the employees. It is also perceived as a lazy form of leadership style as rewards and punishments are the simplest ways of leading people.

Participative Theory: Participative leadership isn't as popular in the business world. Often referred to as democratic leadership, this leadership theory gives leverage for employees to be directly involved in the decision making process of an organization. The leader simply stirs up a discussion and takes down notes and subsequently comes up with best possible actions. In this theory, all members of the organization are neck deep into the decision making process with the leader directing their affairs. Microsoft Giant Business Mogul, Bill Gates is said to be a practitioner of the participative theory. The theory encourages employees to be open and honest about their thoughts. They take inputs from subordinates and thereafter meets with other leaders to dissect issues. In other-words, leaders makes decision based on the inputs from subordinates.

Power Theory: This theory is fashioned on the way a leader utilizes their power and influence to get missions accomplished. French and Raven's Five Forms of Power is a commonly known power theory of leadership. It looks at positional power and personal power and how they impact leader's choices and outcomes. This theory appears to be highly effective as leaders with great power seems to get things done effectively and quickly. However, a large percentage of employees rebels against this form of approach. The power theory can be found in organizations where hierarchy and promotion is a pre-requisites to attaining success. This can result in low morale, political, and cliques climates in the office.

Relationship Theory: The theory of leadership focuses on leaders who are so concerned about their relationship with others. They prefer to mentor employees to achieve results, creating time to talk and interact with them and always making efforts to meet their needs. These leaders strive hard to make an organization a better place to



work by creating a conducive organizational work climate. This leadership behavior has been rated as the most effective for many employees. Relationship-oriented managers often get better results from their employees. Employees always have a sense of belonging and have so much confidence in their leaders and their abilities. This makes them to always aspire to become a leader and mentor someday.

3. METHODOLOGY

This section presents the research methodology with description of methods adopted in the data collection and analysis. These includes the research design, population of the study, sample size and data collection techniques.

3.1 Research Design

The research adopted the survey research design. It was carried out to obtain evidence regarding the cause - effect relationship between variables. The preference for this method was that it does not give room for the manipulation of data. The study population consists of twenty five (25) selected employees of the pathfinder hotels in Ado-Ekiti derived using the proportionate sampling technique. The total sample size was drawn from the total staff population of fifty two (52) full time and part time staffs and this sample represents about 48 percent of the total population of the employees. The quantitative data used for this study were gathered through semi-structured questionnaire while secondary data were gathered through notes from academic journals, newspaper, online articles, papers from seminars and text books from reputable authors in the field of human resources. The descriptive and inferential statistics packages were used in analyzing the data. Such parameters as means, frequency distribution tables, percentages and one way analysis of variance (ANOVA) were employed to show the relationship between the different variables that explains the relationship between selection and recruitment practices and employee retention. The statistical package SPSS version 20 was used in the analysis of data.

4. ANALYSIS

This section of the research focuses on data analysis, interpretation and presentation of the 20 questionnaires of the total 25 distributed and administered.



Table 4.1

Sex

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male	9	45.0	45.0	45.0
Female	11	55.0	55.0	100.0
Total	20	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey 2021

Illustrations from the above table shows that 55% of the respondents were female while 45% were male.

Table 4.2

Age

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Under 21 Years	5	25.0	25.0	25.0
21-30 Years	12	60.0	60.0	85.0
31-40 Years	3	15.0	15.0	100.0
Total	20	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey 2021

Illustrations from table 4.2 above shows that 60% of the total respondents were between the ages of 21-30 years, 25% were under 21 while 15% were between the ages of 31-40 years of age.



Table 4.3

Marital Status

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Single	13	65.0	65.0	65.0
Married	6	30.0	30.0	95.0
Divorced	1	5.0	5.0	100.0
Total	20	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey 2021

Table 4.3 above shows the marital status of the respondents. 65% of the respondents were reported single, 30% were reported married while just 1% was reported to have been divorced.

Table 4.4

Education

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Primary/ Secondary	4	20.0	20.0	20.0
OND	8	40.0	40.0	60.0
HND/BSc	6	30.0	30.0	90.0
Masters and Others	2	10.0	10.0	100.0



Total	20	100.0	100.0	
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Source: Field Survey 2021

Table 4.4 above shows the level of education of the various respondents as follows. 40% of the respondents were OND holders, 30% were holders of BSc or HND, and 20% were holders of primary and secondary school certificates while 10% were holders of Master's degree and other equivalent Qualifications.

Table 4.5

Religion

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Christianity	16	80.0	80.0	80.0
Islam	3	15.0	15.0	95.0
Others	1	5.0	5.0	100.0
Total	20	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey 2021

Table 4.5 above illustrates the religion of the respondents. It reported that 80% of the respondents were Christian, 15% were of the Islamic faith while the remaining 5% were from other religion.

Table 4.6

Ethnicity

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yoruba	16	80.0	80.0	80.0



Igbo	3	15.0	15.0	95.0
Others	1	5.0	5.0	100.0
Total	20	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey 2021

Table 4.6 above illustrates the ethnicity of the respondents. It reported that 80% of the respondents were yoruba, 15% were igbos while 5% were Hausa and others.

Table 4.7

Employment Length

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Less than 3 Years	5	25.0	25.0	25.0
3-5 Years	11	55.0	55.0	80.0
5-10 Years	4	20.0	20.0	100.0
Total	20	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey 2021

Table 4.7 above clearly illustrates the years the various respondents have stayed in the organization. It reported that 55% of the respondents have been in the organization for between 3-5 years, 25% have stayed in the organization for less than 3 years while 20% have stayed in the organization for between 5-10 years.



Table 4.8

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.112 ^a	.013	-.042	2.18710

a. Predictors: (Constant), DemocraticLeadershipStyle

Table 4.9

ANOVA^a

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	1.098	1	1.098	.230	.638 ^b
Residual	86.102	18	4.783		
Total	87.200	19			

a. Dependent Variable: EmployeePerformance

b. Predictors: (Constant), DemocraticLeadershipStyle

Table 4.10

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	12.779	5.405		2.364	.029
	DemocraticLeadership Style	-.196	.409	-.112	-.479	.638



a. Dependent Variable: Employee Performance

From the tables above, the p-value of our regression model is seen to be at 0.638. Using the significance level of 0.05, it is obvious that the p-value is higher than the significance value. As an implication, the regression model is said to be insignificant. Due to this, it can be concluded that the democratic leadership style has no significant impact on employee performance.

Table 4.11

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.280 ^a	.078	.027	2.11320

a. Predictors: (Constant), AutocraticLeadershipStyle

Table 4.12

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	6.819	1	6.819	1.527	.232 ^b
	Residual	80.381	18	4.466		
	Total	87.200	19			

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Performance



b. Predictors: (Constant), Autocratic Leadership Style

Table 4.13

Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	16.166	4.851		3.332	.004
Autocratic Leadership Style	-.550	.445	-.280	-1.236	.232

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Performance

Tables 4.11, 4.12, and 4.13 represent the model summary, ANOVA and regression coefficient of data relating to autocratic leadership style and employee performance. As seen in the model summary, the adjusted R square is seen to be at 0.027. This means that 2.7% of the variance in the employee performance is explained by autocratic leadership style. Moreover, using the significance level of 0.05, the p-value which is 0.232 is seen to be higher than the significance level. Hence, the regression model is said to be insignificant. Owing to this, it can be concluded that autocratic leadership style has insignificant impact on employee performance.

Table 4.14

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.359 ^a	.129	.080	2.05457

a. Predictors: (Constant), LaissezfaireLeadershipStyles



Table 4.15

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	11.217	1	11.217	2.657	.120 ^b
	Residual	75.983	18	4.221		
	Total	87.200	19			

a. Dependent Variable: EmployeePerformance

b. Predictors: (Constant), LaissezfaireLeadershipStyles

Table 4.16

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	14.421	2.630		5.484	.000
	LaissezfaireLeadership Styles	-.567	.348	-.359	-1.630	.120

a. Dependent Variable: EmployeePerformance

From Table 4.14, Table 4.15 and Table 4.16 above, it could be seen that the adjusted R square is 0.080. This means that 8% of the variance in employee performance can be explained by laissez-faire leadership style. Furthermore, using the significance level of 0.05, the p-value is seen to be at 0.120. With the p-value being higher than the significance value (0.05), the regression model is said to be insignificant. This implies that laissez-faire leadership style has insignificant impact on employee performance.



5. SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Discussion of Finding

Findings from this study carried out at Pathfinder hotels Ado-Ekiti shows that the three researched leadership styles namely democratic, autocratic and laissez-faire has no significant impact on the performance of the employees. A critical observation of the multidimensionality of leadership styles, it could be deduced that application of same has no impact whatsoever on the successes recorded by the business entity.

5.2 Contribution to Knowledge

This study makes modest contribution to knowledge and the series of existing literatures especially as leadership styles relates to employee performance. Future researches can rely on this study as a foundation when conducting their studies. It is expected to widen the horizon of those who seeks knowledge, particularly those occupying managerial positions in similar sector. The study also offers empirical ingredients for future studies.

5.3 Recommendation and Implication

Based on the researcher's observation, from the study and findings of the study, the research recommends that the management of the hospitality outfit derive more dynamic leadership styles like the transactional, participative and transformational style of leadership as this might suit the nature of the businesses in the hospitality sector. It is also advised that some of the researched styles of leadership should be strategically and practically implemented especially the democratic style of leadership as it has serious tendencies in building an harmonious relationship with the dependent variable employee performance.



5.4 Conclusion

This study has x-rayed the impact of democratic, Autocratic and Laissez Faire leadership styles on workforce performance. The focus were only on three types of leadership styles. This study has offered exposition on the impact of leadership styles on workforce performance. The study concluded that the various leadership styles that were researched had no positive significant effect on the dependent variable employee performance. What this implies is that there are other leadership styles that were at play in the hospitality outfit or there might be a blend of two or more leadership styles at play in the organization. It is imperative to state that the method of research might have affected the outcome of the research. This is a gap for future researches. Future researches can either consider using mixed methodologies or utilize only the qualitative approach. This will strengthen the results as it appears to be a limitation to a general acceptability. Apart from leadership styles researched in this study, there are other leadership styles like the transactional, transformational and participative styles of leadership that can be researched in future researches in the same organization as it relates to employee performance.

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