RELEVANCE OF LEADERSHIP STYLES ON INSTITUTIONAL PERFORMANCE. A CASE STUDY OF GARISSA UNIVERSITY, GARISSA COUNTY, KENYA

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ABSTRACT

Purpose of the Study: To examine the relevance of leadership styles on institutional performance in government institutions of higher learning, with a focus on autocratic leadership style, bureaucratic leadership style, and democratic leadership style.

Methodology: The study used a mixed-methods approach, with a survey instrument and questionnaire used to sample a total of 80 respondents representing 87% of the total staff population at Garissa University College.

Findings: The study found that Garissa University College majorly uses democratic leadership style in its operations, and that this leadership style has had an appreciable influence on the operations and performance of the institution. The study also found that there is a strong relationship between leadership style and institutional performance.

Conclusion: The study recommends that the management of the institution apply more of the democratic leadership style, which has been shown to be effective in promoting institutional performance. The study also suggests that the management could mix the democratic leadership style with other leadership styles where necessary, depending on the specific situation.

Keywords: *Relevance of Leadership Styles, Institutional Performance, Garissa University, Garissa County, Kenya*

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Leadership is a style of character that aims to shape and exploit the exertions of people to attain its goals and objectives (Landis et al., 2014). These characteristics give the wide range of meanings to the term leadership ensuing the known leadership styles. When it comes to leading others, leadership style depends on how one chooses to lead the people. According to Nyambuga (2012) leaders use varied approaches to provide leadership to the organizations they own or lead. Several leadership styles exist, ranging from authoritarian, democratic, laissez-faire among others. Mittal (2015) acknowledges that leadership is a powerful practice that is capable of dictating the performance and success of an organization. Proficient managers engage their followers, communicate the right vision, change the level of tolerance, and create the most appropriate culture that resonates with the changing needs of different stakeholders. Efficient leadership has emerged as an effective model for empowering employees and ensuring that existing challenges are addressed. Over the years, organizational leadership in government institutions has been hierarchical in nature (Sparks, 2015).

This means that topmost managers make decisions and dictate the behaviors and practices of different workers. Numerous studies focusing on the ineffectiveness of leadership in different institutions have revealed that incompetent individuals are usually identified to dictate and influence the performance of different followers. For instance, Mittal (2015) observed that many managers in such organizations were incapable of developing the right vision and sharing it with their followers. Consequently, the level of motivation was affected significantly. The concept of success has not been taken seriously by many leaders in such organizations. This is a challenge that has been catalyzed by the absence of adequate measures to gauge or monitor the effectiveness of such institutions. Matei and Drumasu (2015) argues that the recent past has been characterized by new changes in the field of leadership in an attempt to redefine or support the effectiveness of government institutions. Mittal (2015) indicates that many established or emerging democracies have managed to formulate new policies to ensure that more citizens have access to quality and efficient services from the government.

Leadership in such organizations has been improved whereby the idea of power of exchange has been taken seriously (Mittal, 2015). This means that managers can develop superior competencies and apply them accordingly in an attempt to secure positive outcomes. The need to hire or identify individuals with adequate personalities and values is being taken seriously

than ever before. This initiative has continued to transform the effectiveness and performance of different institutions in the world.

Different types of leadership styles exist in organizations. The nature and culture of an organization are determinative factors on which leadership style fits the organization best. Also, the goals and targets of a company play significant roles in the leadership styles that exist inside it. Leadership styles can be used interchangeably depending on the situation. The same leadership style cannot be used all the time. The most successful leaders can move among these styles, adopting the one that corresponds to the needs of the organization. Effective human capital management strategically incorporates new leadership styles. (Thornton, 2013). Kigari Teachers Training College was the Kenya's first higher learning center started in 1910 to train educators by the Missionary Societies. The first university was Nairobi's Royal Technical College, opened in 1956 now University of Nairobi. According to Thornton (2003) Kenya has fifty-two university colleges, with a total student population of over 250 thousand, up from 80,000 in 2003. There was a 20% rise in new students during the 2012-13 academic sessions over the previous academic year. In 40 technical and vocational institutions, about 80,000 students are enrolled, up to 34,000 in 2003. Additionally, CPS International poll, East Africa's best ICT universities are: (Information and Communication Technology).

Garissa County government higher education institutions have reportedly been performing poorly in recent years despite having leaders. There also has been issues like shared governance, financial crisis, legislative interference in teaching and issues in contingent faculty positions. Many of the learning institutions across the country do not have a distinct leadership style used for the administration and governance of the institutions. The failure to have an unwavering leadership style has led to ungovernable systems where students are left to do what pleases them and has been linked to underperformance in most institutions of higher learning. Aspects of leadership including need to meet strategic mission and vision of an organization, information gathering, and decision making largely attract influence from religion. The researcher demonstrates that religion influence leadership into two areas – under leadership styles and under leadership roles.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The role of higher learning leaders is inevitable in steering employees towards goal attainment. This is only possible with adoption of effective and relevant leadership within the organization. Prior leadership studies and models claim on effectiveness of the respective models however,

Germano (2010), noted that the relationship between leadership style and performance in the organization depends on the model relevance within the organizational environment. This meant that there is no measurement to assess correlation between leadership style and performance in an organization. Further, there is a lack of a set of standards and criteria that can measure how leaders influence employee satisfaction. Thus, to mediate the relationship between leadership styles and institutional performance, assessing its leadership style relevance on the institutional setting is the effective approach to understand how the style affects the performance in institutions' performance. Further, considering the reactive nature of higher learning institutions, information on relevance of leadership styles seems unclear. Thus, rather than trying to reinvest in the higher education, value will be added if the relevance of leadership styles on this institutional performance is assessed. The study aimed at investigating the relevance of leadership styles on institutions' performance, a case analysis of Garissa University in Garissa County, Kenya.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section presents the theoretical background, empirical review and conceptual framework.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Different concepts are proposed to clarify how diverse styles of leadership have an impact on institutional performance in various educational institutions. The majority of theories have attempted to explain how leadership styles affect higher education institutions.

Scientific Management Theory

Frederick W. Taylor coined the theory of scientific management, which has boosted productivity in every workplace by standardizing labor. Taylor carefully studied the number of hours required to complete a given task. The main principle of this approach is to eliminate chance and coincidence through the scientific study of every aspect of work. The theory disregarded the need for skilled labor by assigning each worker a specific task to complete. Scientific management has improved workplace output, but it has also led to the monopolization of employees and deprived them of the freedom to choose work they enjoy. Employees are also expected to complete their duties within a specified time frame. Capitalism has made extensive use of scientific management due to its ability to increase output and profits for organizations.

According to Callahan (1962), Frederick W. Taylor's theory of scientific management was based on the following approaches: Organizing labor into distinct, measurable, and observable responsibilities. Managing workers in all spheres of management. Curtailing outlays by considering the employees' financial interests, as well as by appealing to systematic practices and development. This theory was first incorporated into the corporate world and the education sector due to concerns about strategizing America's education system, which was diverse due to immigration (Tyack & Cuban, 1995). In response to these developments, reformers emerged who wanted the business and education systems to be transparent, accountable, and efficient. One of the reforms put in place was for educational managers to learn from the corporate world (Callahan, 1962; Kliebard, 1970) and to develop a quantifiable system of measurement to assess the performance of each learning institution and to practice economic lucidity to guide the education sector (Cuban, 1988; Gray, 1993).

Therefore, public education was now being monitored, tested, and competitive. Trujillo (2014) asserts that the acquisition of efficient experts in school matters such as performance evaluation and productivity maximization became common. Additionally, ties between outside advisors from the corporate world and institute managers were also formed. Educationalists and various societies reflected on issues of academics, prompting them to seek assistance in collecting school data, directing school managers in matters pertaining to leadership in the institutions from consultancies (Cuban, 1988). Trujillo (2014) states that susceptibility was seen in urban institutions, thus requiring reforms in management. The institutions were mainly full of immigrants and students who came from low-income households. The performance of these institutions was low, prompting the different stakeholders to come up with a better management system for them.

It is worth noting that in recent years, different organizations have been involved in spearheading the education sectors to enhance quality performances by giving the needed resources. Some consultancies are also offering management expertise for the schools that are struggling to perform (Trujillo, 2014). According to Burch (2009), consultancies always offer their support in alignment with the requirements of the states' education system. Their assistance is always grounded in the principles of proficiency, output, and responsibility. These are undoubtedly some of the policies that have hardened managerial roles in the education sector today.

Regarding the United States Department of Education (2001), Taylor's thoughts of regulating responsibilities to upsurge proficiency and production equivalents the implementation of

higher consistent tests with the Act of No Child Left Behind. The theory has also posited that when a leader must have a styler of leadership that enables a leader to allocate institutional resources properly, therefore allowing maximization of profits. Quality management also enhances and strengthens the relationship between the staffs and students, thereby achieving productivity in terms of performance and quality education.

Great-Man Theory

Because most civilizations look to their heroes to define their accomplishments and justify their failings, the search for universal leadership attributes has lasted for millennia. Carlyle (1847) observed that the awareness of the protagonists that "widespread antiquity, the times gone by of what has been achieved by human beings, is at the lowermost of the past of the inordinate people who have fought here." In this theory, only heroically endowed individuals are capable of ascending to leadership positions. Carlyle (1847) supposed that great men are not made but born. Dobbins & Platz (2008) echo Hooks's highlight of the importance of the "eventful man" against the man who creates events. The eventful character remained complicated in a historical environment, but he had no natural choice in how events unfolded. His premise was that the event-creating man's activities altered the course of events, which might have taken an entirely different path without him.

The point at which "huge capacities of knowledge, volition, and character established man's place in the universe, rather than remarkable achievements." Although this paradigm was morally wrong, as Hitler, Napoleon, and others demonstrated, the Great Man concept came under investigation in the aftermath of events. This outstanding collection of individuals faded from prominence, impeding the growth of their various businesses (MacGregor, 2003). Another force has acquired the coup de grace: a great individual who, by his brains and foresight, has the potential to preside over a burgeoning organization with dictatorial powers, so delaying democratization. The leadership philosophy has developed from the belief that leaders are born or predestined to fill a particular function at a particular moment to reflect specific characteristics that indicate leadership potential.

Trait Theory

According to trait theory, leaders are believed to be born with specific physical and psychological qualities. This theory did not consider whether leadership skills can be passed down through family genes or acquired through experience. Jenkins distinguished between two

types of characteristics that contribute to a leader's effectiveness: developmental characteristics, such as stature, acumen, and self-confidence; and effectiveness characteristics, such as charisma, which can be influenced by experience or learning (Ekvall & Arvonen, 1991). Max Weber argued that the most important radical strength is "the ability to create a completely new direction through the complete devotion to the leader of those who perceive them as endowed with nearly supernatural, exceptional qualities as well as expertise. A later study found few differences in intelligence, physical attractiveness, and personality between followers and leaders, casting doubt on the early emphasis on these characteristics (Burns, 2003). Due to the difficulty of identifying the traits shared by all great leaders, trait theory has fallen out of favor as a stand-alone theory.

Contingency Theories

According to contingency theories, no single leadership style is flawless because it depends on various factors, including the quality of the followers, their position, and more. As outlined in this theory, there is no single style of leadership because each situation requires a different approach. Leaders frequently alter the company's dynamics and surroundings and its workers. Leadership theories based on theories of contingency are behavioral theories that states that organizations cannot be led using one style of leadership. (Greenleaf, 1977). However, while situational theorists believed that subordinates have an indispensable role in defining a leader-subordinate relationship, contingency theorists held the opposite view. Even though the main emphasis of situational leadership depends on an individual leader, other members contribution is also important. Societal subtleties and leadership research like this are the basis for many of our present theories. According to Bass (1997), the idea of situational leadership approach should be tailored to the level of maturity of those under them. There is no single applicable leadership style strategy.

EMPIRICAL REVIEW

Every institution has a preferred leadership style which they are most comfortable with. The style recognizes the necessity of specific leadership abilities that allows each leader within the institution to carry out specific action while drawing on the leader's previous competence. As with one-size-fits-all clothing, no single look is appropriate for every situation. Regarding the leadership in universities, Bass (2000) noted that transformational and transactional leadership styles are referred to as two sides of the coin that cannot be separated. Transactional leaders

are considered the best, compared to other types of leaders. The reason is that transformational leaders strive to meet materials needs, encourage followers to build self-concept, create consistency, think about how to motivate his followers, and turn them into new leaders. Transformational and transactional leadership behaviors are needed to build the future of universities, as proposed by Bass (2000:26).

Considering that universities have different characteristics, particularly regarding the members of organization or followers. Therefore, a leadership style suitable for the academic field is required. Furthermore, Levin (2000:2) quoted Birnbaum's opinion (1989) which confirms that observing the transformational leadership required in the universities a leader with the ability to change his intuition into a successful one is needed considering that a tight global competition in the academic field. Levine (2000), leaders in higher learning institutions are required to be very receptive to the shifting societal, fiscal and educational system requirements. The milieu of these institutes is changing and leaders also need to be very flexible to accommodate the changes that are experienced. Additionally, importance should be put to do research in the area in respective areas of tertiary institutions. An assessment of study done by Bryman (2007) states that study in leaders in tertiary educational institutions has not been done extensively and aspects of areas of leadership efficiency, chiefly at departmental levels needs to be taken into consideration.

An evaluation of works done to investigate the leadership styles that are effective for a leader in higher learning institutions in the level of departments, it was found that there is astoundingly slight pragmatic research to address the problem of leadership in higher learning institutions. (Bryman, 2007). Furthermore, research by Bryman, (2007); Eacott (2011) and Lumby (2012) highpoints that higher learning institution staffs needs to be directed with different leadership styles compared to other professions. The staffs need to be supervised and monitored closely for the institution to realize it vision as a center of learning.

Recent studies on leadership styles in higher learning sectors that researched on transformational-transactional leadership style recommends that effective leaders need to use transformational leadership style to be successful in a given learning institutions. In addition, transactional leadership style coupled with the use of laissez-faire leadership can also be an alternative for a leader. (Bateh & Heyliger, 2014). The governance in Kenyan universities comprise the authority to make pronouncements about essential policies in several critical areas relating to colleges and universities. These areas include the mission, vision, location, enrollment size, the quality of expected in students and staff performance, internal organization

structure, division of resources for operations, and support programs. (Miller, 1985). In relation to ethical and biblical leadership in higher learning institutions, leaders are expected to set shared values and principles that are understood and owned by everyone in the institution. To enhance performance, every action of individual is sense-checked against this vision and mission and if completion of said action would not uphold the values and principles, it is automatically considered invalid. Additionally, servant leadership is also important leader in every institution.

Yang and Islam (2012), noted that democratic leadership style is normally used where organizational environment emphasizes on teamwork between the leader and other members of an organization. Spedlove (2007) acknowledges that leaders who use this style of leadership communicates and involves the team members in driving the organization towards its vision. Yang and Islam (2012) adds that leadership focused in maintain and creating a rapport between the employees creates a positive impact on the employees resulting into job satisfaction. This style is also characterized by democracy in making decisions. Making decagons is known to be one of the behaviors of a leader with influence (Amzat & Idris, 2012). Bryman (2007) identifies that giving members of faculty an opportunity to participate in the decision-making processes in a learning institution gives them encouragement to communicate freely and be productive.

Study by Khan et al. (2015), pointed that democratic type of leadership is only obligatory when leader is leading members who are expertise in their area of work and have portrayed individual achievements. Feidler & House's (1994) states that in this style, there are leaders who work with individuals and affiliation performances and those who work in making sure that there is high production. Study by Devi & Subiyantoro (2021), on implementation of democratic leader's ability to build rapport and trust with his team is scrutinized. Leaders need to have the capability to establish, organize, and express their personal and others follower's tasks to support the corporation attain desired goals, increase turnover, and accomplish its given mission. Iqbal et al. (2015), have proposed authoritarian, democratic, and laissez-faire forms of government as viable options for leaders. Authoritarian leaders make decisions without consulting their staff. In this type of leadership style, staffs are allowed to make their own decision as long as it leads to positive outcome on the assigned roles. Leaders who use this kind of style of leadership also consult their staff before making a decision in the institution (Iqbal et al. 2015).

According to Bennis (2017), bureaucratic leadership relies on a clear chain of command and strict regulations. This style is a very decent style for work involving serious safety risks, such as handling toxic substances, moving large objects. The focus is on compliance with rules and laid down procedures to make sure that the group is doing their job correctly and safely. Further study by Al Khajeh, (2018), pointed that bureaucratic is a leadership style that is diffused among a number of departments or people and there is a strictest of rules. This is a classic style of leadership and is used quite a lot in organizations that don't encourage innovation and change and by leaders who may be insecure and uncertain in what their role may be. Findings by Ojokuku et al. (2012) concluded that bureaucratic type of leadership has no space to explore new ways to solve problems and is usually slow-paced to ensure approval of the ladders stated by the company.

Research by Islam (2010), noted that leaders that try to speed up the process usually led to frustration and anxiety in the team. This is the case with bureaucratic leadership styles since employees operating within a bureaucracy are given very little choice as to how they play their roles and the vast majority of their day-to-day tasks will be governed by the rule book. According to Arshad et al. (2021), bureaucratic leadership is very useful in organizations where employees do routine tasks. When the job is routine and doesn't change over a long period of time, that kind of job generally requires a definite set of safety rules or working guidelines in order to comply with the law. Gultom & Situmorang (2020), recommended that bureaucratic leadership style is effective when employees are performing tasks that require handling cash, jobs that involve working with large amounts of money to ensure strict adherence to policies and procedures to avoid loss.

Following the trend in industry, higher education has chosen to base its performance assessment initiatives on the notion of quality. Quality, however, is a notoriously ambiguous term. In the commercial world where the notion should be at home, it defies generally agreed definition (Garvin, 1988). Equally, a number of writers in the higher education field have recognized how indeterminate the quality concept is when applied to higher education (Bauer, 1992; Staropoli, 1992; Liaison Committee of Rectors' Conferences, 1993; Vroeijenstijn, 1992; Williams, 1990). The ambiguous nature of quality has been emphasized by Reeves and Bednar (1994), who have traced the evolution of quality definitions and have reached the following conclusion: "The search for a universal definition of quality and a statement of lawlike relationships has been unsuccessful".

This study tested the relevance of leadership styles in institutional performance assessment in higher education. Garissa university, following the general trend, has quality at the center of institutional performance assessment in higher education. Kenyan higher educational institutions are mandated to demonstrate their effectiveness by a system which emphasizes "quality" performance through self-assessment and peer review (Pounder, 1997).

Regarding this, Ogbonna & Harris (2000) noted that leadership styles correlate to the outcome of the performance, as well as the culture types concerning superior performance. Similarly, organizational culture correlates with the leadership behavior. Therefore, this research study is needed to identify, explore and explain the character and relationship patterns among the organizational cultures, leadership styles, and performances. Implementing a suitable leadership style should adhere to the organizational culture to achieve the expected performance. In this case, it's clear that implementing the leadership style depends on the leader itself (Ogbonna & Harris, 2000). Is he/she able to apply the appropriate leadership style that fits with the culture of the organization in order to deliver a performance? This research study should be able to answer this question.

Furthermore, the performance concerning the organizational culture that needs to be built in which the organization should be ready, capable, and willing to change as described by Bass (2000:20) who stated, "Organizations that are ready, able, and willing to change are more transformational than transactional in terms of the new paradigm of leadership (Bass, 2000)". Leadership and organizational culture are interrelated parts. Leadership is one of the significant and determining elements to achieve the organization's vision. This suggests that leadership is required to promote performance; including the establishment of the organizational culture in order to possess a sustainable competitiveness. Regarding this performance, Mulyadi (2010) stated that another determining factor of organizational performance is human factor involved in the organization. Every employee has specific expectations and goals resulting in behavioral differences and performance diversities.

Leadership styles is a key area where religion manifests itself with several authors indicating that there is a significant relationship between Christianity and the dimensions of leadership styles. According to Hage & Posner (2013), Christians use their religious beliefs and practices to model, encourage, enable, inspire and challenge, key dimensions of leadership styles. The paper holds the position that the impact of Christianity on leadership shows in the varied leadership styles adopted. Christianity influence is felt in all forms of leadership they deem

appropriate be it democratic leadership, servant, transformational, charismatic, or strategic leadership as shown in the following discussions.

Autocratic leadership is exercised by various leaders in the Bible including King Solomon and King David. Such leadership involves having the leader exercise total authority bestowed upon him or her by people. In autocratic leadership, the leader is in control over all decisions with little or no input from group members. While this is not the kind of leadership widely accepted, there are various instances where leaders exercised autocratic leadership (Kagema, 2012). Under Christianity, followers are expected to be submissive to leaders while leaders are advised to exercise responsibility. Leaders in autocratic leadership have a lot of power over the people. However, the leadership style is incredibly efficient.

Christianity is also deemed to be the cornerstone of democratic values. The Christian democratic values are based in Jesus' sovereign authority. While Jesus Christ is depicted as the infinite powerful rule, the teachings show the need to exercise democratic leadership by involving his followers in decision making processes as well as building relationships with followers while at the same time striving for consensus from followers (Wambura, 2010). Therefore, it is evident that religion has powerful lessons on the need for democratic leadership which empowers them to make decisions. The political leadership in Kenya keeps on arguing that the voice of the people is the voice of God to emphasize the importance of democratic processes (Mohsen, 2013). The Christian practices such as swearing using the bible are also incorporated into the democratic practice among the Kenyan leadership.

Servant leadership also the center stage of each religion. Coined by Robert Greenleaf in 1977, servant leadership involves serving followers, searching for opportunities to serve followers, and training servants to lead as servants (Sendjaya & Sarros, 2002). In Christianity, Jesus demonstrated various traits of servant leadership more so exemplified in washing his disciples' feet. Servant leaders lead by example. In servant leadership, values are increasingly important, helping leaders achieve power because of ideals, values, and ethics (Brubaker, 2013). The Kenyan political leaders regularly posture as servants in a bid to endear themselves to the public.

Charismatic leadership is a leadership style that resembles transformational leadership. In charismatic leadership, leaders evoke nonetheless, charismatic leaders tend to focus on themselves, thus high belief in oneself as opposed to followers (McGuire & Hutchings, 2007). Succession of leaders in spaces that implore charismatic leadership may be difficult because replacing such a leader is extremely difficult. Charismatic leaders such as Reverend Martin

Luther King are acknowledged as having fused religious teaching into their leadership enabling them to push their transformative agendas in a short period of time (McGuire & Hutchings, 2007).

According to McClendon and Riedl (2015), political leaders in Kenya use the Pentecostal and Charismatic messaging to stimulate citizens to participate in political activities. Raila Odinga has endlessly invoked the Biblical charisma in his campaigns for the presidential seat in Kenya over the years. In the 2017 General Elections campaigns Raila Odinga campaigned under the theme of the walk to Canaan promising his supporters of reaching the promised land once elected (BBC, 2017).

Strategic leadership on the other hand focuses on leaders with overall responsibility for an organization (Gaitho, Ogutu, Awino & Kitiabi, 2018). Strategic leadership is exercised by top management or executives in an organization. Gaitho and Awino (2018) further indicated that strategic leaders often focus on creating organizational the vision, meaning and purpose. Strategies are adopted to enable the leader achieve the vision of the organization as well as help subordinates execute their tasks efficiently. Religion incorporates strategic leadership extensively exemplified through various rulers in the history of religion. For instance, leaders exhibited strategic leadership in battlegrounds while engaging with their opponents. In addition, to achieve the best outcomes, leaders such as Moses and Jesus utilized strategic leadership to guide followers (Worden, 2005). The political leadership in Kenya fashions their visions in line with religious beliefs with an aim of achieving desired political ends through religious effects among their followers. The politicians share their strategic visions using Biblical language to give hope and inspiration.

Additionally, literature on African leadership frequently reports comparative cross-cultural studies that contrasted Eurocentric and Afrocentric perspectives and practices (Kessler & Wong-MingJi, 2009; Moran et al., 2011). It was evident from the reviewed literature that in some respects, African culture, organizational practices, leadership styles, and leader attributes differed from the values espoused by Western societies and the practices endorsed in contemporary management literature (Bjerke, 1999; Steers et al.,2012; Tucker et al., 2014). Further, the findings of the current study also indicate that Kenyan leadership practices vary from other African countries (Akinnusi, 1991; Jackson et al., 2008; Kuada, 1994; Metsäpelto, 2009) as well as from the Sub-Saharan African profile presented by GLOBE and other researchers (House et al., 2004; Littrell, 2011). To propose an Africa model of leadership is problematic (Bolden & Kirk, 2009; van den Heuvel,2008). Due to Kenya's ethno-cultural

diversity, the findings of this study also need local contextualization and further investigation into within-country differences.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

A conceptual framework is a representation of the relationship a researcher expects to see between variables. Conceptual frameworks can be written or visual and are generally developed based on a literature review of existing studies about the topic under study.
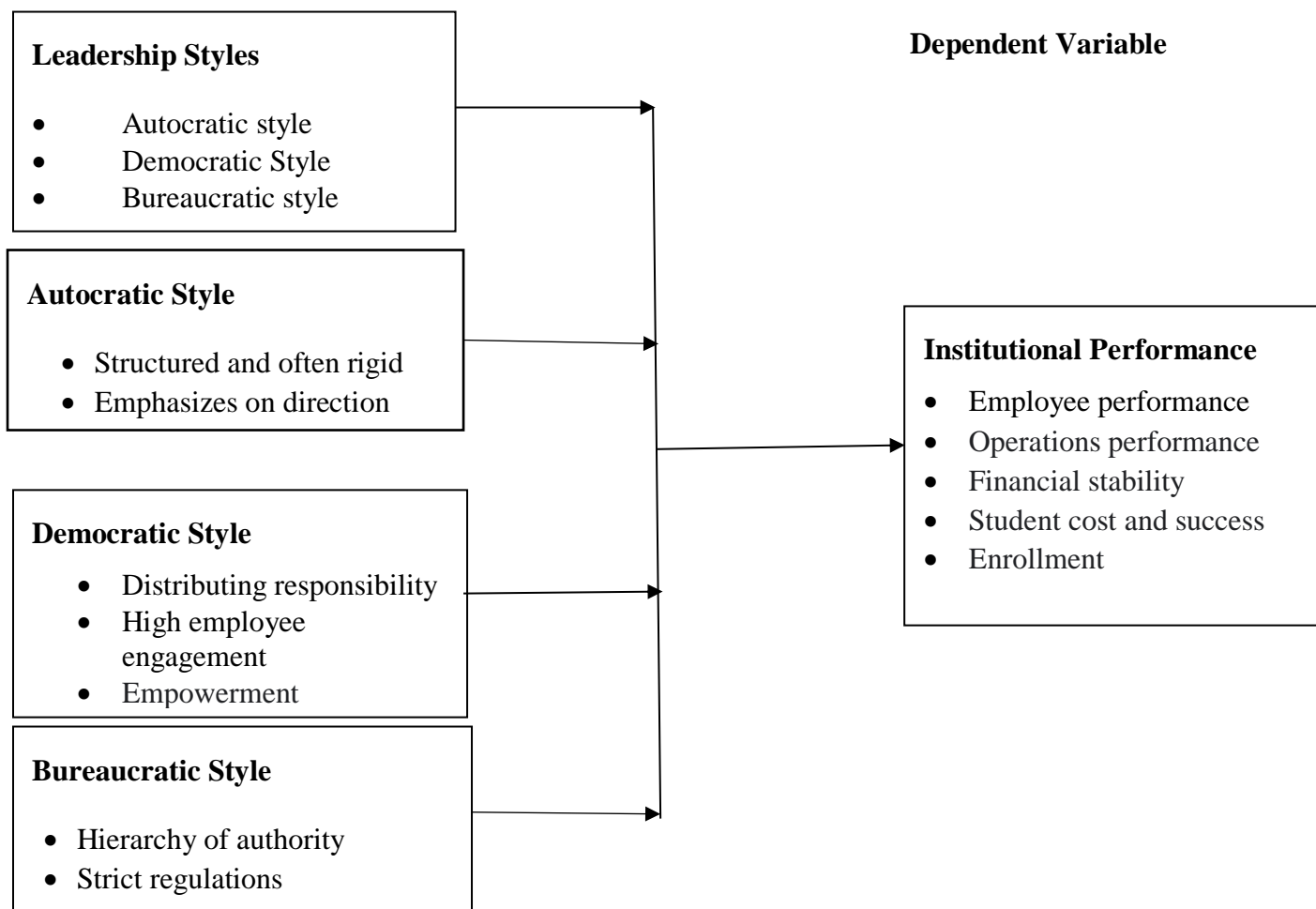
Dependent Variable

Leadership Styles

- Autocratic style
- Democratic Style
- Bureaucratic style

Autocratic Style

- Structured and often rigid
- Emphasizes on direction

Institutional Performance

- Employee performance
- Operations performance
- Financial stability
- Student cost and success
- Enrollment

Democratic Style

- Distributing responsibility
- High employee engagement
- Empowerment

Bureaucratic Style

- Hierarchy of authority
- Strict regulations

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this study, the researcher used a mixed-methods research design. The study was conducted at Garissa University, Garissa County, Kenya. The target population was the university management, heads of faculties, students, and workers of Garissa University, Garissa County, Kenya. The sample size was 92 respondents, and proportionate stratified sampling was used to

identify the total number of respondents to be drawn from each category. The primary data collection instruments were a semi-structured interview and a questionnaire with closed-ended and open-ended questions. The primary data analysis methods were qualitative and quantitative data analysis techniques. These data analysis techniques can be used independently or in combination to help business leaders and decision-makers acquire business insights from different data types.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Respondents agreed that Garissa University has adopted leadership styles for efficiency in the institution. The main types identified are autocratic leadership, democratic leadership style, and bureaucratic leadership style. Respondents agreed that democratic leadership style is the most popular and preferred style among staff and students at the institution. They also agreed that autocratic leadership style affects their performance negatively. The regression results indicated a significant negative effect of autocratic style on the performance of higher learning institutions. The majority of respondents agreed that democratic leadership style is the most popular style adopted at the university. There was agreement among respondents that democratic leadership creates a conducive environment for employees to execute their duties effectively. The regression results indicate that there is a significant positive effect of democratic leadership style on the performance of higher learning institutions. Respondents agreed that bureaucratic style is an effective leadership style in guiding the institution to its desired future. The regression results pointed to a significant positive effect of bureaucratic leadership style on the performance of higher learning institutions.

CONCLUSIONS

The study found that Garissa University has adopted three main leadership styles: autocratic, democratic, and bureaucratic. Autocratic leadership style was found to have a negative effect on performance, while democratic leadership style had a positive effect. Bureaucratic leadership style was also found to have a positive effect on performance, but only if properly implemented. The study's findings suggest that leadership style can have a significant impact on the performance of higher learning institutions. Democratic leadership style is the most effective leadership style for improving performance, while autocratic leadership style is the least effective. Bureaucratic leadership style can be effective, but only if properly implemented.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Higher learning institutions should strive to adopt democratic leadership styles. This will help to create a more positive and productive work environment, which can lead to improved performance. Institutions should also be mindful of the potential drawbacks of autocratic and bureaucratic leadership styles.

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