Influence of Leadership Styles on Staff Retention: A Review of Literature

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Abstract: Prior to the 1970s and the beginning of the 1980s, majority of people joined organizations and stayed for a very long time, sometimes for the duration of their working lives. This study is a review of the literature on leadership styles and how well they foster staff retention in organizations. The literature review further looks at the relationship between leadership styles and employee retention, which is positively and significantly impacted by leadership style. It is worthy to note that, the more effective a company's leadership style; the more motivated the employees will be to stay there. The non-physical work environment amplifies the influence of leadership style on employee retention. It was found among other things that job mobility and voluntarily changing jobs started to rise sharply, employers started to face the issue of employee turnover, and a corresponding management tool known as employee retention started to be developed. The purpose of the study is to determine how leadership styles affect an organization's ability to retain employees. Leadership style that encourages staff retention should be adopted because of the review of several empirical studies, which revealed a substantial relationship between leadership style and employees' intentions to leave. These findings, together with earlier research, support the assertion that leadership styles have significant impact on employee retention. This review paper possesses the potential to aid HR managers and other decision makers in organizations to develop leaders through training and development programmes with the goal of increasing job satisfaction as well as reducing staff turnover rates.

Keywords: Staff retention, leadership style, motivated, work environment, employee turnover

1.0   Introduction

Employee retention is one of the most important challenges facing organizational managers due to the lack of trained labour, significant employee turnover, and economic development (Michael, 2008). According to Michael (2010), current leadership theories describe leaders according to qualities or how influence and power are used to further organizational goals. According to him, leaders can be categorized as autocratic, democratic, bureaucratic, charismatic, or laissez-faire when using trait-based descriptions. However, when power is the focal point and how it is used to secure outcomes, leaders are either situational, transactional, or transformational. Leadership philosophies or perspectives found in studies conducted by Ng'ethe et al,(2012); Tian et al, (2020) and Yamin,(2020) suggested that, leadership qualities such as transformational leadership, supportive leadership, empowering leadership, authentic leadership, and servant leadership are particularly effectual in creating a positive work environment, fostering a sense of belonging and ownership among employees, and empowering them to achieve their goals. By demonstrating these qualities, leaders can create a more engaged and committed workforce, which is more likely to stay with the organization over a long term.

According to Olowu and Adamolekun (2005), it is becoming more essential to secure and manage competent human resource as the most valuable resource of any organization, due to the need for effective and efficient delivery of goods and services by organizations, whether in public or private sector. Therefore, for an organization to realize its goals, appropriate strategies for employee recruitment and retention are sine-qua-non for enhanced performance. Kaliprasad (2006) has confirmed that despite the fact that a company may try to bring all these factors into play to enhance employee retention, an employee can still choose to leave the workplace because of bad management. Kaliprasad (2006) pointed out that an organization's ability to retain its employees completely depends upon its ability to manage them. He discovered that the motivating process, the interaction process, the visioning process, and the learning process are four interconnected processes that can be used for an efficient human resource management system. According to Das, B. L., & Baruah, M. (2013), it is significantly more difficult and expensive to hire new personnel than to keep the company's current workforce. Because of this, the primary concern in any business is to make a continual effort to recognize and try to retain all of the best performers, regardless of their age.

Mwita and Tefurukwa (2018) found that there is significant linear relationship between leadership and employee retention in Tanzania commercial banks. In reflecting the transformational leadership theory individuals who are offered leadership and managerial role have to ensure that they let employees be the focal point of their leadership process, as leadership plays a significant role in employee retention. In the quest to attain this feat, Mwita and Tefurukwa (2018) further reiterated that, commercial banks have to pay attention to other factors such as financial incentives and the demands of clients, that are equally essential in retaining employees. It was recommended by the researchers that; training programmes be organised for bank managers and supervisors on leadership skills since managing and leading go hand in hand.

2.0   Employee Retention

Retention is the ability for an organization to keep its employees, stakeholders and customers over a period of time. Retention in Human Resource Management (HRM) context refers to an organization's ability to retain or keep its employees committed, engaged and motivated to prevent them from leaving for opportunities in other organizations. However, in the context of customer retention, it denotes the ability of organizations to retain their customers over a period of time by providing them with high quality products or services, good customer service, customer satisfaction and loyalty (Price, 2001).

Plessis et al (2015) conducted a study that revealed Perceived Organizational Support as significantly related to Talent Management Practices, Perceived Supervisor Support and Intention to Quit. It was further seen that Perceived Supervisor Support was significantly related to Talent Management Practices and Intention to Quit. Talent Management Practices were significantly related to intention to quit as well. These findings further show the essence of leadership role in retaining an organization's workforce for a longer period.

Research conducted by Boakye et al., (2022) on Employee Retention in selected University Colleges in Ghana, show that Senior Members anticipate receiving a high salary, better working conditions, more training opportunities, career development opportunities, favorable work environment, and some sort of institutional recognition and appreciation before accepting employment in to chosen institutions. Again, a number of factors, including better pay, concern and care from employers, greater possibilities for training and development, an improved promotion system, a positive work environment, and higher employee engagement, affected the retention of senior members in to these institutions. The opinions of Senior Members (academic and non-academic) of the chosen institutions on the variables affecting staff retention, however, did not show any discernible variations. This is affirmed by Terera and Ngirande (2017) in their research that there is a significant positive relationship between employee job satisfaction and retention.

3.0   Factors Affecting Employee Retention

Fitz-enz (1990) acknowledged that a variety of factors affect employee retention, and that there are many different reasons why people stay with a company. Management must take into account elements like pay and benefits, job stability, training and advancement, supervisor support culture, workplace atmosphere and organizational justice. Employee happiness and retention are crucial for an organization's performance, according to Osteraker (1999). The three main components of the retention factor are social, mental,

and physical. Employees always choose flexible work projects where they can utilize their skills and see the consequences of their efforts, which, in turn, assists in retaining the precious resources. Work characteristics make up the mental component of retention. The interactions that employees have with others, both internally and externally, make up the social dimension. The working environment and compensation are part of the physical dimension.

Walker (2001) also identified seven elements that can help retain employees: (i) pay and recognition for the work done; (ii) challenging work; (iii) opportunities for advancement and learning; (iv) an inviting environment within the organization; (v) good relationships with coworkers; (vi) a healthy balance between the professional and personal life; and (viii) effective communication. All of these point to a system of workplace standards and procedures that may be interpreted as encouraging employee participation. The retention determinants were further categorized into three by Kehr (2004): power, achievement, and affiliation. Social control and dominance are symbols of power. Achievement is defined as exceeding expectations in one's own performance, while affiliation is the establishment and strengthening of social bonds.

According to Hytter's 2007 research, characteristics like a person's sense of loyalty, trust, dedication, and identification and attachment to the company directly affect how long they stay with the company. Additionally, she discussed the indirect effects of workplace variables like compensation, leadership style, career possibilities, skill development and training, physical working conditions, and the harmony between work and family life.

Kaur (2017) identified that lack of growth opportunities and salary are the major factors which force employees to change their jobs. This study concluded that industries should create some opportunities for the growth of their employees within the organization by adopting new Innovative Technologies and Effective training programs in order to reduce attrition. The company should also think of recruiting people who are in the vicinity of the industry, so that family related problems will not lead to attrition.

Seneviratne (2017) also posited that, human-nature depicts that a strong superior-subordinate-relationship was more likely to engage workers, encourage two-way communication, motivate them to raise productivity, which could finally lead to the building-up of a strong relationship with trust and confidence, thus leading workers to stay committed and loyal to the business.

4.0   Leadership Qualities

Although there is no universally accepted definition of leadership, it can be summed up as a relationship in which one person has an impact on the attitudes or behaviours of others. Leadership and management are incorrectly used interchangeably in common discourse. While leadership involves aligning people with the anticipated objectives of an organization's vision, management focuses on the creation, planning, and control of organizational resources. The two are intimately associated because managing and leading go hand in hand (Gwavuya, 2011).

Okumbe (1998) explained leadership as the process of inspiring and assisting others to act on their own initiative, without being forced to or out of concern for the repercussions of disobedience. Thus, leadership is the process of inspiring and assisting others as they enthusiastically work toward targeted goals. The human element is what ties a group together and drives it toward goals, turning the potential of the collective into reality. A capable leader gives the group direction and guides followers toward the completion of objectives (Voon et al., 2011).

Leaders use their ability to sway others toward achieving objectives and maximizing outcomes within the organization. The influence element is the leader's own activities that have an impact on the followers' behavior and actions, not the leader having power over the followers and guiding or directing them to the goals the leader wants to achieve. In most cases, followers will emulate the leader's actions and behaviours, which will result in the accomplishment of the desired goals (Mat, 2008).

According to Ng 'ethe et al. (2012), a leader's style is the specific behavior used to inspire his team members to accomplish the organization's goals. According to Ushie et al., (2010), a leader's style refers to their own traits that are common to all scenarios. It covers the different forms of control group leaders exercise and how they act toward group members. They emphasized that different leaders have different leadership styles depending on the tasks they believe they should handle alone, the duties they expect their followers to take on, and their

personal philosophy toward personal growth and the realization and fulfillment of subordinate expectations. According to Michael (2010), current leadership theories described leaders as been chosen based on personal qualities or how they use their influence and position to further the goals of the company. Using trait-based classifications, he said, leaders might be categorized as Authoritarian, Democratic, Laissez-Faire, Charismatic, or Bureaucratic. However, when power is the focal point and how it is used to obtain goals, leaders are either Situational, Transactional, or Transformational.

4.1 Autocratic Leadership

In an autocratic system of government; leadership, also known as a dictatorship, the leaders are the center of power and are viewed as having absolute authority (Burke et al., 2006; Vigoda-Gadot, 2007). The transactional theory, which emphasizes the connections between leaders and their followers, is where the style got its start. In this instance, followers comply due to the incentive structures or penalties for non-compliance (Burke et al., 2006; Rad & Yarmohammadian, 2006). It would seem that the drawbacks of an autocratic leadership style outweigh their benefits.

The autocratic leadership style is therefore unpopular with employees (and coworkers) in the majority of organizations. Leaders in organizations might unintentionally use it. According to the literature consulted, democratic leadership is in direct contrast to autocratic leadership. Gordon (2013) opined that organizations with autocratic leadership tend to have high employee turnover rates and cases of absenteeism. She argued that among the issues with autocratic leadership that affect workers, are the notion that managers do not trust them, the fact that managers frequently use punishment or threat to motivate workers, and the fact that workers' opinions are not generally valued. She emphasized further that autocratic leadership frequently negatively impacts morale among employees. She continued by saying that when talented workers encounter an autocratic leader, they become more passive, aggressive, and frequently tend to leave the company. In some cases, the workers may also feel resentful and look for ways to trouble their managers, which may lead to a potentially dangerous situation.

4.2 Democratic leadership

Despite the advantages of democratic leadership, there are still some dangers involved. According to Donna (2011), there are a number of challenges that must be overcome for democratic leadership to be effective in an organization. He listed the following five fundamental issues that confront democratic leadership: competence, crises, consensus, pseudo-participation, and adherence. He added that by overcoming these five drawbacks of democratic leadership, organizations will be able to fully reap the rewards of this management approach, including improved employee performance, satisfaction, and retention rates. This leadership approach puts an emphasis on visionary leadership, change, and improving both individual and organizational outcomes. The implication here is that members have the opportunity to hone their leadership abilities, take on leadership roles, and participate in decision-making. It stands to argue that this leadership approach is more effective than autocratic leadership. Employees believe their views, recommendations, and ideas are taken into account.

4.3 Laissez-Faire Leadership Style

Regarding the laissez-faire leadership style, the leader does not regularly communicate with or solicit feedback from the group's members, nor does he or she directly supervise the members. In particular, it gives the participants complete autonomy and self-rule to decide how to complete the task (Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & Van Engen, 2003; MacBeath, 2005; Rad & Yarmohammadian, 2006). However, the leader is readily available to provide advice whenever the group needs it (Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & Van Engen, 2003). The laissez-faire leadership style, which is used in situations where members are highly skilled, passionate, and satisfied with their jobs, works well even though members have a limited degree of autonomy.

4.4 Charismatic Leadership

According to Burke et al. (2006) and Avolio, Walumbwa, and Weber (2009), charismatic leadership is rooted in a type of boldness, bravery, or extreme personality that is somewhat of a celestial origin. One of the leadership philosophies advanced by Max Weber in 1947 was this one. It is predicated on the idea that charisma and grace attract large followings, self-belief is a fundamental need of leaders, and members adhere to those leaders they hold in high regard rather than any other form of authority (Chen & Silverthorne, 2005; Lee, 2005; Hannah et al., 2008). In church organizations, the charismatic leadership style is quite prevalent. According to Michael (2010), in bureaucratic leadership, the organization's execution, strategy, objectives, and results are all influenced by the policies. He emphasizes further that

bureaucratic leaders frequently come across as distant and extremely resistant to change because they are typically more focused on policies and procedures than on people (employees). According to Swarup (2013), a bureaucratic leadership style can be effective when: employees are required to perform routine tasks repeatedly; employees need to understand specific standards or procedures; employees are working with hazardous or delicate equipment that needs a specific set of procedures to operate; employees are undergoing safety or security training; and employees are required to handle cash. He added that ineffective bureaucratic leadership can occur in the following situations: He added that bureaucratic leadership can be ineffective when: employees lose interest in their jobs and in one another, which is especially true if those habits are no longer useful, and employees are complacent with regard to organizational policies and standards.

5.0   Leadership Style and Employee Retention

Effective leaders, according to Ohari (2008), should mentor staff members in a way that enables them to cultivate a favorable work attitude and behaviors that will enable them to contribute to the achievement of the group and the overall objective of the organization. This supports Oluyinka's (2010) observation that organizational researchers have frequently emphasized the crucial roles that employees' work attitudes and behaviors play in the organization's wellbeing, acceptance, retention, and image. He emphasized that employees who display a bad work attitude and behavior could compromise the integrity of the organization, damage its reputation, foster mistrust, and harm relationships between organizations. He emphasized that it might also harm the reputations of the organization's honorable and diligent members. Largely, he contended that, such an infestation of negative behavioral traits might lower the organization's productivity level and encourage employees to consider quitting because they may find such negative attitudes and work behaviors of their coworkers and leaders repugnant.

According to Eisenberger et al (1990), a worker's relationship with their boss has a significant impact on how they view the company. In his study on the leadership style of hospital directors, McNeese-Smith (1995) reported a substantial positive correlation between staff loyalty to the organization, productivity, and job happiness. According to Brunetto and Farr-Wharton (2002), immediate manager supervision raises workers' levels of job satisfaction in the public sector. Research by Chung-Hsiung et al., (2009) confirmed this stance that, leadership style can positively influence organizational commitment and work satisfaction, and also work satisfaction can positively influence organizational commitment and work performance. Tian et al., (2020) thinks that leaders should implement the traits of transformational leadership such as developing a compelling vision for employees, focusing on goal achievement, having problem-solving techniques, having a sense of purpose, and spending time on training and development of the team to enhance employee retention.

6.0   Conclusion

Understanding human capital is difficult due to its complexity. Human Capital are the resources that have the power to make or break a company. They will contribute to an organization's reputation and long-term growth if they are retained. The most challenging task a business faces today is satisfying and maintaining these resources. Although the research paper made every effort to highlight the various studies conducted and the contributions made by different researchers in the fields of employee retention and job satisfaction, there is still much room for further research in this area by taking into account factors like compensation practices, leadership and supervision, career planning and development, alternative work schedules, working conditions, and others. It is understood that HR specialists should lead these initiatives.

This research draws the conclusion that leadership style affects employee retention in organizations based on the literature's findings. It was discovered that the favoured metric frequently employed in various research to evaluate turnover and retention was intention to depart. When a leader's leadership style is unfavorable, employees are more likely to leave, and when it is good, they are less likely to quit (Ng 'ethe et al., 2012). Therefore, managers' leadership style should receive the attention it merits if organizations want to keep their valued employees. Therefore, businesses need to be careful to choose managers who have the correct personality attributes.

The synthesis of the literature presented above indicates that managers' leadership styles are important for retaining valued and talented employees in their organizations. This is because when their subordinates perceive managers' leadership styles negatively, it

increases the employee turnover rates. When a leader's leadership style is admired and viewed favorably by their team members, it might increase employee retention rates and further increment in employee performance, organizational productivity and profitability. Because of the direct positive impact of leadership style on boosting and revamping employee performance and retention in the company, it behooves management to develop leadership styles that are seen as industrial friendly. The aforementioned claims provide a detailed explanation of the relationship between leadership styles and employee retention in emerging tertiary institutions.

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