Journal of Business and Economic Policy
UNIZIK Business School, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka

UBSJBEP Volume 1 Issue 4
https://journals.unizik.edu.ng/index.php/ubsjbep
Quarterly Journal of UNIZIK Business School, Awka, Nigeria

X-RAYING EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE THROUGH THE LENSES OF VARIOUS LEADERSHIP STYLES

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CITATION: Ojimba, C.C., Idigo, P.I., Okafor, N.D. & Osita, F.C. (2023). X-raying employee performance through the lenses of various leadership styles, *UBS Journal of Business and Economic Policy*, 1(4), 125 - 133.
Paper Type**: Original Research Paper;* ***Correspondence: cf.osita@unizik.edu.ng.

Abstract
An effective leader is one who can direct the efforts of his subordinates towards organizational efforts. It is based on this that the study x-rayed employee's performance through the lenses of different leadership styles. The study was narrowed down to Seplat energy Plc. Sapele, Delta State, Nigeria. The research adopted a survey design, and with a population 230 senior and junior staff of Seplat energy Plc. that were randomly selected for the study. Copies of questionnaire that were distributed, 207 copies were retrieved and were certified fit for the study. A Likert structured questionnaire format was deployed for data collection, which was tested for validity using face and content method while its reliability was assessed using Cronbach Alpha reliability test for internal consistency, and an alpha level of .999 was obtained signaling a good consistency level. The data generated was analyzed using Mean, and hypothesis was tested using simple regression on Statistical packages for Social Science at 5% level of significance. The findings reveal that, democratic leadership style has a significant positive effect on employee performance in Seplat energy Plc. (r= 0.728, n=207-1=206 and p=0.25). Thus, since p value is less than 0.05, hence, democratic leadership style has a positive effect on employee's performance. The study therefore recommended that employees should be allowed to participate in decision-making, especially in that which affects them directly. Leaders should also place emphasis on the understanding of subordinates, employee motivation, self-development and employee development, cultivating appositive employee work attitude, and problem solving.

Key Words: Democratic, Employee Performance, Leadership Styles, Seplat, X-Raying.

Introduction
Increased productivity does not always come through working faster and putting in more hours in one's place of work. Workers unproductivity runs high where there is no control and direction. Employee productivity could be increased if the workers have an organized work schedule, and objectives to be achieved clearly mapped out. Any

organization that does not have leadership will find it difficult to have a direction and will likely leave the future to chance, thereby inviting chaos and anarchy in the system. Leadership plays important roles in organizational management and employee productivity. The growth of any organization is majorly attributed to the charisma and makeup of the leader. The success of an organization's performance is strongly supported by the quality of the person who is in charge in that organization.

According to Jamaluddin et al., (2019); Sari et al., (2020), one of the most important resources of an organization is human resources. These are people who have the capacity and wherewithal needed in organizations for human and material resources management. Leadership being one of the key areas in the organizational management where a person influences a group of people towards achieving a set objective for the organization (Northouse,2022). Leadership is the capacity of a leader to control the action or inaction of the persons under him for the aim of accomplishing a predetermine goals of the organization. Quality leadership is paramount to achieving whatever target set by an organization. In recent times, organizations are using different styles of leadership in accomplishing strategic objectives of organization at workplace (Laliasa et al., 2018). A particular leadership styles employed by an organization can bring about employee's job satisfaction, job retention, which consequently helps in improving employee performance. However, without proper leadership style and envisioning the future, it could not be easy to achieve a desired success in an organization. An inspiring leader can manage their organization by influencing the employees. Employee management is not an easy task. The leadership style of a leader can step-up or demoralize the employees. A leader who knows his or her onions can enhance employees' performance, and equally retains his or her best brains through a particular kind of leadership adopted by the organization.

The growth and performance of every organization depends greatly on the style of leadership employed in manning the affairs of organization. When a leader employs an inclusive style of leadership, workers would feel satisfied, and consequently their contribution to the organization will improve and their retention for longer period becomes easy (Lussier & Achua, 2020). Considerate, and friendly leaders, generally, command respect and trust of their workers, and issues associated with employee dawdling, and day dreaming for every minute will never come up easily. Equally, a leader who is seen by his subordinate to not to be humane, often encounters resentment. So, a blend of human qualities which gives the employee a feeling of appreciation and acceptability which enables him or her realize his or her role expectations is considered optimal. Therefore, because of the volatile and competitive nature of our business and organizations' environment, an effective leader has to always keep at the back of his mind how to romance the ergo, motivate his workforce in order to improve employee's productivity, and consequently retain the high performing ones in the organization. Adoption of a suitable leadership style can effectively kick the organization to a stellar performance.

The study was narrowed down to Seplat energy Plc. A Nigerian privately owned oil and gas company that was listed on both the London and Nigerian Stock exchanges

with its assets in Sapele, Delta State, Nigeria. The narrowing down was necessitated due to the company's leadership initiative in driving the country's energy transition towards cleaner, and more reliable energy that is accessible. So, searching for what brought about this great achievement necessitated the study of this nature. Many organizations are facing the challenge of increased productivity (Henley,2021). As Organizations are operating in highly competitive business environment, it is very important to employ a leadership style that will make organizations and their employees perform optimally in order to achieve competitive advantages within their industry (Farooqui and Ahmed, 2018). In recent times, most organizations are confronted with severe consequences of poor leadership which could be attributed to the incapacity of certain leadership styles to guide employees effectively and enhance their work performance. The influence of leadership style in achieving organizational success cannot be overstated, as leaders play a pivotal role in shaping the culture, direction, and overall effectiveness of an organization. When a leader fails to employ a right or suitable style of leadership style, it could lead to a decline in productivity, job satisfaction, and overall morale of employees. Ineffective leaders struggle to communicate a clear vision, set realistic goals or provide the necessary support for employees to excel.

Therefore, it on this premise that the study seeks to x-ray employee performance through the lenses of various leadership styles. The specific objective is to:

1. determine the effect of democratic leadership styles on employee performance in Seplat energy Plc. Sapele, Delta State, Nigeria.

Literature Review

The Concept Leadership

The concept of leadership is dynamic, flexible, and complicated, and has no commonly accepted definition. Leadership is a symbiotic concept that involves both the leader and the led. Yukl (2020) Sees leadership as the process of influencing people to agree about what needs to be done and how to do it, and the process of organizing and amassing efforts to accomplish a given task. Leadership involves getting things done through other people in order to achieve a predetermined objective. This involves establishing and nurturing a vision for the future, directing people and gaining their trust. Leadership provides direction for the led and the organization. Employees need to know the direction in which the organization is headed and who to take them there. So, it involves showing employees how to effectively perform their duties through regular supervision of assigned tasks. Setting a positive example, exhibiting a strong character, honesty, integrity, trustworthiness is part of leadership. Leadership, as an of influencing people to contribute willingly and zealousness toward group goals requires followership. There several approaches to understanding leadership; which ranges from the trait to contingency approach, autocratic, democratic.

The bottom line is that, leaders are the product of particular situation. The leadership approach to use is contingent to a particular situation at hand. There is no best way to leadership, managers can be a great leader if placed in appropriate situation and environment. The path-goal approach to leadership made it clear that, most effective

leaders contributes the successes achieved by their subordinate in their organization and in their personal lives.

Leadership Style

Leadership style is a pattern of administration and tactics, which arises as a result of a combination of philosophies, habit, idiosyncrasy, which a leader at times uses when trying to influence the performance of persons under him (Mohr & Wolfram, 2018). Leadership style is the way a leader exert control over his subordinates in order to get things done (Mohammed et al, 2023). Improving organizational productivity through employee performance and enshrining discipline in the organization is somehow dependent on the leader's approach to leadership. The leadership style has three main approaches, namely the leaders that rank the implementation of tasks high, those that pay special attention to cooperative relationships, and those that emphasize the results that can be achieved (Hanafi et al., 2018). So, the most appropriate leadership style is something that can foster motivation and can easily be adapted at all situations. Leadership style influences employee performance because the impact will be very high. Leaders who are considerate and friendly always earn the respect and trust of their subordinate, and there always a few cases of insubordination and unproductive attitude of workers.

While autocratic leaders often incur resentment and uncooperative attitude of employees. So, a blend of various types of leadership styles give employees a feeling of appreciation and belonging in an organization. Concern should also be giving to employees and productivity, and by doing so, unity of aim will be achieved and assured. So, leadership style which is a management approach, and which a leader employs in setting and accomplishing a strategic goal for the organization while motivating employees to successfully carry out a given task in service to the objectives set by the organization. Most professionals develop their own approach to leadership based on experience and personality as well as the specific needs of an organizational culture. Be that as it may, a leader should be flexible, and always be eager to blend various approaches to leadership. This is because, effective leaders draw out the best performance from their employees by understanding their needs and tries to meet these needs of individual employees. The style to employ should be dictated by the situation. Preponderance of evidence in literature has shown that, there is no single leadership approach that is effective at all circumstances. Some of the styles of leadership to be discussed under are: Democratic, Autocratic, Laissez-Faire, and Bureaucratic leadership styles.

Democratic type of leadership style is a type of leadership approach where employees are allowed to participate in decision- making, especially in discussion of matters that affects them or that, when calculated that their input will be of great importance to the organization. There are downwards and upwards channels of communication in this type leadership style. Democratic leadership style professes consultation, collective participation, egalitarianism, flexibility as weapons to improving employee's performance and organizational productivity. This does not mean that a democratic leader is not in absolute control of happenings in his organization, but rather, he tries

to inject into the system humanitarian considerations, which in turn gives the subordinate a feeling of acceptance and sense of belonging. It encourages employees' performance and overall organizational productivity.

Autocratic type of leadership style is characterized by absence of participation by the subordinates, with a high degree of direction and absolute obedience. The leader determines what to be achieved all alone and assigns responsibility to members without minding if the subordinates will make any input (Dotse & Asumeng, 2020). So, there is absolute power gap between the leader and the led in autocratic leadership style. The leader is always in control. Communication in this type leadership style is usually downwards. The good thing about this style is that sometimes, productivity is very high because of persistent use of threat and punishment. But later, productivity will begin to fall as subordinates may start protesting against their leaders' excessive usage of power. This is actually what usually brings about mutiny in the army, civil disobedience, rebellion and formation of unions in the organization.

Laissez-Faire type of leadership style: is a type of leadership style that goes by many names such as: loose rein, "hands-off style", "no confidence". The word laissez-faire is a French phrasing which connotes "leave it be". In this type leadership style, the subordinates receive little or no direction from the leader, and they are allowed to act as they deem fit. The leader is just a ceremonial head, and there is no appraisal, no threat or punishment. There is undiluted form of freedom. Laissez-faire leadership style affords subordinates much autonomy freedom to exercise their worth; it promotes high job satisfaction which could consequently led to high productivity in the organization (Alan (2018). But some scholars argue that, under this type of leadership style, productivity is always lower than either in autocratic and democratic styles. This is because subordinates get little to no guidance in their task, the confusion of not really being too sure about one's responsibility within their circle, and the less well organized, and what is required of them at any giving time could creep in low performance and productivity.

Bureaucratic type of leadership style is a type of leadership style that is characterized by too much support for rules and regulations. It is anchored on hierarchy and rules which gives room for rigidity and inflexibility in organization. Waste of time on paper-work is also its hallmark; frustration and complaints about the pace at which things are done is another. However, this style of leadership could favour a highly monitored business where the whole organization pivots on efficient management. An establishment that do not necessarily require innovation, problem-solving could employ this style to their advantage.

Employee's Performance

Employee's performance is a combination of efficiency and effectiveness of employee's routine responsibilities to meet the required expectations of the stakeholders and stockholders (Bataineh, 2019). Efficacy is the inputs and outputs that result in higher output for a given volume of inputs, while effectiveness is the extent to which scheduled outcomes are achieved. Employee's performance could be

calculated to be the outcomes achieved for each task performed over a time frame. Performance of individual employee is a critical aspect of every organization and the most crucial components of the organization's growth towards achieving increased productivity. Consumer satisfaction of service quality could be highly linked with high employee performance, while consumer complaints and brand switching could be linked with poor employee performance. Employee performance must be shown to recognize each employee's personal development and achievement (Hendrey, 2020). So, the need for performance appraisal should be advocated to organizations that want to achieve growth. The objective is just to determine how effectively an employee has done the work for which he/she was employed. Employee performance should be a routine affair.

Leadership Styles and Employee's Performance

Nowadays business environment is highly competitive environment. Effective leadership style is what is required for ensuring employee's efficient performance and organizational success and growth (Nwokocha, & Iheriohanma, 2019). The success of every organizational is to an extent dependent on its leadership style of its leaders. The effectiveness of employees in every organization is also a product of organization's leaders and their approach to leadership. Effective leader can enhance employee's performance through a suitable leadership style. This is because the approach of leader to organizational critical and core issues is very important to improving employee's performance and retain quality employees for longer period of time in the organization. No matter the situation, leaders need to allow contingency approach to leadership to be their driver. Meanwhile, there are some other factors such as job satisfaction, flexible working condition, work life balance, and career development opportunities are needed in every organization to trigger employees' effective performance.

Theoretical Framework

This study was anchored on Fiedler (1967) contingency theory of leadership. This theory stated that no single leadership style is considered ideal in all circumstances; that, it is a situation that calls for usage of a particular leadership style. Fiedler, the proponent of this style of leadership believes that two major factors are key: the personality of the leader and how fovourable the situation is. So, the application of this is dependent to a greater extent the situation and the ability of the leader to understand the situation of things and act accordingly. Fiedler opined that the performance of an employee is related to both the leadership style and to the degree to which the situation provides the leader with the opportunity to exert influence (Armstrong, 2009), and this marked the link between the study and the theory. According to Fiedler, a leader's type of leadership styles is somehow relatively fixed and a times not easy to be changed. So, the fundamental idea is to grow the leader's style with the situation most favorable for his or her effectiveness.

Methodology

Research design was adopted for the study, and the research studied Seplat energy PLC, Sapele, Delta State. The Organization was chosen because of the company's leadership initiative in driving the Nigeria's energy transition towards cleaner, and

more reliable energy that is accessible. Data were collected through questionnaire which was tested for validity using face and content method while its reliability was assessed using Cronbach Alpha reliability test for internal consistency, and an alpha level of .999 was obtained signaling a good consistency level. A total population of 230 staff (both senior and Junior) of Seplat energy Plc were randomly selected for the study. The entire population was studied because of their limited number. Out of 230 copies of questionnaire that were distributed, 207 copies were retrieved and were used for the study. The data generated was analyzed using Mean, and Hypothesis was tested using simple regression on Statistical packages for Social Science (version 27) at 5% level of significance.

Result and Discussion

4.0 DISCUSSION OF RESULT

Decision Rule

Accept the Alternate hypothesis (H_a) if $_{cal}$P-value is less than 0.05 (P-value < 0.05); otherwise accept the Null hypothesis (H_o).

Test of Hypothesis

H_o: Democratic leadership style has no significant effect on employee performance in Seplat energy Plc. Sapale, Delta State.

Below is the analysis outcome of the simple regression on the effect of democratic leadership style on employee performance.

Table 1

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.728[a]	.046	.207	8.22900

a. Predictors: (Constant), Democratic leadership

Table 2

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	10.584	1	10.584	.133	.025[b]
	Residual	637.816	206	79.727		
	Total	648.400	207			

a. Dependent Variable: employee performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), democratic leadership

Table 3

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
	(Constant)	23.592	6.153		3.834	.005
	Democratic leadership	-.085	.235	-.128	-.364	.025

a. Dependent Variable: employee performance

Democratic leadership style has a positive effect on employee performance r= 0.728, n=207-1=206 and p=0.25. Thus, since p value is less than 0.05, hence, there is positive effect of democratic leadership style on employee performance. This implies that democratic leadership style encourages employees' performance. Allowing them partake in decision making, consequently, make them feel fulfilled and have sense of belonging.

Conclusion and Recommendations

A good leader combines different styles of leadership. The style to use should be dictated by the situation at hand. There no single leadership style that is considered ideal in all circumstances. This study revealed that democratic leadership style has a positive influence on employee's performance in the organization under study; and it is an effective administrative tool for making subordinates putting in their best and have a sense of belonging in the organization. Democratic leadership style generally has positive influence on the employee's performance and growth of every organization.

The study therefore recommended that:

1. employees should be allowed to participate in decision-making, especially in that which affects them directly. Leaders should also place emphasis on the understanding of subordinates, employee motivation, self-development and employee development, cultivating appositive employee work attitude, and problem solving.

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