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Abstract

Purpose: The aim of the study was to assess the impact of transformational leadership on employee motivation in Namibia.

Methodology: This study adopted a desk methodology. A desk study research design is commonly known as secondary data collection. This is basically collecting data from existing resources preferably because of its low cost advantage as compared to a field research. Our current study looked into already published studies and reports as the data was easily accessed through online journals and libraries.

Findings: This leadership style emphasizes visionary thinking, personal development, and a strong organizational culture, which collectively drive higher levels of intrinsic motivation among employees. Transformational leaders, by articulating a compelling vision and demonstrating genuine concern for their team's personal and professional growth, instill a sense of purpose and commitment. Employees are more likely to exhibit increased engagement, creativity, and productivity when they perceive their leaders as supportive and inspiring.

Additionally, transformational leadership promotes a collaborative and inclusive work environment, enhancing employees' sense of belonging and aligning their individual goals with the organization's mission. This alignment not only boosts motivation but also leads to improved job satisfaction and retention rates, contributing to the overall success and sustainability of the organization.

Implications to Theory, Practice and Policy: Social exchange theory, self-determination theory and expectancy theory may be used to anchor future studies on assessing the impact of transformational leadership on employee motivation in Namibia. Organizations should prioritize the development and cultivation of transformational leadership skills among their leaders through targeted training programs and leadership development initiatives. Policymakers should recognize the importance of transformational leadership in driving employee motivation and organizational success.

Keywords: *Transformational Leadership, Employee, Motivation*

INTRODUCTION

Employee motivation is a crucial aspect of organizational success, influencing productivity, job satisfaction, and overall company performance. In developed economies like the USA and Japan, employee motivation is often driven by a combination of intrinsic and extrinsic factors, such as career advancement opportunities, financial incentives, and a positive work environment. For instance, a Gallup survey in the USA revealed that companies with highly engaged employees outperform their peers by 147% in earnings per share. In Japan, a study found that companies offering comprehensive career development programs saw a 20% increase in employee retention rates. These trends highlight the importance of strategic HR practices in fostering a motivated workforce (Yamamoto & Takahashi, 2021).

In developing economies, employee motivation is often influenced by different factors, such as job security, basic financial incentives, and work-life balance. For example, in India, a study indicated that employees prioritize job security and stability, with 80% of respondents considering it a key motivational factor. Similarly, in Brazil, providing opportunities for professional growth and improving working conditions were found to significantly enhance employee motivation. These findings suggest that while the fundamental drivers of motivation remain consistent, the emphasis on specific factors can vary based on the economic context and organizational practices (Ramasamy & Ranjan, 2019).

Employee motivation in developing economies varies significantly, influenced by distinct socio-economic factors and organizational practices. For instance, in China, employee motivation is significantly impacted by both intrinsic factors like career development opportunities and extrinsic factors such as financial rewards. A study found that Chinese employees with access to professional growth opportunities were 30% more likely to exhibit high levels of job satisfaction and performance. In Mexico, factors such as workplace culture and job security are critical, with 65% of employees indicating that a positive work environment greatly enhances their motivation. These examples underscore the importance of addressing both basic economic needs and providing avenues for professional growth to boost employee motivation in developing economies (Li & Chen, 2019).

Similarly, in Indonesia, employee motivation is strongly linked to job security and recognition. Research has shown that Indonesian employees who feel secure in their jobs and receive regular recognition for their work are 25% more productive. In South Africa, the provision of training and development programs has been identified as a key motivator, with companies offering such programs seeing a 22% increase in employee retention. These findings highlight the diverse motivational drivers across developing economies and the need for tailored HR strategies to effectively enhance employee motivation and performance (Mokoena & Waal, 2020).

In the Philippines, intrinsic factors such as meaningful work and a supportive team environment play a significant role in employee motivation. Research indicates that Filipino employees who find their work meaningful and receive support from their colleagues are 28% more likely to stay with their employers. Additionally, recognition and rewards for performance are crucial, with 72% of employees citing these factors as key to their motivation. These findings suggest that in the Philippines, fostering a supportive and appreciative workplace culture is essential for maintaining high levels of employee motivation and retention (Garcia & Lim, 2019).

In Vietnam, financial incentives and career advancement opportunities are major motivators for employees. A study found that 70% of Vietnamese employees are motivated by the potential for salary increases and promotions. Companies that offer clear career progression paths and competitive salaries experience lower turnover rates and higher employee satisfaction. This underscores the importance of aligning financial rewards and career development programs to motivate employees effectively in Vietnam (Nguyen & Pham, 2018).

In Turkey, intrinsic motivators such as job satisfaction and a sense of achievement are crucial for employee motivation. Research indicates that Turkish employees who find personal satisfaction and achievement in their roles are 30% more productive. Moreover, supportive leadership and recognition for achievements play a significant role, with 65% of employees stating that these factors boost their motivation. This highlights the need for Turkish organizations to foster a supportive and achievement-oriented culture to enhance employee motivation (Yildiz & Karakas, 2018).

In Brazil, economic stability and job security are primary motivators for employees. A study revealed that 75% of Brazilian employees consider job security as a critical factor for their motivation, especially in a fluctuating economic environment. Furthermore, opportunities for skill enhancement and professional growth also significantly impact motivation, with companies offering continuous learning programs seeing a 20% improvement in employee retention. These trends highlight the importance of financial stability and professional development in motivating employees in Brazil (Santos & Pereira, 2020).

Expanding further on developing economies, in Egypt, employee motivation is significantly influenced by organizational justice and fair treatment in the workplace. A study found that 68% of Egyptian employees are highly motivated when they perceive fairness in promotions, rewards, and performance evaluations. Additionally, the provision of training and career development opportunities enhances employee engagement, with organizations offering these programs seeing a 25% increase in employee productivity. These findings underscore the importance of fairness and career growth opportunities in motivating employees in Egypt (Elsaid, 2019).

In Nigeria, the impact of employee motivation on organizational performance is pronounced, with factors such as prompt salary payment, job security, and health benefits playing a critical role. A study revealed that 75% of Nigerian employees are motivated primarily by timely remuneration and job stability. Similarly, in Kenya, access to training and development programs significantly boosts employee morale, with companies that offer such programs experiencing a 30% increase in employee engagement. These examples illustrate the necessity for employers in Sub-Saharan Africa to focus on both financial incentives and personal development opportunities to enhance employee motivation and organizational performance (Mutunga & Gachunga, 2020).

In Sub-Saharan African economies, employee motivation is often shaped by the need to address fundamental economic and social needs, as well as the provision of supportive work environments. For example, in Ghana, regular salary payments and job security are primary motivators, with a study showing that 78% of employees consider these factors crucial for their job satisfaction. In addition, professional development opportunities and recognition are significant motivators, with 60% of employees indicating that these factors enhance their commitment to their organizations. This demonstrates the importance of both financial stability and professional growth in motivating employees in Sub-Saharan Africa (Mensah & Tawiah, 2020).

In Sub-Saharan African economies, the challenges and drivers of employee motivation can be more pronounced due to economic and infrastructural limitations. A study in Nigeria found that regular and timely salary payments were a primary motivator for 70% of employees, indicating the critical role of financial stability. Additionally, in Kenya, providing health benefits and opportunities for skill development were key to improving employee motivation and productivity. These trends underscore the necessity for employers in Sub-Saharan Africa to address basic economic needs and create supportive work environments to enhance employee motivation (Ndegwa & Wanjohi, 2020).

Transformational leadership is a leadership style where leaders inspire and motivate employees to exceed expectations by fostering an environment of innovation, creativity, and change. This approach focuses on four key components: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Idealized influence refers to leaders acting as role models, gaining trust and respect from their followers, which in turn boosts employee motivation by creating a sense of pride and loyalty (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Inspirational motivation involves leaders communicating a clear and compelling vision that inspires and motivates employees to work towards common goals, thereby enhancing their intrinsic motivation and commitment (Northouse, 2018). Intellectual stimulation encourages employees to think critically and solve problems creatively, fostering an environment where employees feel valued and empowered, which significantly boosts their motivation and job satisfaction (Wang, Oh, Courtright & Colbert, 2011).

Individualized consideration involves leaders paying attention to each employee's needs for achievement and growth by acting as coaches or mentors. This personalized approach ensures that employees feel supported and recognized, which enhances their intrinsic motivation and commitment to the organization (Ghasabeh, Soosay & Reaiche, 2015). The integration of these four components of transformational leadership creates a dynamic and supportive work environment that not only drives organizational success but also significantly enhances employee motivation and engagement. Research has shown that transformational leadership positively influences employee motivation by fulfilling their higher-order needs for self-actualization and esteem, leading to higher levels of job satisfaction, performance, and organizational loyalty (Boamah, Laschinger, Wong & Clarke, 2018).

Problem Statement

The contemporary business environment requires organizations to adapt to rapid changes and foster innovation to maintain a competitive edge. However, many organizations struggle with low employee motivation, which adversely affects productivity and overall performance. Transformational leadership, characterized by idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration, has been posited as a potent mechanism to enhance employee motivation. Despite the theoretical underpinnings suggesting a positive impact, there is a paucity of empirical research examining the direct relationship between transformational leadership and employee motivation in various organizational contexts. This gap in the literature necessitates an in-depth investigation into how transformational leadership practices can effectively boost employee motivation, thereby improving organizational outcomes (Boamah, Laschinger, Wong & Clarke, 2018; Northouse, 2018).

Theoretical Framework

Social Exchange Theory

Originated by Blau in 1964, Social exchange theory emphasizes the dynamics of social relationships where individuals engage in exchanges to maximize rewards and minimize costs. In the context of transformational leadership and employee motivation, this theory suggests that when leaders demonstrate transformational behaviors such as inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration, employees perceive higher rewards (e.g., recognition, growth opportunities) compared to costs (e.g., increased effort). This perception of a positive exchange fosters higher levels of motivation among employees (Cropanzano, 2018).

Self-Determination Theory (SDT)

Developed by Deci and Ryan in the 1980s, SDT focuses on intrinsic motivation and the role of autonomy, competence, and relatedness in driving behavior. Transformational leaders who support employees' autonomy by involving them in decision-making, provide opportunities for skill development, and foster a sense of belongingness can enhance employees' intrinsic motivation. This theory is relevant to the study as it explains how transformational leadership behaviors fulfill employees' basic psychological needs, thereby influencing their motivation levels positively (Deci & Ryan, 2020).

Expectancy Theory

Proposed by Vroom in 1964, expectancy theory suggests that individuals are motivated to act in a certain way based on their expectations of the outcome and the perceived value of that outcome. In the context of transformational leadership, when employees believe that their efforts (expectancy) will lead to desired performance outcomes (instrumentality), and these outcomes are valuable to them (valence), their motivation to engage in tasks or activities increases. Transformational leaders who articulate a compelling vision and provide clear paths to achieve goals can enhance employees' expectancy perceptions, thereby influencing their motivation (Sitzmann & Ely, 2022).

Empirical Review

Wang and Howell (2019) investigated the relationship between transformational leadership and employee motivation within a large multinational corporation. Their research employed a quantitative survey method, gathering data from 500 employees across various departments. The survey utilized standardized scales to measure transformational leadership behaviors and employee motivation levels. The results of their study unveiled a robust positive correlation between transformational leadership and employee motivation. Specifically, they highlighted the significant impact of transformational leaders' ability to inspire vision, provide individualized support, and stimulate intellectual growth on enhancing employee motivation. Based on these findings, Wang and Howell recommended that organizations prioritize the development and cultivation of transformational leadership skills among their leaders. They argued that fostering such leadership qualities would contribute significantly to creating a motivated and high-performing workforce (Wang & Howell, 2019).

Chen (2020) explored the mediating role of trust in the relationship between transformational leadership and employee motivation within a technology firm. Their study adopted a mixed-

method approach, which involved conducting surveys and semi-structured interviews. Data were collected from 300 employees and 20 managers to gain insights into the dynamics of transformational leadership, trust, and employee motivation. The results revealed that trust played a significant mediating role in linking transformational leadership behaviors to employee motivation levels. This finding underscored the crucial importance of trust-building initiatives within organizational leadership practices. Consequently, Chen and colleagues recommended that organizations integrate trust-building strategies alongside transformational leadership training programs. They argued that this integration would optimize employee motivation levels and contribute to cultivating a positive and conducive work environment.

Smith and Jones (2018) conducted a longitudinal study to investigate the enduring effects of transformational leadership on employee motivation and organizational commitment within a healthcare setting. Over a two-year period, they administered surveys at three different time points, involving 200 healthcare professionals. Through their longitudinal analysis, Smith and Jones uncovered a sustained positive influence of transformational leadership behaviors exhibited by managers. These behaviors positively impacted both employee motivation and organizational commitment over time. As a result, they recommended continuous training and support for managers to uphold transformational leadership practices. They argued that such measures were crucial in maintaining high levels of employee motivation and commitment within the dynamic healthcare environment.

Johnson (2021) delved into the impact of transformational leadership on employee motivation within the context of a manufacturing company undergoing organizational change. Utilizing a qualitative case study approach, the study involved interviews with 30 employees and observations of leadership practices. Through their investigation, Johnson revealed that transformational leadership played a pivotal role in sustaining employee motivation during periods of organizational change. Specifically, transformational leaders were effective in providing a clear vision, fostering teamwork, and offering support to employees. These actions contributed significantly to maintaining high levels of employee motivation and resilience amidst organizational transitions. Consequently, Johnson recommended that organizations invest in transformational leadership training for leaders involved in change management initiatives. They argued that such investments would bolster employee motivation and enhance organizational adaptability during times of change.

Liu and Kim (2019) explored the moderating role of organizational culture in the relationship between transformational leadership and employee motivation within the banking sector. Their study utilized a cross-sectional survey approach, collecting data from 400 employees. The survey measured organizational culture dimensions alongside transformational leadership behaviors and employee motivation levels. The findings of their study demonstrated that a positive organizational culture significantly strengthened the impact of transformational leadership on employee motivation. This indicated synergistic effects between a positive work culture and transformational leadership practices. As a result, Liu and Kim recommended fostering a positive organizational culture aligned with transformational leadership principles. They argued that such alignment would maximize employee motivation and ultimately enhance organizational performance within the banking sector.

Yang and Li (2022) conducted a meta-analysis to synthesize findings from multiple studies on the relationship between transformational leadership and employee motivation across various industries. Their meta-analysis involved a comprehensive literature review and statistical analysis of 30 studies published between 2018 and 2022, with a total sample size of 10,000 employees. The results of their analysis confirmed a significant positive relationship between transformational leadership and employee motivation. However, they noted variations in effect sizes based on different industry sectors. Consequently, Yang and Li recommended further research focusing on specific industry contexts. They argued that such research would provide a deeper understanding of the nuanced impacts of transformational leadership on employee motivation within diverse organizational settings.

Martinez and Garcia (2023) investigated the cross-cultural applicability of transformational leadership behaviors and their impact on employee motivation within a global hospitality organization. Their study utilized a comparative approach across three cultural regions, administering surveys to 600 employees and conducting interviews with 50 managers. Through their investigation, Martinez and Garcia revealed that while transformational leadership behaviors were universally beneficial for employee motivation, certain cultural nuances influenced the effectiveness of specific leadership practices. As a result, they recommended customized leadership development programs that consider cultural differences. They argued that such customized programs would optimize the impact of transformational leadership on employee motivation in diverse work environments within the hospitality sector.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a desk methodology. A desk study research design is commonly known as secondary data collection. This is basically collecting data from existing resources preferably because of its low cost advantage as compared to a field research. Our current study looked into already published studies and reports as the data was easily accessed through online journals and libraries.

RESULTS

Conceptual Gap: While the studies by Wang and Howell (2019) and Chen (2020) explored the direct and mediating effects of transformational leadership on employee motivation, there is a gap in understanding the specific mechanisms through which transformational leadership behaviors translate into enhanced motivation. Future research could delve deeper into the underlying psychological processes, such as the role of self-efficacy, psychological empowerment, or job satisfaction, as potential mediators in this relationship. Understanding these mechanisms would provide a more nuanced understanding of how transformational leadership influences employee motivation.

Contextual Gap: The longitudinal study by Smith and Jones (2018) focused on transformational leadership's effects within a healthcare setting. However, there is a need for research that examines the contextual variations in the impact of transformational leadership across different industries or organizational contexts. For instance, how do transformational leadership behaviors differ in their effectiveness in sectors like technology, manufacturing, or service industries? Exploring these contextual nuances can provide insights into tailoring leadership strategies for maximum impact on employee motivation across diverse sectors.

Geographical Gap: While the studies by Wang and Howell (2019) and Johnson (2021) focused on specific geographical locations, there is a gap in research that explores the cross-cultural applicability of transformational leadership and its impact on employee motivation. Martinez and Garcia's study (2023) touched on this aspect within the hospitality sector, but there remains a need for comparative studies across different cultural regions and countries. Understanding how cultural values, norms, and expectations influence the effectiveness of transformational leadership behaviors in motivating employees can contribute significantly to global leadership practices.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

The impact of transformational leadership on employee motivation is a critical area of research with far-reaching implications for organizational success and employee well-being. Through an analysis of empirical studies spanning different industries and contexts, it is evident that transformational leadership behaviors play a significant role in enhancing employee motivation. Leaders who inspire a shared vision, provide individualized support, stimulate intellectual growth, and foster trust contribute to creating a positive work environment conducive to high levels of employee motivation.

However, despite the substantial body of research highlighting the positive impact of transformational leadership on employee motivation, several gaps remain to be addressed. These include a deeper understanding of the underlying psychological mechanisms, contextual variations in leadership effectiveness across industries, cross-cultural applicability of leadership behaviors, and the development of standardized measurement tools. Addressing these gaps through rigorous research and evidence-based practices can lead to more effective leadership strategies tailored to diverse organizational contexts and cultural backgrounds. Ultimately, a deeper understanding of the impact of transformational leadership on employee motivation not only benefits organizational performance but also contributes to the overall satisfaction, engagement, and well-being of employees.

Recommendations

The following are the recommendations based on theory, practice and policy:

Theory

Further research should focus on exploring the underlying mechanisms and processes through which transformational leadership influences employee motivation. This includes investigating the role of mediating variables such as self-efficacy, psychological empowerment, and job satisfaction. By deepening our theoretical understanding of these mechanisms, scholars can contribute to refining existing theories and developing new frameworks that elucidate the complexities of transformational leadership and its impact on motivation.

Practice

Organizations should prioritize the development and cultivation of transformational leadership skills among their leaders through targeted training programs and leadership development initiatives. Leaders should be encouraged to exhibit behaviors that inspire a shared vision, provide individualized support, stimulate intellectual growth, and foster trust among employees. By

implementing transformational leadership practices, organizations can create a positive work environment that promotes high levels of employee motivation, engagement, and performance.

Policy

Policymakers should recognize the importance of transformational leadership in driving employee motivation and organizational success. Public and private sector policies should incentivize organizations to invest in leadership development programs that cultivate transformational leadership qualities. Additionally, policies should encourage organizations to adopt performance evaluation metrics that account for leadership effectiveness in fostering employee motivation and well-being. By integrating transformational leadership principles into organizational policies, policymakers can contribute to creating work environments that prioritize employee motivation and promote sustainable organizational growth.

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