

## Effect of Leadership Style on Growth of National Government Constituency Development Fund Projects in Trans Nzoia County, Kenya

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### Abstract:

*The main purpose of this study was to assess the effect of leadership style on the growth of NGCDF projects in Trans Nzoia County, Kenya. The study was informed by situational leadership and trait theories. The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The target population was employees from 25 NGCDF projects in Trans Nzoia County, Kenya. The study used random sampling to select a sample of 174 employees. The researcher employed structured questionnaires as instruments of data collection. The reliability test of the instruments was done using Cronbach alpha coefficient. Multiple regression analysis was the appropriate method to examine the relationship between independent variables and dependent variable in this study. Multiple regression analysis was carried out to analyze the relationship between one dependent variable and five independent variables. The study's outcome gives the insight to project administrators on how much impact the instituted change has on the successful implementation of construction projects. Similarly, the study is also of help to managers of institutions to gauge the development of their project management systems and assess the appropriate and strategic ways to employ for improvement of their institutions or organizations. The study also adds to the body of knowledge of project management.*

**Keywords:** Team Work, Employee Motivation, Growth Of NGCDF Projects

### 1.1 Introduction

The performance of the project is considered a key concern to both public and private sector clients. Kumaraswamy (2002) found out that project performance measurements include time, budget, safety, quality, and overall client satisfaction. Thomas (2002) defined performance measurement as monitoring and controlling of projects accordingly on a regular basis. Kuprenas (2003) stated that project performance measurement means an improvement of cost, schedule, and quality for design and construction stages. Long *et al.* (2004) stated that a project performance measurement is related to many indicators such as time, budget, quality, specifications and stakeholders' satisfaction. The success or failure of any project is mainly related to the problems and failure of the project manager. Moreover, there are many reasons and factors which attribute to such problems. In the US, Long *et al.* (2004) discovered that performance problems arise in large construction projects due to many reasons such as project managers' incompetence, leadership style and change management, social and technological issues, site related issues and improper techniques and tools. Lehtonen (2001) obtained a model for performance measurement which assists both firms' top management and operational managers for continuous feedback on operational activities. Adoption of leadership style by a manager in implementation of construction projects in public primary sector is critical in completing the projects in good time. According to Long *et al.* (2004), in instances where by there is a delay in completion of classroom construction, the delay is attributed to the manager's leadership style. According to Belout & Gauvreau (2004), leadership styles of a manager can help in the implementation of classroom construction and is also a key factor.

Leadership styles may vary depending on the scenarios (Yang *et al.*, 2011). In Nigeria, according to Chan and Kumaraswamy (2002), some leadership styles can help in the fast implementation of classroom construction if there is an effective relay of information between the manager and the people in the institution. Transformational leadership produces satisfaction and trust. The transformational leaders motivate their juniors expressively and psychologically (Ammeter & Dukerich, 2002). The leaders are always in support of their

juniors' self-determination. The managers also put enthusiasm and vigor into all. They mind about their subordinates and yearn for them to be successful (Spreitzer, 2003). It has dimensions which characterize it: Idealized attribute where the leaders act in a way that incorporates the value of others for them and goes further than one's personal attention for the group projection. Idealized manners: they choose to talk about key values and take into account the principled and honorable results of decisions. Inspiration motivation: they sustain staff to picture attractive prospect states and encourage staff. Intellectual stimulation: these leaders like to promote new thoughts, and artistic solutions to troubles (Yang et al., 2011). Individual considerations: according to Nixon et al., (2012), these managers motivate staff for success and to develop their strengths.

Studies have shown that the most NGCDF projects fail. The situation is made worse by their failure to successfully implement projects (World Bank, 2006). Jiang (2014) noted that leadership was rarely considered as a critical success factor of the project. Turner and Muller (2005) contemplated that probably the project managers neglect themselves or leadership is not covered in the research. Projects are managed using teams in a work environment that are complex for two reasons: first, each project is unique, and second, conditions for team selection and motivation are often far from ideal (Smith, 2001) as a typical organization structure presents problems in team selection, and in many organizations, a project manager may not have the discretion to select the project team. Compounding the situation further, some of the project team members are engaged in more than one project to increase their income if they are not adequately remunerated in one project. Their moral goes down if they are not properly motivated, they are not inspired if they do not receive adequate support from the project leaders; they lose confidence if they are not empowered in the project and will lack cooperation if they are not convinced to work as a team. Kerzner (2006) observed that projects fail to meet time and cost targets due to poor morale, lack of motivation, poor human relations, poor productivity, and lack of commitment from employees. It is evident from Kerzner's observation that people-related issues play a crucial role in project performance, underlining the importance of a project manager's management and leadership roles. Duarte & Snyder (2001) noted that ineffective leadership does not empower the project team hence has a negative impact on the company virtual team performance as the team leaders become overly dominant with achieving project goals and overlook project team details in the company. Previous studies have addressed factors affecting project performance. However, these studies have given little attention to leadership styles and their effect on the growth of NGCDF projects in Kenya giving a significant gap in the existing literature. This study, therefore, sought to address the above gap by addressing the effect of team work, employee motivation, leader's support, and employee empowerment and employee remuneration on the growth of NGCDF projects. Therefore, this research sought to establish the effect of leadership style on the growth of NGCDF projects within Trans Nzoia County, Kenya. The study hypothesizes that:

- i. *There is no significant effect of team work on growth of NGCDF projects in Trans Nzoia County, Kenya*
- ii. *There is no significant effect of employee motivation on growth of NGCDF projects in Trans Nzoia County, Kenya*

## **2.0 Theoretical Framework**

Situational leadership theory proposes that effective leadership requires a rational understanding of the situation and an appropriate response, rather than a charismatic leader with a large group of dedicated followers (Grint, 2011). Situational leadership in general and situational leadership theory (SLT) in particular evolved from a task-oriented versus people oriented leadership continuum (Bass, 2008; Conger, 2010; Lorsch, 2010). The continuum represented the extent that the leader focuses on the required tasks or focuses on their relations with their followers.

Both conceptualizations of SLT admit that task-oriented and relation oriented behaviors are dependent, rather than mutually exclusive approaches. The effective leader engages in a mix of tasks and relation behaviors (Cubero, 2007; Graeff, 1997; Shin et al., 2011; Yukl, 2008; 2011; Yukl & Mahsud, 2010). The level of maturity

(both job and psychological maturity) of followers determines the correct leadership style and relates to previous education and training interventions (Bass, 2008; Hersey & Blanchard, 1969). Some scholars criticize SLT specifically and situational leadership in general.

Trait theories emphasize the personal qualities of leaders and focus on attributes that distinguish leaders from non-leaders. Three kinds of traits are physical factors which include height, appearance, age, etc., aspects of personality and self-esteem which include dominance, emotional stability, conservatism, etc., and aptitudes general intelligence which include fluency of speech, creativity, etc., assuming that the different traits could be identified by empirical research. Stogdill's (1948) review of the literature on leadership traits showed associations with factors that he classified under the general headings of capacity intelligence, alertness, verbal facility, originality, judgment, achievement of scholarship, knowledge, athletic accomplishments, responsibility dependability, initiative, persistence, aggressiveness, self-confidence, desire to excel, participation activity, sociability, cooperation, adaptability, humor, and status socio-economic position, popularity. However, the basic premise of the trait approach that a person must possess a particular set of traits in order to be identified as a leader could not be supported. A person does not become a leader by virtue of the possession of some combination of traits, but the pattern of personal characteristics of the leader must bear some relevant relationship to the characteristics, activities, and goals of followers (Judge et al., 2004).

## 2.1 Empirical review

### Effect of Team Work on Project Growth

Extensive research has been carried out on the relationship between components of effective teams and project growth. Clear goals are major elements of project success (Dinsomore and Cooke-Davies, 2006; Rad and Levin, 2006). Parker (2008) further added that scope of the work is brought off in a much better way when goals are apparently defined and substantially understood, and thus prospects of project and team success are increased.

The above studies indicated that teamwork plays an important role in team performance. Teams can be made more successful by improving their interaction and cohesiveness. As such, effective team performance may derive from team communication, collaboration, and cohesiveness (Morris, 1988; Kendra and Tap lin, 2004). Additionally, several researchers have stated that project type may play a moderating role in the relationship between practice use and project success (Muller and Turner, 2007; Yang et al., 2006).

Transformational Leaders play a very important factor in the effective functioning of virtual teams and pay attention to work environments and organizational climate. They also coordinate project tasks and facilitate the group process to achieve teams' goals thus ensuring the success of these projects (Kayworth & Leidner, 2002).

Gido and Clements (2011) concluded that the characteristics of effective teams include a high degree of cooperation, trust, open, timely effective communication and ethical behavior. These characteristics are important factors for project success. Previous studies in the scope of teamwork remarked that the success of a project is heavily dependent on appropriate management of internal conflicts, effective communication, setting and agreeing on comprehensible goals and establishing good trusting relationships within the team (Kerzner and Saladis, 2013; Dalal, 2011). Effective communication has been strongly linked with project success (Rad and Levin, 2003; Williams, 2002; Clutterbuck, 2007; Herson and Rossiter, 2006).

Kerzner (2013) indicated that inadequate communication is a major drawback to the development of good teams as it induces low motivation levels, drops in team spirit; and it contributes to poorly stated targets and poor project control, coordination and flow of work. Stevens and Campion (1994) reviewed the literature on knowledge, skills and ability need for teamwork and concluded that good interpersonal relations, team initiative approaches, honesty, respect, trust, openness and collaborative behavior and cooperative attitude of team members are particularly attractive and unique factors linked to good team performance. A clear structure and

well defined roles promote the stability of coordination within a team (Choi, 2002; Molleman et al., 2004). Hoegl and Parboteeah (2003) reported after studying the data of leaders and managers of 145 teams specialized in software development that good coordination and open exchange of pertinent information during the task promotes team effectiveness. There is less number of conflicts and high understanding when members of team openly communicate with each other (Ensley et al., 2000).

Team performance improved when decisions are made unanimously (Bettenhausen, 1991; Jackson et al., 2003). Hartenian (2003) suggested that teams with cooperative behavior are more likely to achieve their set goals properly. It was concluded that teams who are trained in solving conflicts and showed good performance in settling conflicts, agreeing on goals and planning adequately. Team members should be selected based on the skills and expertise relevant to the scope of work. According to Beale and Freeman (1991), the skills and expertise of key team members like client representative, leader of the designing team and the construction team leader are needed to be emphasized as to enhance team effectiveness. Palmer (2002) remarked that culture within the project team as a significant element by pointing that organizations may not be capable of achieving specific goals simply by getting key people to work together if the culture of the project does not support the disciplines involved. Scarnati (2001) pointed out that by following the proper structure of the organization, enduring effective communication, making resources available, developing trust among team members, promoting respect for culture differences of the corporate and the conditions in which teamwork is conducted can lead to effective and high performing teams.

### **Effect of Employee Motivation on Project Growth**

Employee motivation is likely the criterion of an organization to gauge its employee performance. Employee motivation plays a critical role in bringing about energized employees to commit their time and efforts to the organization (Bwire et al., 2014). Motivation enhances employees' satisfaction and happiness in their workplace which leads to high job performance (Ufuophu-Biri, 2014). Thus, highly motivated employees are likely to perform better than less motivated employees.

Every organization is concerned with what should be done to achieve sustained high levels of performance through its workforce. This means giving close attention to how individuals can best be motivated through means such as incentives, rewards, leadership, etc. and the organization context within which they carry out the work (Armstrong, 2006). The study of motivation is concerned basically with why people behave in a certain way. In general, it can be described as the direction and persistence of action. It is concerned with why people choose a particular course of action in preference to others, and why they continue with chosen action, often over a long period, and in the face of difficulties and problems (Mullins, 2005).

Employee motivation is one of the policies of managers to increase effectual job management amongst employees in organizations (Shadare et al., 2009). A motivated employee is responsive to the definite goals and objectives he/she must achieve. Therefore he/she directs its efforts in that direction. Rutherford (1990) reported that motivation formulates an organization more successful because provoked employees are constantly looking for improved practices to do work, so it is essential for organizations to persuade motivation of their employees (Kalimullah et al., 2010).

The success of the project as a matter of fact depends largely on the motivation of the employees. Human resources are essential to the prosperity, productivity and performance of any company. Motivation is the key to creating an enabling environment where optimal performance is possible (Chapman, 2004). Employee motivation promotes workplace harmony and increased employee performance. It is the key to long term benefits for the company. Motivated employees mean staff retention and company loyalty, which in the short run will give birth to growth and development of business (Jishi, 2009).

Behavior motivated by goal internalization occurs when individuals adopt attitudes and behaviors congruent with their personal value systems. Strong ideals and beliefs are paramount in this motivational source (Hollingshead, 2004). Individuals motivated by goal internalization believe in the cause and have developed a strong sense of duty to work towards the goal of the collective. This source of motivation is similar to Kelman's (2008) value system, internalized values, valence for the outcome and pure moral involvement. Each of these perspectives emphasizes a virtuous character and a desire not to compromise these virtues. Transformational leader behaviors are most typically seen in persons who trust and believe in the goal of the organization naturally expanding to belief in the organization's cause.

The literature review above did not adequately identify the direct effect of leadership styles on the growth of NGCDF projects. There were also inconclusive findings on how leadership style affects implementation of classroom construction. The studies reviewed were mostly conducted in developed countries with limited studies being done in Kenya. There was a need, therefore, to find out how leadership style affects the growth of projects in Kenya.

### 3.0 Material and Methods

The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The target population was employees from 25 NGCDF projects in Trans Nzoia County, Kenya. From the 25 projects' database, there was a total of 748 employees. Simple random sampling was used to select a sample of 174 employees was selected. Primary data was obtained using questionnaires while secondary data was sourced from magazines and journals dealing with current issues in the completion of projects and leadership style. The reliability test of the instruments was done using Cronbach alpha coefficient. Analysis of data was done using descriptive statistics specifically mean and standard deviation. Inferential statistics was Pearson correlation coefficient and multiple regression analysis, however, since the data was in categorical form, for the study to use regression model, data was converted into interval data.

### 4.0 Results

This chapter describes the analysis of data followed by a discussion of the research findings. The findings relate to the research objectives that guided the study. Hypotheses were also tested with the study accepting or failing to accept them depending on the p values. Discussions of the findings were given in under the information presented. A total of 174 questionnaires were administered. The response was however received from 168 respondents giving a response rate of 96.55%.

#### 4.1 Teamwork

This section of the analysis presents the results of team work. The findings are presented in table 1 below. Finding indicated leaders contribute to their teamwork effort ( $M=4.5$ ,  $SD=1.11065$ ). also, there is an indication of the high degree of cooperation and effective communication between the leaders and their subordinates which are crucial for project success. leader supports their teamwork, always encouraged to work as a team, the and recognize employees' teamwork effort.

**Table 1 Teamwork**

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Our leaders contribute to our team work effort	4.5	1.11065
My leader support our team work	4.7083	0.52886
We are always encouraged to work as team	4.7976	0.40298
My leader recognize our teamwork effort	4.6905	0.53559
<b>Teamwork</b>	<b>4.6741</b>	<b>0.42363</b>

#### 4.2 Employee Motivation

The item revealed a mean of 4.3095 and standard deviation of 0.70032 an indication that leaders set goals for both personal and institution's growth. In a bid to establish whether the leaders make the employees feel a strong sense of belonging to NGCDF projects, the respondents were asked to respond accordingly. The results imply that leaders make their employees feel a strong sense of belonging to NGCDF projects. Finally, The results summed up to a mean of 4.5655 and standard deviation of 0.52071 an indication that the leaders care a lot about their employees. Generally, the results on employee motivation summed up to a mean of 4.5079 and standard deviation of 0.45991.

**Table 2 Employee Motivation**

	Mean	Std. Deviation
My leader set goals for both personal and institution's growth	4.3095	0.70032
Our leader makes feel a strong sense of belonging to CDF	4.6488	0.5487
Our leader care a lot about us	4.5655	0.52071
<b>Employee Motivation</b>	<b>4.5079</b>	<b>0.45991</b>

#### 4.3 Project Performance

This section of the analysis focused on project performance. The results are as presented in table 4.6 below. The results summed up to a mean of 4.4405 and standard deviation of 0.60638 meaning that most of the projects are completed within the given timeline. the employees are capable of minimizing costs. The results revealed a mean of 4.3393 and standard deviation of 0.74889. This means that the projects have met their expected targets. The item realized a mean of 4.1845 and a standard deviation of 0.8163. This is an indication that most of the projects initiated are of good quality. The item revealed a mean of 4.2857 and standard deviation of 0.71043. From the results, it can be safely concluded that there has been an improvement in service delivery in the community. In general, results on project performance summed up to a mean of 4.3524 and standard deviation of 0.50256. This is an indication that the respondents were generally agreeable. Also, there were fewer variations in the responses as indicated by the standard deviation.

**Table 3 Project Performance**

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Most of our project are completed within the given timeline	4.4405	0.60638
We are able to minimize cost	4.5119	0.57895
Our project are achieving the expected targets	4.3393	0.74889
Most of the project initiated are of good quality	4.1845	0.8163
There has been an improvement in services delivery in the community.	4.2857	0.71043
<b>project performance</b>	<b>4.3524</b>	<b>0.50256</b>

#### 4.4 Hypothesis testing

There was a strong relationship between support from leaders and project performance ( $r = 0.644$ ,  $p$ -value  $< .01$ ). There was a medium relationship between employee motivation and project performance ( $r = 0.439$ ,  $p$ -value  $< .01$ ). Finally, there was a weak relationship between teamwork and project performance ( $r = 0.252$ ,  $p$ -value  $< .01$ ) as indicated in table 3 below. The results showed that all the five predictors (teamwork and employee motivation) explained 50.7 percent variation of project performance ( $R$  squared = 0.507).

**Hypothesis 1 ( $H_{01}$ ) stated that teamwork has no significant effect on project performance.** Research findings revealed that teamwork had a significant effect on project performance basing on  $\beta_1 = 0.162$  (p-value = 0.018 which is less than  $\alpha = 0.05$ ) implying that we reject the null hypothesis stating that teamwork has no significant effect on project performance. The results suggest that teamwork effort brings about improved project performance. As such, for every unit increase in teamwork, there is also an increase in project performance by the same unit. Furthermore, the effect of teamwork was stated by the t-test value = 2.39 which implies that the standard error associated with the parameter is more than the effect of the parameter.

In conformity with the results, Parker (2008) posits that the scope of the work is brought off in a much better way when goals are defined and substantially understood and thus team success is increased. Similarly, Gido and Clements (2011) concluded that high degree of cooperation, trust, open, timely effective communication and ethical behavior are among the characteristics of an effective team that contributes to project success. Besides, appropriate management of internal conflicts, effective communication, setting and agreeing on comprehensible goals and establishing good trusting relationships within the team also contribute to the success of the project (Kerzner and Saladis, 2013; Dalal, 2011).

**Hypothesis 2 ( $H_{02}$ ) stated that employee motivation has no significant effect on the project performance.**

Findings showed that employee motivation had coefficients of the estimate which was not significant basing on  $\beta_2 = 0.057$  (p-value = 0.479 which is more than  $\alpha = 0.05$ ) hence we accept the null hypothesis that employee motivation has no significant effect on the project performance. Furthermore, the effect of employee motivation is shown by the t-test value of 0.71 which implies that the effect of employee motivation surpasses that of the error. Contrary to the results, Bwire et al., (2014) elucidates that employee motivation brings about energized employees to commit their time and efforts to the organization. In a similar vein, Ufuophu-Biri, (2014) echoes that motivation enhances employees' satisfaction and happiness in their workplace which leads to high job performance. The results are also contrary to that of Chapman, (2004) which shows that motivation is the key to creating an enabling environment where optimal performance is possible. Besides, Jishi, (2009) echoes that employee motivation gives birth to growth and development of business.

**Table 3 Hypotheses Testing**

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			Correlation (r)
	B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.	
(Constant)	0.213	0.312		0.683	0.496	
Teamwork	0.159	0.066	0.162	2.39	0.018	.252**
Employee Motivation	0.054	0.076	0.057	0.71	0.479	0.139
F	33.34					
Sig.	.000b					
R Square	0.507					
Adjusted R Square	0.492					

a Dependent Variable: project performance

## 5.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

In conclusion, team work is key if project success is to be enhanced. Teamwork is established whenever aspects such as effective communication, trust among the team members and respect for cultural differences are adhered to. These aspects are strongly linked with the project success. For instance, whenever there are glitches in communication within the group, the end results are low motivation levels, poorly stated targets as well as coordination and flow of work. This implies that teamwork is as a result of improved interactions and cohesiveness. This, in turn, contributes to the project success.

Furthermore, the literature has indicated that the success of a project depends on whether employees are motivated with their work or not. Motivated employees are energized and work towards the growth of the project. They commit their time and efforts to the project, and in turn, they receive incentives and rewards. This promotes workplace harmony and increased employee performance. However, the study has indicated that employee motivation has no significant effect on project performance. There is thus need for further findings on the same so as to assess the validity of this concept.

Furthermore, support from the leaders is key in enhancing project success. There is, therefore, need for the project leaders to explain to the subordinates how the tasks should be carried out. As well, employees will feel a sense of responsibility and belong if they are consulted for their suggestions in decision making. It is also important for the project leaders to treat all their employees fairly and offer constructive criticism. Leaders should also listen to complains by employees and attend to them promptly.

Finally, the study has established that employee empowerment has a positive influence on project performance. There is, therefore, need for employees to participate in setting the goals and objectives for their job and have independence and freedom in what they do. It is also crucial for employees to have a chance to use their personal initiative and judgment in carrying out the work. Moreover, a supportive supervisor that encourages employees' career advancement is of utmost importance. To sum up, there is a need for employees to receive encouragement to come up with new and better ways of accomplishing project tasks.

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