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**ABSTRACT**

*This study examined the extent to which leadership influence performance of non–academic staff in public Universities. Accordingly, independent variable included leadership while the dependent variable was performance. The study was based on Contingency Theory. Descriptive research design targeting a population of selected non-academic staff in three chosen public universities that is; (UoN), (JKUAT), and (KU) was applied. The target population was 7403 non- academic staff .The sample size was 365 staff non - academic staff. The study used primary data collected from respondents through questionnaires, while Secondary data was collected from, publications, journals and websites and consistency of data collection instruments was ascertained through Cronbach alpha coefficient. The correlation between the independent and dependent variable was determined by the use of regression analysis. Data was coded; cleaned and analysed using SPSS software. Data was presented on tables. The study revealed that leadership had positively and significantly influenced employee performance. The study concluded that a good leader will ensure that employees are reminded of the organization's mission and principles, and that they are reminded to incorporate them into their everyday activities. The study recommended that in addition to practical experience on how to operate their departments, university administrators can demonstrate skillful use of their people-management abilities to keep workers involved.*

**Key Words:** Leadership, Employee Performance, Public Universities

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## INTRODUCTION

Most leaders in the universe appreciate the importance of employee engagement as a major contributor to performance and productivity. This has propelled scholarly debate by human resource and management practitioners who assert that employee engagement increase performance and productivity in organizations (Anitha, 2014). In this rapid series financial system, business influential recognize that having employees that have high performance is important for growth and constant experience thus, employee engagement is prognostic of workers outcome, attainment, and fiscal organization performance.

Leadership is a factor which has been found to affect worker commitment (Walumbwa, Avolio, Gardner, Wernsing and Peterson, 2008). Employee delegation is also an important factor to organizational performance (Edna Apasi Wabomba, Asenath Onguso, Hannah Orwa Bula, 2022). Engagement occurs logically while leaders are inspiring. When an employee's job is well thought-out to be key and important, it leads to their wellbeing and engagement. Strong maintenance method Team and colleague association is another fundamental issue that emphasizes clearly on the mutual agreement feature of worker engagement.

In the human resource management discipline, contrasting writers propose that standards for checking staff performance which include: quantified standard by ratio of labor that must be decreased or changed; purchaser contentment that can be quantified by the quantity of loyal buyers and the buyer's reaction. promptness, is dignified in terms of how work is fast carried out by the employees when given a specific duty; truancy/non-attendance noticed when staff make themselves absent from work; and goals are measured as they are attained when a staff excels in the set targets, she/he is reviewed to have executed their duties appropriately to attain objectives (Armstrong, 2006). The administration of independent task

execution in the company has customarily focused on evaluating task execution and assigning compensation, with successful task execution as the outcome of the interconnection linking independent capability and motivation. It is progressively being acknowledged that good organization and an good environment have a critical effect on independent performance, with performance goals and standards, suitable assets, counsel and support from the executive all being central (Torrington, Hall & Stephen, 2008). Practices and policies in the department of human resource do influence organizational as well as independent performance. Job contentment for example, has for long been perceived as key to influencing work performance as well as dedication. Additionally, analysts have recognized motivation as the arbitrating apparatus and recognize confidence and motivation. In spite of more current awareness to dedication, motivation is still reviewed to be a key impact to performance (Torrington et al, 2008). Leadership can take many dimensions; one common perspective is that leadership is an exchange that brings win-win relationship, this type of leadership is transactional and it highly influences the way employees performance and ultimately the way organizations perform (Kabiru, G.K. & Bula, H.O, 2020).

Higher education colleges in Kenya are working in an extremely aggressively setting which requires that these institutions hold to their core staff in order to increase and uphold competitive advantage. According to Commission for Education University, thirty public universities had been fully accredited as of October 2016. For the last one decade these institutions have experienced opposition both locally and globally in terms of students and staff. The private area is also contending for the similar students and staff (Mwiria, 2007).

Employees in the University encompass of teaching personnel and non-teaching personnel. The non-teaching personnel provides service that facilitates teaching to run efficiently. It is vital to make a note

of the non-teaching staff performance will have a major influence on the overall success of the institution. According to Yizengaw (2008), disconcerted individual issues resolve to make the employees not to achieve their set goals consequently for organization to meet their set goals and objectives too; they require encompassing well fit staff. Personal challenges similar to unnecessary concerns coming from the place of work interconnected issues such as deadline and target, short of time intended for personal and family commitment, not having skills to carry out a specific job plus sorrow can be able to direct to decreased personnel performance. Owing to increased demand meant for advanced education that can later on lead to a reliable raise of scholar enrollment over the days have as well led towards the amplified staff frustrations in community Universities.

#### **Statement of the Problem**

Worker engagement becomes an exceptionally general notion throughout the past two decades. Establishments attempt to understand if their staffs are involved plus how to make them occupied through using diverse surveys as well as the gear to continue being aggressive and progress better the performance. In the recent past, most Kenyan public universities have been embroiled in labor crises epitomized by industrial actions. Performances of these universities have deteriorated owing to elevated income rates and connected issues such as a lot non-attendance, little trustworthiness plus reduced performance. This has resulted in poor service delivery, unsatisfied customers and ultimately poor productivity. Researchers have revealed that the level of worker engagement is a major determinant of organizational performance (Abiodun 2010; Tonvongval, 2013). A study by Rich, Lepine and Crawford (2010) found that work participation, work fulfillment, and essential enthusiasm are intermediaries but do not go beyond engagement in explanation of relationships in the midst of previous circumstances and performance outcome.

Most of the documented employee studies on obligation and its power on task execution in Kenya have been done on private sector. For example, Otieno, Waiganjo and Njeru (2015) researched on the consequence of worker's inclusion on association on task execution in Kenya's horticultural area. The trio found that worker commitment is one of the major determinants of relationship performance in the horticultural sector in Kenya. Gikonyo (2013) studied worker commitment and performance of exploration and training state corporations in Kenya plus established with the intention of individuals with those characters, mental condition and behavioral actions significantly manipulate performance of research and training in State Corporation in Kenya accounting for 43% of change in performance.

Mokaya and Kipyegon (2014) did a study in the banking sector and observed that decision makers need to be conscious of the requirements plus the composition of their workers, as well as the impact of ecological factors, while increasing their programmes plus policies with the aim of having implications on commitment. More so, Mwangi and Thuku (2013) researched on the factors which affect worker commitment as well as have an impact on performance in a medium enterprise, which included training and development, recognition, pay and benefit communication and equal opportunity. It's therefore justifiably clear that no specific study has paid more attention on the consequences of worker inclusion on the task execution of public universities in the republic of Kenya. Therefore, there exists minimal information on the extent to which leadership influence performance of non-academic workers in higher education facilities in Kenya, Accordingly, this study sought to fill the gap by exploring how leadership affects presentation of non-academic employees in chosen public universities.

#### **Objective of the Study**

The objective of this study was to determine the extent to which leadership influences performance of non-academic employees in public learning

institutions. The study was guided by the following research question;

How does leadership influence performance of non-academic employees in public Universities

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Theoretical Review

#### Contingency Theory

The theory was advocated by Fielder (1958). This theory asserts that most group performance is reliant upon connections of leadership approach and amount of control that the manager has over the state of affairs. According to this theory the situation in which a leader operates relies on three factors; confidence towards a leader, clarity of task and position power of a leader. The effectiveness of a leader depends on the amount of self- assurance and admiration employees have towards the person in charge. Duty formation refers to the level in to which task assignment is understandable mutually the persons in charge and the subordinate. Positions authority is the quantity of authority attached to the leaders 'situation. A leader must be relationship oriented and task oriented. Relationship oriented is more concerned with creating good relations between leaders and subordinate for the accomplishment of the task. Task oriented is concerned with accomplishment of the task than the relations. Relation oriented influential are extra efficient in facilitating group performance when the circumstances are fairly constructive or moderately unfavorable. In this case therefore public University leaders require being both relations oriented and task to be efficient to guide their establishments in the right direction track through their workers. When University leaders make decisions, they take into account all aspects of the present state of affairs and act on those aspects that are key to the circumstances at hand. This theory was used in this study the objective of leadership.

### Empirical Review

#### Leadership and Employee Performance

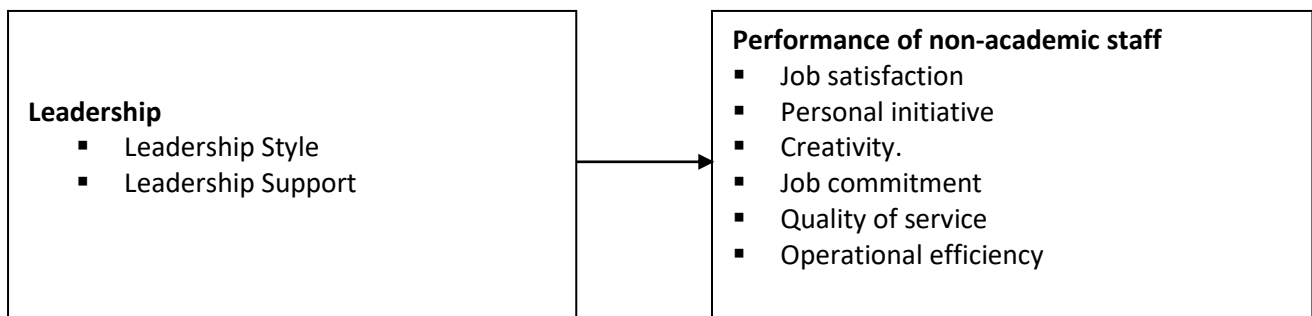
Kirkland (2011) examines worker performance in relation to diverse leadership styles in Pakistan. The study established that the association amid employee performance with self-governing approach be statistically significant. The study accomplished that if the person in charge involves the workers in decision –making procedure, having welcoming connections and reduce their anxiety at place of work he can make the most of their performance. Kitili (2013) researched on how the performance of the employee can be influenced by the different types of leadership styles in Coffee Research Foundation (CRF) in Kenya and concluded that there exists a connection amid the leadership style adopted.

There are leadership styles that are presiding and they include bureaucratic and democratic leadership style. Employees' performance has been impacted positively in terms of productivity, commitment and motivation.

Nguyen and Nguyen (2014) analyzed the association linking leadership behaviors and individual job routine in software companies in Vietnam Among those behaviors which are established to persuade extensively and completely on a person's job performance, individualized deliberation is the most significant; it's then followed by idealized persuade, scholar motivation, management by exemption – active and contingent reward.

Juma and Ndisya (2016) analyzed the elements of components of transformational leadership at an organization like safaricom. The study observed that an increase in inspiration motivation from leaders to achieve managerial goals and objectives, sustain for team building, leader's expression of the everyday jobs employees should do, and supporting workers uncover meaning in their work and had important alteration in worker performance.

## Conceptual Framework



### Independent Variables

### Dependent Variable

**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework**

Source: Researcher 2021

## METHODOLOGY

The study adopted descriptive research design. Descriptive study deals with the who, how and what of an incident which is the worry for this study (Donald and Pamela 2006). The study population was 18,000 non-academic staff 7403 non-academic employees were purposively targeted from three chosen public Universities namely University of Nairobi(UON) Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT) and Kenyatta University (KU). The study was conducted in the main campuses of these Universities since relevant employee data for the whole of selected public university and fraternity campuses could be found.

For data collection, this study used open ended and closed ended questions. The collection of data a tools that were used in this study were interviews, self- developed questionnaires and document analyses. Questionnaires mainly concentrated on acquiring opinions of the individual and specific information respectively. The questionnaires were administered randomly to the researcher by to respondents. Secondary data was collected by reviewing documents like website, journals which are pertinent to the study theme for getting more information on the research.

Based on the usable responses data was analyzed using statistical package of social sciences (SPSS) computer program. The data that was collected was analyzed by quantitative statistics by tallying the likert scale points. Those with responses missing and also items unanswered were eliminated to ensure validity. Every item in the questionnaire was scored according to the suitable likert scale point. The scores in every questionnaire was scrutinized and described in the outcome. Data was presented on tables and the overall percentage of score per question was calculated and presented in percentages. Score of each component was calculated to recognize which components are highly attributed to employee performance.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### Descriptive Statistics

#### Leadership

The study looked from a list of statements concerning the extent to which respondent agree on how leadership influences performance of public universities non- academic staff. The results were presented as follows;

**Table 1: Leadership**

Statements	M	SD
I receive recognition from my immediate supervisor when I do a job well	4.50	0.790
My employer clarifies the roles staff must play and the job requirements they must complete in order to arrive at their individual goals while satisfying the mission of the organization	3.23	1.726
My employer focuses on the individual development of employees	3.94	1.068
Supervisors are accommodative of employee views and suggestions	4.84	0.749
Organization leadership approach makes positive contribution in general performance of the university	4.84	0.503
My immediate supervisor treats everybody reasonably	4.83	0.373
Leaders/supervisor represents my call for thoughts and suggestions to his/her manager	3.96	0.444
The Leaders frequently involves staff in problem solving, policy making and decision making in the University	4.46	1.190
I am contented with the capability of supervisors and leadership in this University	4.85	0.619
The leaders communicate to staff frequently on matters significant to them	4.04	1.707
<b>Total points</b>	<b>4.35</b>	<b>0.65</b>

**Survey Data (2021)**

The table above showed that the interviewees approved that leadership influences performance of non-academic staff in public Universities as shown by aggregate of 4.35 and a standard deviation 0.65. This is in line with Kirkland (2011) examines worker performance in relation to diverse leadership styles in Pakistan. The study established that the association amid employee performance with self-governing approach be statistically significant.

The respondents strongly approve the statements that they were contented with the capability of supervisors and leadership in their University (M=4.85, SD=0.619), organization leadership approach makes positive contribution in general performance of the university (M=4.84, SD=0.503), supervisors are accommodative of employee views and suggestions (M=4.84, SD=0.749), their immediate supervisor treats everybody reasonably when they do a job well (M=4.50, SD=0.790). This concur with Nguyen and Nguyen (2014) who analyzed the relationship between leadership behaviors and individual job performance in software companies in Vietnam Among those behaviors which are established to persuade extensively and completely on a person's job

performance, individualized deliberation is the most significant.

The respondents approved the statements that the leaders frequently involves staff in problem solving, policy making and decision making in the University (M=4.46, SD=1.190), the leaders communicate to staff frequently on matters significant to them (M=4.04, SD=1.707), leaders/supervisor represents their call for thoughts and suggestions to his/her manager (M=3.96, SD=0.444) and that their employer focuses on the individual development of employees (M=3.94, SD=1.068). This is in consistent with Juma and Ndisya (2016) surveyed the request of elements of transformational leadership at Safaricom. The study observed that an increase in inspiration motivation from leaders to achieve managerial goals and objectives, sustain for team building, leader's expression of the everyday jobs employees should do, and supporting workers upper cover meaning in their work and had important alteration in worker performance.

The interviewees indicated to a moderate on the responses that their employer clarifies the roles staff must play and the job requirements they must complete in order to arrive at their individual goals while satisfying the mission of the organization

(M=3.23, SD=1.726). Kitili (2013) researched on how employee performance can be influenced by 49 the different types of leadership styles in Coffee Research Foundation (CRF) in Kenya and concluded that there exists a connection amid the leadership style adopted.

### Worker Performance

The study sought from a list of responses concerning the extent to which the respondents agree on how employee engagement influences performance of non-academic employees in public institutions of higher learning. The results are presented as follows;

**Table 2: Employee Performance**

Statements	M	SD
Job Satisfaction	4.42	1.147
Personal initiative and creativity	4.07	0.814
Job Commitment	4.30	0.589
Quality and quantity of work	4.14	0.836
Efficiency at work	4.63	0.503
<b>Total points</b>	<b>4.31</b>	<b>0.690</b>

#### Survey Data (2021)

The table above shows that participants concurred that engagement of workers determines how non-academic staff perform in public Universities as shown by aggregate of 4.31 and a standard deviation 0.690. This agrees with A study done in West Africa by Sanneh and Taj (2015) reveals that a major connection exists amid a variety of factors with the intention to have an result on worker commitment and the performance of the workers even in the public sector and that high ranking managers have got to reflect about committing their personnel regardless of having a permanent contract and other amenities that are usually connected with the public sector employment.

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study sought to determine how leadership influences non-academic staff performance in public Universities and found that leadership had positively and significantly influenced employee performance. Employees were contented with the capability of supervisors and leadership in their University, organization leadership approach makes positive contribution in general performance of the university, supervisors are accommodative of employee views and suggestions, their immediate supervisor treats everybody reasonably and that

they receive recognition from their immediate supervisor when they do a job well. The study sought to examine how team and co-worker relationships influences performance of non-academic staff in public Universities and found that team and co-worker relationships had positively and significantly influenced employee performance. The management are welcoming to people in their direct work group, mechanism through which work teams are formed are fair, employees are contented with how members of their work group solve problems, they feel free to talk candidly and sincerely with members of my work group, senior managers understand the concept of teamwork and that organization culture supports team work.

The study concluded that a good leader will ensure that the mission and principles of the organization are clear to the staff and also should include them in their activities of the day. This should reach the staff through emails or staff meetings, and that hearing from a certified source will eliminate any uncertainty about the news being true or not. Every employee needs to be well equipped so as to do their work well and a good leader will ensure that these are accessible to the entire organization.

The study recommended that in addition to practical experience on how to operate



their departments, university administrators can display expert use of their people- management capabilities to keep staff involved. They must select applicants with the appropriate level of competence, which necessitates the development of job postings that accurately describe the job requirements, including requisite qualifications and experience. Managers should give daily input to their workers in order for them to incorporate in their daily activities best practices.

### Suggestions for Further Studies

The study focused at establishing the extent to which leadership influence performance of non - academic staff in selected public universities in Kenya. It was suggested that further studies should be researched that concentrate more on different conceptualization of employee engagement. In addition, the study can be carried out in other public Universities apart from the ones studied.

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