

MEDIATION ROLE OF ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE IN THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LEADERSHIP STYLES, LEADERSHIP COMPETENCE, AND PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION AMONG NGOs IN PALLISA DISTRICT

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DECLARATION

I the undersigned, declare that this dissertation is my original work, except where due

acknowledgement has been made. I declare that this work has never been submitted to this

University or to any other institution for partial fulfilment for any award.

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DEDICATION

To my lovely parents Dakasi Deo and Asekenye Christine. I also dedicate it to my uncle Levy Lawrence Omulen and my Aunt Asekenye Sichola, My Brothers and sisters, relatives and all those who treasure education. Blessing to them all.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CBO Community Based Organisation

CSOs Civil Society Organisation

LDQ Leadership Dimension Questionnaire

MLQ Multi-factor Leadership Questionnaire

NACWOLA National community for women living with HIV Aids

NGO Non-Governmental Organisation

OCED Statistical Packages for the Social Sciences

OCP Organisational Cultural Profile

PACONET Pallisa Civil Society Organisation's Network

PMBOK Project Management Body of Knowledge

PMI Project Management Institute

PWC Price Waterhouse Coopers

UK United Kingdom

USA United States of America

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ABSTRACT

Under the guidance of the strategy implementation framework providing the theoretical foundation, this study examined the mediation role of organisational culture in the relationship between leadership styles, leadership competence and project implementation among NGOs and CBOs in Pallisa District with a particular focus on both NGOs, and CBOs. The study applied across sectional research design and quantitative approach to study the relationship between variable as outlined in the study objective. The quantitative approach was used because it presents a clear effect of independent variable on dependent variable. The population comprised 100 Organisations (NGOS and CBOs). From each NGO and CBO, four persons were purposively selected to participate in the study and these formed the unit of inquiry. These included; project officers, project managers, finance and administration officers, monitoring and evaluation officers and program managers. SPSS was used to analyse data from which frequency tables, correlation and regression results were obtained. Med-graph application for testing mediation effect was used. The findings revealed a significant positive relationship between leadership styles, leadership competence, organisational culture and project implementation. A significant positive relationship between leadership styles, leadership competence and organisational culture was established. The study established that organisational culture positively and significantly mediates between leadership styles and project implementation. Results further indicated that Organisational culture does not mediate between leadership competence and project implementation. This was so due to the fact that at times the shared values, beliefs, behaviours in a work setting limit a competent leader to execute successfully. The study again confirmed that leadership styles, leadership competences and organisational culture as key factors in enhancing project implementation. The study recommended that NGOs should adopt appropriate leadership styles and organisational culture that are aimed at motivating and encouraging employees to achieve better organisational out comes in addition to improving the competences of a leader through training and development.

Keywords: Organisation culture, leadership styles, leadership competence, project implementation

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) also known as "Charity Organisations" or "Not for Profit Organisations" are widely accepted as drivers to social-economic development of a country (Fritz, 2018). Through their activities such as environmental, social, advocacy and human rights work, NGOs work to promote social and political change on a broad scale (international) and local arena/national (Fritz, 2018). They play a significant part in developing society, improving communities, and promoting citizen participation besides addressing a wide variety of issues, including economic and technological development, disaster relief, animal welfare and other global problems (Ochieng, 2016; Fritz, 2018; Ochieng, 2016). In light of this, NGOs globally are under pressure to implement projects with efficiency and effectiveness in order to realize value for money, customer satisfaction and quality service delivery (Omofonmwan & Odia, 2009; Gerelser, 2010; Ministry of Public Services, 2011).

Despite the above, NGOs globally have been faced with myriad of strategy implementation challenges (Oyaro, 2013; Okoth, 2010) inhibiting their operations, and consequently leading to extensive closures (Ochieng, 2016; Ochieng, 2017). In communist countries like Russia, 75000 NGOs ceased operations in 2013 compared to 7400 in 2010. The situation is not any better in Asia, and Latin America where records show that thousands of them ceased operations due to project implementation related challenges such as time overruns, budget overruns, un met specification and unmet customer needs (CAI, 2013; Oguta, 2016; Stuart, 2013). The situation is even worse in Africa. According to Stuart (2013), African countries have the highest number of poorly implemented projects and NGO closures in the world with South Africa leading with over 3000 out of 100 000 registered NGOs closing due to implementation related challenges (Stuart, 2013). In Kenya, 510 of 10,000 NGOs have since 2014 closed their operations due to project implementation challenges (Stuart, 2013).

Uganda is not exception either as many NGOs continue to fall short of expected implementation and performance parameters (Ochieng, 2016; UNNGOF, 2019). Recently of the 13,000 registered NGOs by 2017 (UNNGOF, 2019), 25 closed their operations in the same year

(Atuheire, 2017; Ochieng, 2016). Lately, statistics show that many NGOs in Uganda close up within the first two years of their registration and those that survive, a few remain active and functional with the majority de-registered and terminated due to poor performance arising from implementation challenges (Ochieng, 2016; UNNGOF, 2019). In Pallisa district several NGOs are grappling with project implantation challenges. For instance, effective 2016 to date, Pallisa National Community for Women Living with HIV AIDs (NACWOLA) remain closed, Action Aid - Pallisa is facing a funding gap, and Pallisa Civil Society Organisation's (PACONET) performance is below expectation (Kaluuba, 2016; UNNGOF, 2019).

This study is anchored on three theoretical foundations, namely McKinney's 7S frame work (Peters & Waterman, 1982), Hill and Jones model of 2008, strategy implementation frame work (Noble, 1999). Hill and Jones conceptual model (2008) suggests that organisational culture improves project implementation (Hill & Jones, 2008). McKinney's 7S frame work (Peters & Waterman 1982) which is based on the study of the best American companies in the 1980s identifies seven key factors (*strategy, structure, staff, systems, skills, style and shared values*) to effective strategy implementation (Baroto, Arvand, & Ahmad, 2014). Similarly Hill and Jones Model as cited by Maher (2017) suggest that organisational design is at the heart of effective strategy implementation. According to this model, organisations use of organisational structure, control systems and culture to ensure successful project implementation.

Strategy implementation framework (Noble, 1999) suggests five levers of strategy implementation namely; goals, organisational structure, leadership, communication and incentives. According to this model, leadership plays a key role in determining strategy implementation such as having strategy champions.

Studies indicate that organisational culture, leadership styles and leadership competence are key in project implementation (Mwangi, 2016). Notable, effective leadership styles that define attributes and assumptions exhibited by individuals in attempting to provide leadership (Bass, 1990) are seen as a potent source of management development and sustained competitive advantage for organisational performance improvement (Mwangi, 2016). For instance, transactional leadership helps organisations achieve their current objectives more efficiently leading to effective strategy implementation (Zhu, Chew & Spengler, 2005). Similarly, studies

suggest that organisational culture is associated with project implementation (PMBOK, 2013; Project Management Institute 2015; Cameron & Quinn, 2006). Organisational culture defines values, beliefs and principles embedded by the organization as a basis for organization management (Denison & Neale, 2011). Organizational culture specifically conveys a sense of identity to employees, provides unwritten and often unspoken guidelines for getting along in the organisation, besides ensuring stability of the social system that they experience (Cameron & Quinn, 2006). Studies indicate a positive correlation between leadership competence and project implementation success (Kyalimpa, 2014; Trivellas & Reklitis, 2014). Competence defines an underlying characteristic of an individual that contributes to a job while leadership competence refers to skills and behaviours that contribute to superior performance (Apostu, 2013; Kyalimpa, 2014). A competent leader gives an organisation proper direction and brings about innovatation necessary for project implementation (Trivellas & Reklitis, 2014; Boyatzis & Berlinger, 1992 & Stogdill, 1974).

However, there is lack of empirical studies examining the relationship between leadership styles, leadership competence on project implementation. Majority of studies examining this relationship have relied on data from Europe, Asia and South Africa (Trivellas & Reklitis, 2014; Katene & Shoppee, 2017; Ogbonna & Harris, 2000). Besides, there is no study to the best of my knowledge that has examined all the stated variables in a single study. To fill this knowledge gap, in this study we seek to focus on organisational culture, leadership style and leadership competence as predictor variables of project implementation in a single study. Also, the exact mechanism by which these variables affect project implementation is to date less known on Ugandan context. In order to fully understand the relationship between leadership styles and leadership competence on project implementation, it is necessary to have an integrated framework that factor in organisational culture as a mediator so as to provide a more complete explanation for the relationship.

The theoretical frame work builds on strategy implementation framework (Noble, 1999) of organisational culture which assumes that leadership styles as a strategy implementation lever independently or in combination predict organisational culture which in turn has a positive effect on project implementation. In particular, the framework suggests that leaders who score high on employee involvement, worker engagement, stimulation and inspiration of followers,

staff motivation through rewards and punishments are able to compete, ensure organisational stability, take social responsibility, innovate, and focus on performance orientation which is necessary for project implementation. Accordingly we believe that strategy implementation framework (Noble, 1999) of organisational culture corresponds to our conviction that when transformational and transactional leaders inspire and motivate their followers, employees are likely to embrace the culture of the organisation reflected through taking social responsibility, embracing a culture of competitiveness and innovation, being performance oriented and as result project implementation will be enhanced.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Project implementation among NGOs has consistently fallen short of expectations (Stuart, 2013; Oguta, 2014; Uganda NGO Board, 2016; Ochieng, 2017; UBOS, 2017). Recent statistics show that many NGOs in Uganda close up within the first two years of their registration and those that survive, a few remain active and functional with the majority de-registered and terminated due to project implementation challenges (Uganda NGO Board, 2016; Ochieng 2015). NGO sector has continuously registered time overruns, budget overruns, un met product specification and unsatisfied customer (Auditor General's Report, 2008; Nangoli, 2012; Oguta, 2014; Uganda NGO Board, 2016; and Ochieng, 2017). Further, according to Mwanje (2016), 70 to 90 percent of organisations fail to achieve the success of implementation while Pwc (2016) has noted that few Ugandan NGOs are able to successfully and sustainably bridge the gap between their strategy and execution. As well, there are cases of many NGOs in Pallisa district such as National Association of women living with HIV that have closed business due to implementation challenges

This poor implementation scenario persists despite availability of well laid frame work such as accountability frame work by Upasana (2016), Parmo general guidelines and implementation checklist (2013). Consequently, several NGOs have lost funding and subsequently closed. It is likely that poor project implementation may be attributed to a weak Organisational culture, poor leadership styles and limited leadership competence among NGOs in Uganda in general and Pallisa in particular, yet studies indicate that Leadership styles (Kihara, 2017; Germano, 2010);

leadership competence (Kyalimpa, 2017; Ahmed, 2018) predict project implementation. It is that stimulates further inquiry.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The study examines the relationship between leadership style, leadership competencies, organisational culture and project implementation process in NGOs.

1.4 Research Objectives

- i. To find out the relationship between leadership style and project implementation
- ii. To examine the relationship between leadership competencies and project implementation
- iii. To determine the role of organisation culture in project implementation
- iv. To determine the relationship between leadership style and organisational culture
- v. To find out the relationship between leadership competence and project implementation
- vi. To examine the mediation role of organisational culture in the relationship between leadership style and project implementation
- vii. To examine the mediation role of organisational culture in the relationship between leadership competence and project implementation

1.5 Study Hypotheses

H₁: Leadership style is positively and significantly related to project implementation

 \mathbf{H}_2 : Leadership competence is positively and significantly associated with project implementation

H₃: Organisation culture is positively and significantly related to project implementation

H₄: Leadership style is positively and significantly related to organisational culture

H₅: Leadership competence is positively and significantly related to organisational culture

H₆: Organisational culture mediates the relationship between leadership style and project

implementation

H₇: Organisational culture mediates the relationship between leadership competence and

project implementation

1.6 Scope of the Study

The scope of the study includes: content, geographical and time scope

1.6.1 Content Scope

The study comprised of four variables of leadership style, leadership competence,

organisational culture and project implementation. Leadership style, leadership competence was

the independent variables, project implementation was the dependent variable, while

organisational culture served as a mediator in the hypothesised relationship. The focus was put

on identification of the relationship between the independent variables (leadership style,

leadership competence, organisational culture) and dependent variable (project implementation)

and at the same time examination of the mediation role of organisational culture in the

relationship.

1.6.2 Geographical Scope

This study was conducted across NGOs and CBOs within Pallisa district that are at the centre of

project implementation. These NGOs and CBOs have engaged in project implementation but

with minimal success, the outcome of which has been their massive closure.

1.6.3 Time Scope

The study considered the period between 2000 and 2019. This is because this is when there was

massive registered NGO closure arising from unchecked implementation challenges

1.7 Significance of the Study

This study is likely to be significant to a number of parties as seen below:

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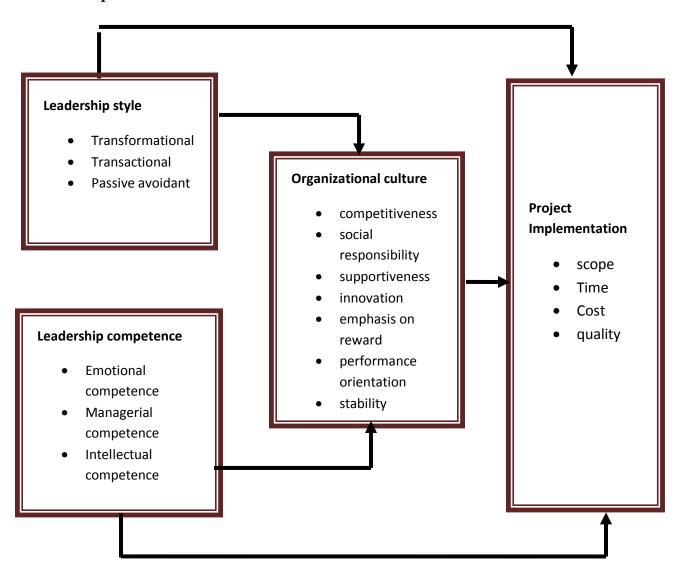
First, the study may help NGOs to understand the importance of leadership style, leadership competence, and organisational culture towards project implementation in NGOs.

Secondly, the study is likely to be of value in the field of academia as it will provide information on leadership competence, leadership styles, organisational culture and project implementation which is likely to act as a source of reference for future studies.

The study may aid government and donor agencies in formulation of policies to guide smooth operations of NGOs.

The study will provide useful insights for planning, assessing, monitoring and evaluating implementation in NGOs.

1.8 Conceptual Framework



Source: (Bass & Aviolo, 1992; Victor Dulewicz & Higgs, 2003; Sarros et .al; 2005; Bushuyu, 2006; PMBOK, 1996)

1.9 Explanation of the Conceptual Model

Based on the above conceptual frame work, project implementation is dependent upon leadership style, leadership competence and organisational culture. Leadership style has been conceptualized in terms of the three main leadership styles practiced in organisations today and most importantly suitable for project implementation. These include; transformational, transactional and passive avoidant Kihara (2016). Leadership competence has been viewed in terms of three dimensions raised by *Dulewicz and Higgs (2003)* comprising of emotional competence, managerial competence and intellectual competences. While organisational culture has been conceptualized into seven dimensions as suggested by Sarros et al. (2005); revisited and revised from earlier works of O'Reilly, Chatman and Caldwell (1991) consisting of competiveness, social responsibility, supportiveness, innovation, emphasis on reward, performance orientations, and stability.

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