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EFFECT OF THE PSYCHO-EMOTIVE DIMENSION OF ETHICAL LEADERSHIP ON EMPLOYEE COMMITMENT IN THE TRANSPORT SECTOR PARASTATALS IN KENYA

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Abstract

Purpose: The purpose of this study was to determine the effect of the psycho-emotive dimension of ethical leadership on employee commitment among senior managers in the transport sector parastatals in Kenya.

Methodology: The study adopted the positivism research philosophy and a descriptive correlational research design. The target population consisted of 253 senior managers in the transport sector parastatals. A sample of 153 senior managers was selected from the target population using the stratified random sampling technique. A self-administered questionnaire was used to collect data from senior managers. Data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics.

Results: Correlation analysis found a positive and significant relationship between the psycho-emotive dimension and employee commitment $r(111) = .79, p < .05$. Chi square test revealed a significant association between the psycho-emotive dimension and employee commitment, $\chi^2(11, N = 113) = 50.86, p < .05$. Results of multiple linear regression indicated that the psycho-emotive dimension was a significant predictor of employee commitment, $\beta = 0.77, t(113) = 13.42, p < .05$, and that 62% of the variance in employee commitment was caused by the psycho-emotive dimension, $R^2 = .62, F(1,111) = 179.95, p < .05$.

Unique contribution to theory, practice and policy: Previous studies on ethical leadership have focused on the ethical characteristics of the leader and behavioral traits in the Western settings. This study has provided an in-depth examination of ethical leadership and its effect on employee commitment in the African public sector context.

Key words: *Employee Commitment, Psycho-emotive dimension, Ethical Leadership*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

Employee commitment has been extensively hypothesized in literature to deliver positive organizational outcomes. However, employee commitment within organizations is often the consequence of sound leadership practices. According to Treviño and Brown (2005) ethical leadership is fundamental in the creation of a functional organizational culture that nurtures high employee commitment. Mamede (2014) has suggested that leader moral intelligence predicts employee affective commitment. González and Guillén (2002) stated that the psycho-emotive dimension creates a trustful atmosphere that influences organizational members towards positive organizational outcomes. This position is supported by several studies that attribute the positive influence of ethical leadership on employee commitment (Dinc & Aydemir, 2014). Some researchers have demonstrated that aspects of the psycho-emotive dimension of ethical leadership predict employee satisfaction (Kiarie, Maru, & Cheruiyot, 2017) and employee commitment (Nazir et al., 2016) among employees. Yates (2011) stated that the conduct of ethical leadership is analogous to that of a moral person and is synonymous with manifesting integrity through the adherence to an overall moral code. Duggar (2009) claimed that a moral environment is greatly valued by employees and in turn leads to their commitment to work.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Empirical studies investigating the relationships between the psycho-emotive dimension of ethical leadership and their organizational outcomes have been conducted mostly in Western settings (Mamede, 2014; Mehmet & Büşra, 2016). Other researchers have investigated the psycho-emotive dimension from a negative perspective vis-à-vis its relationship with employee commitment (Sanecka, 2013). Moreover, there have been recent calls by some researchers to determine how the psycho-emotive dimension of ethical leadership influences employee outcomes such as job satisfaction and employee commitment (Downe, Cowell, & Morgan, 2016). Kumasey, Bawole and Hossain (2017) revealed that codes of ethics significantly predicted affective, normative and continuance dimensions of employee commitment and recommended that future research be conducted using a longitudinal design. Kooskora and Mägi (2010) called for further research using larger samples and in different settings. In a recent study, Sofia, Ahmad and Hadiwidjaja Djumilah (2017) proposed that future research should use different moderating variables. Mitonga-Monga and Cilliers (2016) recently recommended that further studies be conducted using broader samples across various organizations in developing countries.

Contemporary literature suggests that ethical leadership provides a practical means by which an organization can enhance commitment among its employees. Musyimi's (2016) study in the banking sector of Kenya suggested that further research be extended to other sectors. Tanui (2015) suggested that future ethical leadership research should be conducted in other parastatals so as identify best practices of ethical leadership. However, the performance of parastatals in the Kenyan public sector context has raised considerable discussion in the last two decades, registering both successes and dismal failures. Minja (2011) attributes this state of affairs to poor ethical practices. Olesia, Namusonge and Iravo (2013a) stated that the situation is attributable to poor employee commitment. Furthermore, there is a limited body of research on ethical leadership dimensions and employee commitment in the Kenyan

context (Olesia, Namusonge & Iravo, 2013b). Therefore, in order to bridge these gaps, this study investigated the effect of the psycho-emotive dimension of ethical leadership among senior managers in the transport sector parastatals in Kenya.

1.3 Research Question and Hypothesis

The study was based on the following research question:

1. How does the psycho-emotive dimension of ethical leadership affect employee commitment among managers in the transport sector parastatals of Kenya?

Ensuing from the research question above, the following sub-questions guided the study:

- i). What is the correlation between the psycho-emotive dimension of ethical leadership and employee commitment among managers in the transport sector parastatals of Kenya?
- ii). What is the effect of demographic variables on employee commitment among managers in the transport sector parastatals of Kenya?

The study tested the following null hypothesis:

H₀₁ : The psycho-emotive dimension of ethical leadership has no significant effect on employee commitment among managers in the transport sector parastatals of Kenya.

1.4 Purpose and Scope of the Study

The purpose of the study was to determine the effect of the psycho-emotive dimension of ethical leadership on employee commitment among senior managers in the transport sector parastatals in Kenya. Senior managers consisting of heads of divisions, heads of departments and heads of sections in the parastatals under study were interviewed between June and September 2017.

2.0 THEORETICAL AND EMPIRICAL REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Review

The study was underpinned by the ethical leadership theory as described by Treviño, Hartman and Brown (2000). Further development of the theory saw subsequent scholars describe ethical leadership constructs that outlined five pivotal dimensions of ethical leadership collectively identified as, the character dimension, the technical dimension, the empowerment behavior dimension, the moral dimension, and the psycho-emotive dimension (González & Guillén 2002). The psycho-emotive dimension refers to how attractive the leader is to his or her followers. It is defined by leader psychological traits, presence of attractive organizational reward systems and use of social skills by the leader to create appealing work climates (González & Guillén, 2002).

Among the common psychological traits that applicable to this attribute include the five-factor model which names five personality traits as agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, extraversion, studied in the past and conclusions drawn over their applicability in leadership. Guay (2013) observes that leader psychological traits have been extensively studied as part of leadership theory over the last two decades, and that they provide a basis of identifying person-organization compatibility, i.e. the congruence between employee and organizational values. The need for making such an identification stems from person-organization compatibility's importance as an antecedent of the perception of leader

attractiveness. According to Bernerth, Armenakis, Feild, Giles and Walker (2007), some workers and some superiors show more willingness than others to be involved in interactions thus leader psychological traits may determine follower outcomes.

A key attribute of the psycho-emotive dimension involves organizational presence of employee remuneration and reward systems. A substantial number of empirical studies have linked extrinsic rewards to significant relationships with affective and normative commitment (Osibanjo, Adeniji, & Olubusayo, 2014). The significance of employee remuneration, recognition and reward systems as a tool for human capital management practitioners is embodied in its ability to attract, motivate and retain skilled workers. Employee perception of their remuneration may determine their intentions to leave or stay in the organization. Hence, organizations must strive to make sure that remuneration is perceived as fair from an internal perspective and competitive in comparative to prevailing industry compensation standards (Tarus, 2016). Kimutai and Sakataka (2015) found that prospects of promotion, medical benefits, employee training and development, and free worker interaction had the strongest contribution to employee commitment.

The third attribute of the psycho-emotive dimension lies in the leader's propensity to evoke social attraction through effective relational leadership skills. According to Werbel and Henriques (2009), relational leadership refers to a mutually compliant supervisor-subordinate relationship characterized by reciprocal and cordial social exchanges. According to Shafer, Poon and Tjosvold (2013) the promotion of internal competitive environments among employees registers significantly reduced organizational commitment and professional commitment outcomes. Brown et al. (2005) emphasized the role that leaders have in shaping the behavior of their followers through social modeling.

2.2 Empirical Review

Over the last two decades, leadership theorists have been pre-occupied with the subject of leader personality traits. Furnham and Crump (2015) studied the personality traits of sets of managers to identify how the five-factor personality traits affect leadership and found that that managers were prone to extraversion than non-managers. A study by Pundt, (2015) revealed a significantly positive relationship between humorous leadership and innovative behavior. Choi and Lee (2014) found that with the mediation of the five-factor model, employee psychological capital was positively related with their individual performance, turnover intention, work happiness and subjective well-being. Consistent with Werbel and Henriques (2009) other researchers have argued that employee engagement is best predicted by interpersonal leader behaviors such as care of followers.

Studies such as Hansen, Byrne and Kiersch (2014) suggest that employee engagement is best predicted by interpersonal leadership behaviors or social skills, e.g. caring about followers. Abdullah, Omar and Rashid (2013) examined the effect of personality on employee commitment & performance and found that extraversion, conscientiousness and agreeableness positively and significantly affected employee commitment. Shafiq and Rana (2016) demonstrated that leader emotional intelligence had significant and positive relationships with affective, continuance and normative commitment. However, Scott, Colquitt, Paddock and Judge (2010) suggested that emotional intelligence alone may be inadequate in eliciting positive outcomes in followers. Recently, Thompson, Buch, and

Kuvaas (2017) have concluded that the application of participative decision-making by politically skilled leaders results in employee commitment.

A number of studies have linked extrinsic rewards with positive relationships towards affective and normative commitment. For example Miao, Newman, Sun, and Xu (2013) found a positive relationship between employee satisfaction with intrinsic rewards and affective and normative commitment in the Chinese context. Korir (2016) demonstrated in a recent study that monetary reward management practices collectively had a substantial effect on organizational commitment. Similarly, Saqib et al. (2015) demonstrated that both tangible and intangible rewards were significantly and positively related with employee commitment, individually and collectively. From the findings of empirical literature, it can therefore be conclusively opined that leaders who demonstrate good command of employee remuneration and reward systems are able to achieve positive employee outcomes including commitment to the organization.

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study adopted positivist philosophy and descriptive correlational research design. The study was quantitative in nature and sought to determine the effect of the psycho-emotive dimension of ethical leadership on employee commitment among senior managers in the transport sector parastatals in Kenya. The target population for this study consisted of 253 senior managers from the nine (9) parastatals in the Ministry of Transport, Infrastructure, Housing and Urban Development. The parastatals were; Kenya Airports Authority, Kenya Civil Aviation Authority & East African School of Aviation, Kenya Ferry Services, Kenya Maritime Authority, Kenya Ports Authority, Kenya Railways Corporation, Kenya Railways Training Institute, LAPSSET Corridor Development Authority and National Transport Safety Authority.

Stratified random sampling technique was used to select a sample size of 153 senior managers from the total population. Data was collected using self-administered questionnaire and then analyzed using descriptive statistics i.e. means and standard deviations, and inferential statistics including analysis of variance (ANOVA), chi square and multiple linear regression. The results were presented in tables and figures. The statistical program for social sciences (SPSS) v. 24 was used as a tool for data analysis.

4.0 RESULTS

4.1 Demographic information

A total of the 153 questionnaires were distributed and 113 usable questionnaires were returned representing a 73% response rate. The results on demographic information revealed that 68% of the respondents were male and 32% were female. The results also indicated that about 16% of the respondents were aged between 25 years and 34 years. The age brackets with the highest percentage of employees were 35 to 44 years (about 33%) and 45 to 54 years (about 40%). The results, further revealed the majority (60%) of the respondents had master's degree as their highest academic qualification.

4.2 Descriptive statistics

The study analyzed the means and standard deviations so as to provide objective measures of comparison of the data. The means were interpreted using the following scale interval where; a mean value of 1 to 1.8 was an indication of strongly disagree; 1.8 – 2.6 was disagree; 2.6 – 3.4 was neutral, 3.4 – 4.2 was agree and a mean value of 4.2 and above was an indication of strongly agree.

It was found that on average, the senior managers agreed that their leaders created an appealing work environment in the workplace, ($M = 3.55$, $SD = 0.98$), and that they made the managers proud to be associated with them, ($M = 3.75$, $SD = 0.93$). In regard to the effect of the psycho-emotive dimension on employee commitment, the managers were however neutral about whether they found it very hard to leave the organization because the leader strongly believes in recognizing and rewarding productive employees, ($M = 3.19$, $SD = 0.87$). They were also neutral as to whether they felt morally obligated to remain in the organization because the leader made them proud to be associated with him/her, ($M = 3.20$, $SD = 0.95$).

4.3 Inferential Statistics

4.3.1 Correlation Results

Correlation analysis was conducted to determine the relationship between the psycho-emotive dimension of ethical leadership and employee commitment among the senior managers in the transport sector parastatals in Kenya. Table 1 shows that leaders creating an appealing work environment had a strong positive and significant correlation with employee commitment among the managers $r(111) = 0.72$, $p < .05$.

Table 1: Correlation Between the Psycho-emotive Dimension and Employee Commitment

Psycho-emotive Dimension of Ethical Leadership		Employee Commitment
Leader creating an appealing work environment in the workplace.	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.723** 0.000 113
Leader making me/us proud to be associated with him/her.	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.608** 0.000 113
Leader strongly believing in recognizing and rewarding productive employees.	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.733** 0.000 113

** Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

It was further shown that leaders strongly believing in recognizing and rewarding productive employees was positively and significantly associated with employee commitment among these managers $r(111) = 0.73$, $p < .05$.

The study determined the correlation between psycho-emotive dimension index and employee commitment and found a strong positive and significant correlation between the

psycho-emotive dimension of ethical leadership and employee commitment among senior managers of parastatals in the transport sector of Kenya $r(111) = 0.79, p < .05$). The results are highlighted in Table 2.

Table 2: Correlation Analysis on the Psycho-emotive Dimension Index and Employee Commitment

		Employee Commitment
Psycho-emotive Dimension	Pearson Correlation	.786**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000
	N	113

** Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

4.3.2 Chi square Test

A chi square test of independence was conducted to test the association between the psycho-emotive dimension of ethical leadership and employee commitment. The study findings revealed that the psycho-emotive dimension was significantly associated with employee commitment, $\chi^2(11, N = 113) = 50.86, p < .05$. The results implied that the psycho-emotive dimension of ethical leadership was likely to improve employee commitment among managers in the transport sector parastatals in Kenya.

4.3.3 One-way ANOVA

One-way ANOVA was carried out to establish if there were significant differences between the means of employee commitment with the managers' demographic variables (gender, age, management position, years worked in the parastatal and highest level of education). This sought to determine if there was greater variability in the rating between groups and within groups. The results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: One-way ANOVA on Employee Commitment for the Psycho-emotive Dimension

Gender of Managers	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	0.049	1	0.049	0.065	0.800
Within Groups	83.731	111	0.754		
Total	83.78	112			
Age of Managers	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	3.704	4	0.926	1.249	0.295
Within Groups	80.076	108	0.741		
Total	83.78	112			
Management position of Managers	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2.388	2	1.194	1.614	0.204
Within Groups	81.392	110	0.74		
Total	83.78	112			
Years worked in the Corporation	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	4.82	4	1.205	1.648	0.167
Within Groups	78.96	108	0.731		
Total	83.78	112			
Highest Educational Level	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.967	4	0.492	0.649	0.629
Within Groups	81.813	108	0.758		
Total	83.78	112			

** Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The study found no significant differences in the mean values for employee commitment across the managers' demographic variables. It was thus concluded that effect of demographic variables on employee commitment was insignificant.

4.3.4 Regression Analysis and Hypothesis Testing

Multiple linear regression analysis was carried out to determine the effect of psycho-emotive dimension of ethical leadership on employee commitment. The results were presented Table 4(a), Table 4(b), and Table 4(c).

Table 4(a): Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.786a	0.618	0.615	0.527367

a Predictor: (Constant), Psycho-emotive Dimension

b Dependent Variable: Employee Commitment

The results in Table 4(a) indicated that the psycho-emotive dimension explained a significant proportion (62%) of variance in employee commitment among these senior managers, $R^2 = .62$. This implies that 62% of the changes in employee commitment among the managers was attributable to the psycho-emotive dimension.

The regression ANOVA results in Table 4(b) show that the effect of the psycho-emotive dimension of ethical leadership on employee commitment was found to be significant, $F(1, 111) = 55.232, p < .05$.

Table 4(b): Regression ANOVA

Psycho-emotive Dimension						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	50.048	1	50.048	179.952	.000b
	Residual	30.871	111	0.278		
	Total	80.918	112			

a Dependent Variable: Employee Commitment

b Predictor: (Constant), Psycho-emotive Dimension

** Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

In the regression coefficients model, Table 4(c), the results showed that, the psycho-emotive dimension was a significant predictor of employee commitment, $\beta = 0.77, t(113) = 13.42, p < .05$. This means that one unit of increase in the psycho-emotive dimension increases the unit of employee commitment by .77 units, with the influence of the moderating variable. displays the results of the regression coefficients.

Table 4(c): Regression Coefficient

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	0.517	0.213		2.432	0.017
	Psycho-emotive Dimension	0.773	0.058	0.786	13.415	0.000

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Commitment

** Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Based on the findings of the study, the null hypothesis was rejected. The model equation for the psycho-emotive dimension of ethical leadership was:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_2 X_2 + \epsilon;$$

$$Y = 0.517 + 0.773 \text{ Psycho-emotive Dimension} + 0.213$$

5.0 DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this study was to determine the effect of the psycho-emotive dimension of ethical leadership on employee commitment among senior managers in the transport sector parastatals in Kenya. The discussion of the results in this section are based on the research questions that were used to guide the study.

5.1 Discussion

In regard to the effect of psycho-emotive dimension on employee commitment, the results revealed a positive and significant correlation between the two variables, $r(111) = 0.72$, $p < .05$, thus suggesting that the psycho-emotive dimension of ethical leadership had a strong effect on employee commitment among the respondents. The finding support Harvey et al.'s (2014) two-dimensional study which showed that leader political (social) skill had a significant positive relationship with employee perceptions of ethical leadership and a significant positive indirect effect upon employee commitment.

Results of One-way ANOVA established that there were no significant differences in the means for employee commitment across the managers' gender, age, management position, years worked in the organization, and highest educational level. This implied that for the psycho-emotive dimension, the demographic variables did not significantly affect the level of employee commitment among the respondents.

Chi square test was then conducted to check the significance of association between the psycho-emotive dimension and employee commitment. The psycho-emotive dimension was found to be significantly associated with employee commitment, $\chi^2(11, N = 113) = 50.86$, $p < .05$. This finding is supported by Olesia, Namusonge and Iravo (2013a) who found a strong association between leader ability to communicate the visioning attribute of servant leadership and employee commitment within the organization.

Multiple linear regression results illustrated that psycho-emotive dimension significantly predicted employee commitment, $R^2 = .62$, $F(1,111) = 179.95$, $p < .05$; $\beta = .77$, $p < .05$. This suggests that 62% of the variations in employee commitment can be explained by the psycho-

emotive dimension of ethical leadership. The finding is supported by Kónya et al. (2015) whose findings were supportive of the hypothesis that social exchange relates positively with employee commitment, hence reinforcing the notion that leader social skills are vital in engendering employee commitment.

5.2 Conclusions

The study established that the psycho-emotive dimension of ethical leadership had a significant effect on employee commitment among the managers. Based on this finding, the study concluded that it was important for the parastatal leaders to consider adoption of the aspects of the psycho-emotive dimension of ethical leadership since they impacted on the level of commitment among the parastatal managers. These include: creating an appealing work environment in the workplace, making employees proud to be associated with them, and strongly believe in recognizing & rewarding productive employees.

5.3 Recommendations for Improvement

The study found that the psycho-emotive dimension of ethical leadership had a significant effect on employee commitment among the respondents. The study recommends that parastatal leaders should create appealing, open and appropriately equipped work environments, and provide worker incentives so as to attract & retain committed human capital. They should also encourage creation of social networks among employees.

5.3.1 Recommendations for Further Studies

This study provided knowledge on how the psycho-emotive dimension of ethical leadership can enhance employee organizational commitment among the transport sector parastatals in Kenya. The quantitative methodology was used by the study to arrive at the conclusions. The researcher recommends that the study should be replicated across all employee levels in the private transport-sector organizations using a mixed method approach

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