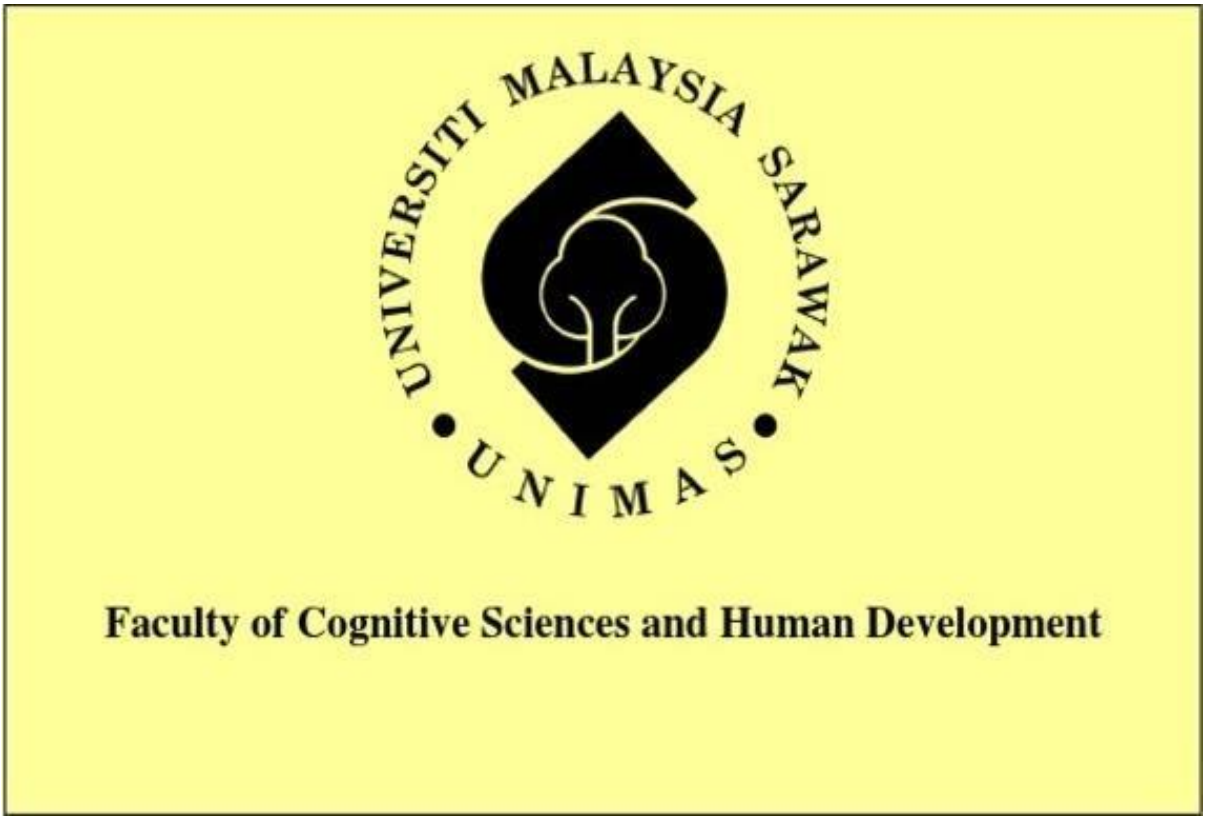

PERCEPTIONS ON THE INFLUENCE OF LEADERSHIP STYLE ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE

NURULKHAIRATI BINTI ASIS

Bachelor of Science with Honours
Human Resource Development
2020

The project entitled Perception on the Influences of Leadership Style on Employee Performance was prepared Nurulkhairati Binti Asis and submitted to the Faculty of Cognitive Sciences and Human Development in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Bachelor of Science with Honours (*Human Resource Development*)

Received for examination by:

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Date:

20th July 2020

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Abstract

This study aims to explore the perceptions of the influence of leadership style on employee performance. To achieve the aims of this study, there were three specific objectives such as is to explore the influence of leadership style on employee performance in selected travel agencies in Kota Kinabalu, Sabah. A qualitative methodology was used in this research. Only five informants are being interviewed who were currently work in the selected travel agencies in Kota Kinabalu, Sabah. The interview session was using semi-structured interview with open-ended questions. The population of this study was targeting the managers and directors director.The data from the interview were manually analysed using thematic analysis. The research instrument had been using the interview guide questions based on the research questions of this study. Based on the research findings, all of the informants are have different leadership style and do not have specific leadership style. Besides, this paper are able to prove that there are some influence of leadership style on employee performance. At the end of this paper, there are several recommendations to the organization, human resource practitioners and future researcher in conducting the research in the future.

Keywords: Perceptions, Leadership style, Employee Performance

Abstrak

Kajian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui persepsi pengaruh gaya kepemimpinan terhadap prestasi pekerja. Untuk mencapai tujuan kajian ini, terdapat tiga objektif khusus seperti untuk meneroka pengaruh gaya kepemimpinan terhadap prestasi pekerja di agensi pelancongan terpilih di Kota Kinabalu, Sabah. Metodologi kualitatif digunakan dalam penyelidikan ini. Hanya lima orang informan yang ditemu ramah yang kini bekerja di agensi pelancongan terpilih di Kota Kinabalu, Sabah. Sesi temu ramah menggunakan temu bual separa berstruktur dengan soalan terbuka. Populasi kajian ini menyasarkan pengurus dan pengarah pengarah. Data dari temu bual dianalisis secara manual menggunakan analisis tematik. Instrumen kajian menggunakan soalan panduan wawancara berdasarkan persoalan kajian kajian ini. Berdasarkan hasil kajian, semua informan mempunyai gaya kepimpinan yang berbeza dan tidak mempunyai gaya kepemimpinan yang khusus. Selain itu, makalah ini dapat membuktikan bahawa terdapat beberapa pengaruh gaya kepemimpinan terhadap prestasi pekerja. Pada akhir makalah ini, terdapat beberapa cadangan kepada organisasi, pengamal sumber manusia dan penyelidik masa depan dalam menjalankan penyelidikan di masa hadapan.

Kata kunci: Persepsi, Gaya kepimpinan, Prestasi Pekerja

Chapter One: Overview of Study

1.0 Introduction

This study was conducted to explore the perceptions of the influence of leadership style on employee performance. Organizations are continually experiencing significant challenges adjusting to the rapid dynamics changing in innovation where it demands new strategic responsibilities of a leader that usually involves organizing, decision making, executing tasks and coordinating towards achieving goal as what intended to be accomplished. This fast changing environment and the current globalization demand for an effective leader who can transform organization to be at par with rapid changes. Leadership is an important factor in enhancing organizational success and effectiveness. In other word, an organization without effective and strong leader will have slight chances of to survive in this environment and able to fulfil the market demand due to high expectations from the public.

1.1 Background of Study

Leadership has become an important aspect in each organization where the organization Selects the leaders who express a vision that guide them towards achievement short-term objective and long-term goals. The employees expect the leader to motivate the workforce n effective ways where it will promise the success of the organization although from different culture and beliefs, when it comes to the terms of leadership, everyone would agree that it define on how a person create a productive employees and organization. Managers that manage and lead their employee are the responsible person that can help the organization to minimize the problem by choosing the right leadership style that is reliable and it is definitely suitable hold together the company with their employee that align with their vision and mission.

The effect of leadership on employee performance has been addressed in several studies. Wang, Tsui, and Xin (2010) studied 125 Chinese companies to research the role of leadership and organizational success and identified two styles of leadership behaviors, relational behavior, and task behavior. Performance as sales growth, productivity, market position, and competitive status are evaluated in this report. We find that the action related to the role of the leader is directly relating to the success of the organization. The business challenge is an atmosphere in which workers understand and contribute to the course, strategy, and priorities of the organization.

To summarize, the research on the perceptions on the influence of the leadership style on employee performance would add as a new paradigm for the organization to discover. In fact, finding for this study could help in initiating further understanding to the concept of leadership style and increase employee achievement based on our own perspectives and culture. This latter can provide a new insight for the organization to further imposed this concept to enhance employee performance that can help the organization to achieve the desire objective by using various types of leadership styles.

1.2 Problem Statement

Leadership is an essential key to success because it incorporates both the use of human resources and other resources within the organization, good leaders inspire workers and motivated employees not only to increase their engagement and work efficiency within an organization, but also to go beyond job requirements, thus improving the organization's overall performance and making it more difficult.

The gaps in the topic under study are highlighted below: knowledge gap, practical gap and empirical gap.

In terms of knowledge gap, **t**he researcher conducted this study to certain the validity of his views on the leadership style. Based on a previous study of leadership style conducted by Hazli (2012), he studied the relationship between leadership style and employee commitment and motivation. There is a gap in the research being carried out which is the understanding of the effect of leadership style on the performance of employees and interesting topics

In terms of practical gap, the understanding and acceptance of the Malaysian can improve and involve the findings and references of the study. Professional leadership including the process, direction and circumstance of establishing an organization to obtain the organization objective. Therefore, this is important to determine the cooperative, autocratic, disruptive, laissez-faire leadership and transactional leadership best used to the organizational leaders to improve their employees ' productivity within the organization (Mastrangelo, 2004).

In terms of the empirical gap, the previous research has been widely practiced abroad on leadership styles. Nevertheless, the study results elsewhere vary from Malaysia's as the study results will be affected by social, geographic, and national factors (Griffin, 2004). In this regard, the present study will help Malaysia's leaders make the most appropriate leadership style choices to ensure that the organization increases employee motivation and performance levels.

In making such exchanges, transaction leadership has ignored factors such as time pressures, poor performance evaluationinadequatetems, unfair rewards and lack of skill.

1.3 Research Objectives

1.3.1 General Objective

The general objective of this study is to explore the influence of leadership style on employee performance in selected travel agencies in Kota Kinabalu, Sabah.

1.3.2 Specific Objective

i. To explore the leadership style used by the the employer to enhance employee performance
ii. To explore the influence of leadership style on employee performance
iii. To explore the challenges faced by the leader to enhance employee performance
iv. To provide suggestions of effective leadership style to enhance employee performance

1.4 Research Questions

i. What is the leadership style used by the employer to enhance employee performance?
ii. What are the influences of leadership style on employee performance?
iii. What are the challenges faced by the leader to enhance employee performance?
iv. How can a leader enhance employee performance?

1.5 Research Framework

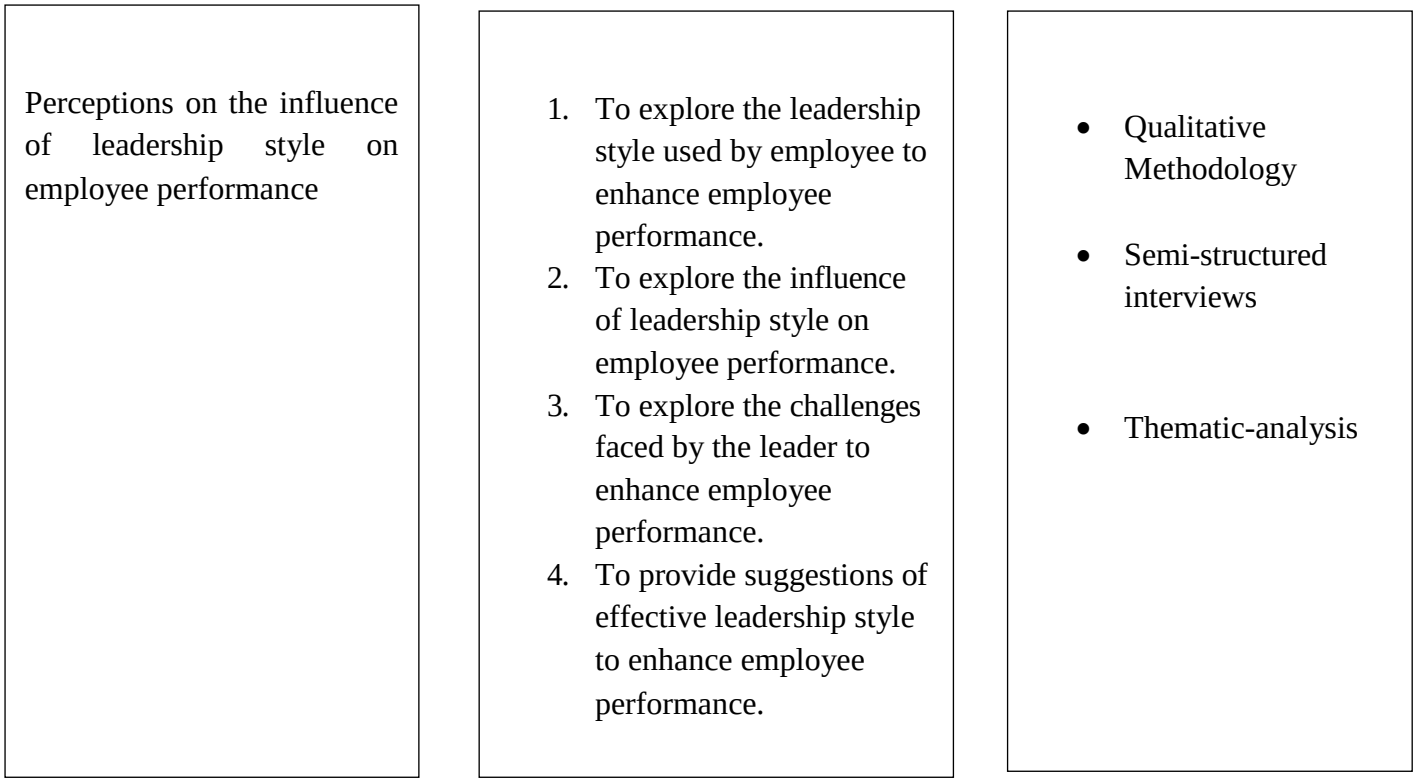

Figure 1.1 Research Framework

1.6 Definition of Terms

In this section, every term that was used in this study for this topic is explained accordingly using two parts, which are the definitions and operational definitions of the related variables.

Leadership:

i. Conceptual Definition

Jones and George (2004) state leadership is the way a person shapes and motivates people, inspires them and directs their activities to help achieve group or organizational objectives.

ii. Operational Definition

In this study, leadership refers to a leader that inspires their employee to achieve the organizational objective through goals.

Leadership Styles

i. Conceptual Definition

According to Mitonga-Monga and Coetzee (2012) leadership style as a combination of different traits, characteristics and behavior that are using by leaders for interacting with their subordinates. Transformational leadership defined by Lussier and Achua (2018) explores the transformation of the status quo by expressing the problem to followers in a compelling vision and the current system of what could be the organization, while transactional leadership is a leader willing to give something back to the organization, including pay rates, performance reviews, promotion and new responsibilities (Uchenwamgbe, 2013). According to Tannenbanum and Schmidt (2012), the leadership in which decision-making is decentralized and shared by all subordinates has been described as democratic leadership. The most powerful entity, the ultimate decision-maker, and authority, is the autocratic leadership style (Gordon, 2013), while the charismatic leadership style that has its power derives primarily from the leader's personality (Eze, 2010). Kendon (2013) described laissez-faire includes the freedom of decision-making and give more opportunities and the least possible guidance to employees.

ii. Operational Definition

For this study, leadership style is a pattern of managerial behavior correlates with employer behavior, which is to accommodate the organization's target. Transformational leadership is exploring when leaders inspire followers to enhance their inspiration, values, principles, understanding, and combination with corporate objectives and transactional leadership to preserve institutional cohesion and human capacity to gain tangible and intangible rewards. Democratic leadership is the suggestion and recommendation by managers in this style on different issues and opinions effectively give tasks to subordinate with full control over these tasks and reassure others to become ethical leaders and participate in leadership and employee development. Besides that, autocratic and charismatic leadership in this study is referred to his or her judgment would be known as a golden rule and should never be challenged and disrupted by anyone and create a vision, and the leadership should be pursued and executed

by the followers. Laissez-faire in this research can be described by involves giving democratic decision-making to group members.

Employee Performance:

i. Conceptual Definition

Crimson and Sitanggang (2005) define employee performance is a comparison of the actual work result of employees with work standards set by the organization.

ii. Operational Definition

In the context of this study, employee performance refers to the proper working condition to perform better for the organization

1.7 Significance of Study

Firstly, the contribution to the body of knowledge on leadership style in the organization. This contribution is to acknowledge the leaders in the travel agency in Sabah reliable on the perspective for describing and evaluating the leadership style in enhance employee performance. Next, the contribution to the Human Resource Practitioner. The findings can be utilized to enhance leadership and employee performance. Then, the input to the organization. The results can help the organization to improve leadership skills in the rapidly changing business environment.

1.8 Limitations of Study

There are some limitations in carrying out this study. One of the barriers faced is the limitation of the sample where informants are from the selected states in Malaysia located in Sabah, where the employee from the other countries of Malaysia who has not been involved in this study. Therefore, the findings in this study might not benefit for the different settings. Besides, the research applied to the explanatory qualitative will constrain finding specific on the objective compare to other methods such as mixed-method or quantitative, which may discover more findings empirically through the relationship between variables. Moreover, the scope of this study only focuses on the position of manager and above in selected travel

agencies in Kota Kinabalu, Sabah. This research will be more interesting if the survey encompasses all levels of employees to produce variety in the findings

1.9 Summary

In summary, this study is to explore perceptions of the influence leadership style on employee performance. This chapter has discussed the background of the study, the problem statement that has been identified together with the research gap. Then, the general and specific objectives have been crafted to determine the purpose of the study. The research questions have been developed parallel to the research objectives, and the significance of the study has been discussed to discover the expectations and the importance of the study to be carried out. The limitation of the study has been discussed in this chapter. Lastly, the terms of leadership, leadership style, employee performance, and engagement have been defined to explain the conditions that are frequently used in this study. The next chapter delves into the literature review.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

2.0 Introduction

This chapter addresses the issues related to the study, followed by the topic of leadership, leadership style, concept of the theoretical importance of employee performance, and past similar findings from previous research related to this study will be addressed towards the end of this chapter.

2.1 Theory Related To Study

Previous researchers have mentioned many theories and approaches. One of the methods was X theory and Y theory, where this theory was introduced by McGregor (1996). McGregor stated that X's theory is the conventional concept of management, which is the leader that subscribes to this theory will have the following assumptions:

- Ordinary humans are naturally lazy and just want to work as little as possible.
- Without management intervention, re-becoming passive will deny organizational requirements. Therefore, they must be persuaded, punished, controlled, rewarded, and their activities must be directed. All this is the responsibility of management by managing the Downline.
- Universal human beings lack ambition, dislike responsibility and prefers to be led
- Management is responsible for the compilation of productive entrepreneurial elements of money, tools, materials, and people for economic interest
- Concerning humans, this is a process that requires efforts to control their actions, motivate them, and to adjust their behavior according to the needs of the organization.

These are two theories reflect the two models against the performance of employee and motivation. This theory presents effective leadership strategies using the concept of participatory management. The idea is known to use the underlying nature of the human policy. Leaders who love approach X tend to like leadership styles through the power and vice versa, a leader who loves theory Y prefer a democratic leadership style. For example, an employee with a type of theory X is that employees tend to have properties that will not work without being ruled, instead of employees with a kind of theory Y will work by itself without supervision and orders from people Superiors. This type of Y is a type that is already aware of the responsibilities and duties of his work.

Theory X and Y are about the perception of managers on their employees, not about how they usually act. Therefore, it is likely that managers in the theory of Y can remind the results and performance of employees from the findings of this study will prove the authenticity of the manager in the theory Y.

2.2 Relattd Concepts in the Study

2.2.1 Leadership

According to Northouse (2007), defined leadership is a process of individual control by a group of people to accomplish common goals and objectives. Leadership is also a mechanism through which the manager may direct, guide, and influence other people's actions and behavior to achieve a specific purpose. Leaders are required to provide guidance and vision for improving performance to organizational leaders (Iqbal, 2015).

This concept of leadership is different from Gribben (1972), which is a process of trying to influence an organization at a specific time and place and can encourage experts to work hard to achieve the same goals. In "dynamic leadership," Hollander (1978) defines leadership as an essential process between managers and their subordinates. Despite the power of supervisors, the power of control relies more on persuasion and coercion. The leadership process also requires a two-way relationship, and the main objective is to accomplish a common goal.

2.2.2 Employee Performance

The main objective of the organization to evaluate the employee's job performance that could succeed in this competitive environment. The organization aims to assess the employee's job performance that could survive in this world of competition. A proper working condition will stimulate spiritual employees to put up the right behavior or attitudes to their job. Performance is a multidimensional construct based on what an individual has accomplished in the year and a critical criterion that determines organizational success or failure (Prasetya, 2011). According to Butler and Rose (2015), performance is the individual or team leaves behind in doing given responsibilities and job assignments effectively and efficiently. Besides, employee performance is action and outcomes in a task that can be used and measured by observation (Niranjana & Pattanayak, 2005). Niranjana and Pattanayak (2005) also argued that

employee performance is the employee's contribution to the achievement of organizational goals.

In like manner, Ibrahim, Al Sejini, and Al Qassimi (2004) stated that employee performance is the result of the pattern of activity and brings it out to satisfy the goals. According to some researches, employee performance correlates with an employee's immediately measurable behavior, substance, or mental activity, such as responses and decisions (Ibrahim et al. 2004). Therefore, return as a significant behavior that brings organizational goals and strategies to accomplish.

2.2.3 Leadership Style

Based on past research, the six types of leadership are transformational, transactional, democratic, autocratic, charismatic, and laissez-faire.

Manning and Carte state that transformational leadership was first discussed in 1973 by JV Downton and is essential to the development of leadership. Based on the leadership theory, there is a difference between transactional and transformational. Transactional leadership emphasizes change between the transformational, leader, and follower focuses on the pitching relationship between leader and follower, for example, continually motivating his followers to achieve the same goals, including both parties. All the decisions they make continue to strive for excellence in the future and reassure their follower. Although the transaction depends on the circumstances such as when a person demonstrates excellence in his or her job, he or she will be compensated. The differences of transactional leaders also in the assessment of their needs rather than the high and mature requirements of their leader's development organization (Jandagi, Matin & Farjami, 2009).

The argument of autocratic leadership is a classed style of leadership (Swarup,2013). It is a leadership style style style where a director is the most powerful entity and the main decision-maker (Gordon, 2013). This leadership style is based on the traditional idea that leaders are competent managers who direct their workers and monitor them. The autocratic leadership style should be tailored to the leadership characteristics, subordinate characteristics, and circumstance existence (Mullins, 2007). The authoritarian leadership style described by Mullins (2007) is to achieve the best results during the crisis, and the attention given by the employer to leadership is based on the assumption that subordinates are more likely to work well for managers who follow a particular leadership style. DuBrin, Dalglish, and Miller (2006) argued that the autocratic leader emphasized this and found it to be a task-oriented and task-

oriented achievement. The authoritarian leader monitors and exercises powers with little confidence or fear of the system and their leader's distrust and seizes them in crisis, in specific and intricate situations or in situations where fast decisions are required, autocratic leaders become more successful (Jooste & Fourie, 2009). Authoritarian leadership is shown as a controlling, directing, or coercive leader who rarely chooses based on their subordinates ' feedback (Bass, 1990). Similarly, autocratic leadership with McClelland (1975) is based on individual domination, and authoritarian behavior serving the self-interest of the leader is self-growing and exploitative of others. The decision is taken without consultation and works if there is no requirement to work or comply with the rules (Maxwell, 2015) In short, the autocratic leader has full control over those around him and feels that he has full authority to handle them as he wishes and is useful when immediate and timely decisions and results are needed.

According to Daft (2014), the democratic leader delegates authority to others to facilitate decision-making by workers and relies mostly on subordinate expertise to complete the task. Members of the group have a more significant say in the decision, policymaking, processes, and procedures (Mullins, 2007). Democratic leadership style is one of the most efficient leadership styles leading to higher productivity, better group membership contributions, increased group morale and supporting subordinates in performing tasks (Igbaekemen & Odivwri, 2015). In this style, managers enable employees to make suggestions and recommendations on major issues and give subordinates full control and responsibility for those tasks, encourage subordinates to become ethical leaders, and involved in leadership and employee development (Iqbal et al., 2015). Thus, this style provides confidence to employees who will help them to meet deadlines, departmental goals, and provide efficient team sport.

Leaders who adopt the laissez-faire leadership style exercise little control over followers and allow the followers to be free without direct supervision to carry out their assigned tasks (Wu & Shiu, 2009). Delegate and hands-off laissez-faire management to encourage group members to make their own choices. Wu and Shiu (2009) argued that such leaders have little influence over their workers and allow them to carry out their tasks without direct supervision. Wu and Shiu (2009) explained that managers have little control over the worker and make it possible without direct supervision for employees to perform their assigned tasks. Tarsik, Kassim, and Nasharudin (2014) found that laissez-faire support little or no instructions and allows workers as much freedom as possible while Cole (2005) is rarely involved in the project. Mullin (2007) also contends that the laissez-faire leader prefers to delegate the power of control to subordinates and to allow them to "do as you say" free action.

Garg and Ramjee (2013) found a low but essential and negative association between normative engagement laissez-faire leadership. The negative results have been observed found in these types of laissez-faire leadership (Chen et al., 2005). Therefore, laissez-faire is not a successful model that raises the morale of workers compared to other forms of le adership (Chaudhry & Javed, 2012).

Charismatic leadership is influenced mostly by the leader's personality. David (2013) stated that establishing high standards by imparting enthusiasm is achieved by setting an example in a charismatic leadership style, rather than by instruction or intentional staff development. There is much evidence of the positive correlation between the charismatic style of leadership and transition leadership. This is because they inspire pride for their teams and encourage others to move forward. This passion and dedication on the part of the group are of enormous benefit to both the employee and the organization. An effective socialized charismatic leader can, therefore, revolutionize an organization and inspire employees to perform better (Stephen, 2013), unlike the personalized charismatic leader who focuses on personal advancement and interest. Such a feeling of invincibility by the individual charismatic leader can quickly lead to frustration, rebellion, and apathy among the most talented employees, thereby destroying the desires and organizational goals of the employees.

2.3 Past Research Related To Study

The position of a manager is significant in maintaining employee performance in an organization. As a wise manager, understanding the nature of the workforce subordinate is essential. The manager must also analyze each of the strengths and weaknesses of all his employees to ensure harmony within the organization or business between the employee and the employer.

Samuel (2019) studied the leadership style and performance of 200 selected bank employees in Edo State, Nigeria. This study aims to examine which leadership style (democratic, transactional, and autocratic) impacts the efficiency of workers. The instrument used in this study was the questionnaire form. The questionnaire used contained the respondents' background, employer leadership style, and employee performance level. Data were analyzed using inferential statistics using multiple linear regression and Cronbach's Alpha. The results of this study found that there is no significant relationship between the autocratic and democratic styles of leadership towards workers' compensation. However, there

is a substantial relationship between transactional leadership style and bank employee performance.

According to a study conducted by Chua, Basit, and Hassan (2018), leadership style and its effect on the service sector's employee performance at various locations in Klang Valley. The results of this study have shown that the autocratic leadership style has a positive relationship on employee performance by showing that workers feel under pressure in an autocratic manner. However, Dawson (2002) states that the authoritarian style in a short time will show a great outcome.

Based on previous leadership research conducted by Iqbal (2015), he observed the effects on the CEO leadership style and workers of Al-Ghazi Tractor Factory and worker performance. In this study, the researcher has used a descriptive approach uses for the focus groups, interviews. The outcome of this study has shown that the democratic leadership style has a significant and effect on small businesses. These leadership styles can influence everyone's senior and top management to the new entrant, even of employees and new firms. They produce the corporate culture that affects the organizations and employee performance in terms of meeting deadline projects.

The study on the effect of leadership style on employee satisfaction and performance of Bank Employees in Bangkok by Belonio (2012) showed transformational and transactional leadership impact on employee satisfaction across different facets. Employee job satisfaction also affects the performance of workers, and leaders incorporate the different leadership styles that produce positive results when performing their leadership duties. The proportions in which these types of leadership converge depend on the nature of the organizational situation.

Daniel and Roussel (2017) studied the influence of leadership styles on employees' performance of Turkana County. The research showed that there is no perfect leadership style according to this report, affiliate and authoritative leadership style of the performance of employees, and these leadership styles influence the style of county government employees in Turkana County, so both methods should be adopted and not every technique should be adopted

2.4 Summary

This chapter had widely discussed the concepts and theories related to leadership and work performance. Each approach has outlined the leadership style and attributes that will arise in terms of employee performance following the implementation of a manager's leadership style. Besides, based on previous research has also helped the researcher to understand in-depth the