ASSESSMENT OF LEADERSHIP STYLES BY GENDER: A CASE OF TAMALE POLYTECHNIC

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Abstract

This study assessed leadership styles of Tamale Polytechnic staff by gender. Key issues in this study included leadership styles being practiced by both male and female staff and how those leadership styles relate to staff efficient performance and productivity. A descriptive survey research design was adopted. The study used purposive and stratified random sampling techniques for selection of respondents with questionnaire as the research instrument. It is found that gender determines staff leadership styles. The study revealed that although both male and female staff practiced transformational leadership characteristics than transactional behavioural trait the female staff slightly dominated their male counterparts in the practice of transformational leadership styles whilst the male staff also exceeded the female staff in the practice of transactional leadership styles. The study concluded that behavioural traits of transformational leadership styles promoted staff efficiency and productivity than transactional leadership styles. The study recommended that the Polytechnic authority should encourage the practice of transformational leadership characteristics among its staff to ensure efficient performance and productivity.

Keywords: Assessment, leadership, styles, leadership styles

INTRODUCTION

Today, development is seen as a multi-dimensional process involving changes in the social, political, cultural and economic structures, population attitudes and national institutions for accelerated economic growth to ensure the elimination of poverty, unemployment and inequality (Amegashie-Viglo, 2009:30). The multi-dimensional process of development must encompass true leadership characteristics male and female exhibit as a function of their gender (Rosener, 1990). It is believed that women are often left out of leadership positions in corporate organisations, and where they are not, they are often under-represented. The situation of Manica Polytechnic in Mozambique confirms this assertion where there is only 17% women staff as against 83% men staff (Manjichi, Brouwer, Menete & Pica, 2007). Similarly, Tamale Polytechnic also has only 20% female staff as against 80% male staff (Tamale Polytechnic NCTE staff data, 2010). Most feminists explained that under-representation of women in top management positions could lead to the possibility of talented women avoiding corporate life in favour of entrepreneurial careers (Oakley, 2000). This presents a worrying trend of female relegation from responsible positions in organisations, especially at the time the world is calling for female empowerment through drastic reductions of their unemployment rates.

Amidst the disparities, researchers have tried to find reasons to the problem by looking into leadership styles of males and females (Rosener, 1990; Powell, 2000). This would not only help in the female empowerment, but it would satisfy the critical research curiosity of getting a definite solution to the leadership problem and the endless quest for it in most organisations (Handy, 1993; & William, James & Susan, 2002).In another debate, researchers (Waldman, Ramirez, House, and Puranam, 2001) argued that there is the need to take a search into leadership styles seriously since these variables have direct effects on the decisional process and results of organisations. Kahai and Sosik (1997) and Evkall and Rhammar (1997) similarly argued that leadership styles affect group-work process, social climate and results of organisations.The overall picture is that there is growing interests on the need to expand the frontiers of leadership styles studies as these variables affect performance of workers and organisational outputs. Specific interest is also towards the need to identify leadership styles with gender by many researchers (Rosener 1990; Kanter, 1977; Barrett, 1980; & Helgesen, 1990). This provides enough ground for the study.

Statement of the Problem

The need for qualified personnel with complementary leadership styles to help in the establishment of an efficient institutional management system to achieve its shared vision remains the number one corporate objective of Tamale Polytechnic (Tamale Polytechnic Strategic Plan, 2007). This is expected to play a pivotal role towards the growth and

development of the institution. However, the leadership structure of the Polytechnic, where administrative and academic authority lines are interlinked presents a complex administrative system which serves as a weakness to the realisation of efficient institutional management system the Polytechnic is yearning for. This is likely to undermine the achievement of its strategic vision of becoming an institution of excellence for the running of Higher National Diploma (HND), certificate and degree programmes relevant to National development with emphasis on socio-economic environment.

To improve the administrative deficiencies in the Polytechnic, it will be imperative to ascertain the leadership styles of its staff by gender. This will unearth the hidden leadership styles of staff and establish the link between leadership styles and staff gender as well as their contribution to the overall productivity of the Polytechnic. Ultimately, Management will be informed on policies pertaining to ways by which these leadership styles could be tapped to help achieve its goal of establishing an efficient management system. This study therefore sought to examine the leadership styles by gender among staff of Tamale Polytechnic. Reference to whether gender is related to staff leadership styles, ways men and women lead as well as how particular leadership styles affect productivity were looked at.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to examine the leadership styles of the staff of Tamale Polytechnic by gender and how these leadership styles affect staff productivity. Specifically, this study examined the leadership styles of Tamale Polytechnic staff in the following areas

1. To examine characteristics of leadership styles of male and female staff in the Tamale Polytechnic.
2. To assess how leadership styles influence the staff productivity in the Tamale Polytechnic.

Research Questions

Does gender of staff of Tamale Polytechnic determined their leadership styles? Other specific research questions the study sought to answer included the following:

1. What are the characteristics of leadership styles of male and female staff in the Tamale Polytechnic?
2. How do leadership styles influence the staff productivity in Tamale Polytechnic?

Significance of the Study

Research on leadership styles based on gender affiliations is very significant on the backdrop of the numerous stakeholders who might have immeasurable interest in the topic and its outcome. They include the government, gender advocacy organisations, researchers, employers and students among others. According to the Ghana Statistical Service (GSS), (Daily Graphic, 2011), women constitute an excess of 620, 109 (11,801,661 males and 12, 421,770 females) of Ghana's population. This calls for the need to back the nation's sex distribution with in-depth knowledge on appropriate leadership styles of its citizens by gender and how that can influence productivity for speedy economic growth and development.

Gender advocacy groups such as Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and Federation of International Women Lawyers (FIDA) among others are concerned about women's welfare on the backdrop that they have suffered historical neglect. This study provides a deep understanding on leadership styles of women and how they contribute to productivity in the industry. On the basis of this, these gender advocacy groups could use the results to make informed cases for women, especially in relation to the need for female empowerment in corporate organisations.

The study also presents enormous benefits to employers. For example, most corporate organisations in both public and private sectors are beginning to sign performance contracts with their employees to gain assurance of higher returns in the end. Some corporate organisations also create artificial barriers for women by virtue of their gender thereby, preventing them from finding employment in those establishments (Indvik, 2004; Powell, 2000). The outcome of this study would establish the relationship between leadership styles and gender and the ways men and women lead in organisations so as to inform policy decisions of managements on employment of new staff and efficiency as well as productivity of employees by their gender.

Though a lot of literature on leadership and leadership styles exists, for example, Theophilus, Richard and Julius, 2009 on Project Leadership Styles in the Private and Public Sectors in Ghana; Rosener, 1990 on Ways Women Lead; Duncan and Karen, 2006 on Women in Leadership and Management; and Eagly, Johnson-Schmidt and Van Engen, 2003 on Transformational, Transactional and Laissez – Faire Leadership Styles: A Meta – Analysis: Comparing Women and Men, there is no substantial in-depth study on corporate leadership styles of the staff of Tamale Polytechnic by gender. It is therefore expected that this study will add to the stock of knowledge on issues of leadership styles. This would enrich the debate of

leadership styles researchers are engaged in and reveal areas that require further research for future studies by the academia, students and researchers.

Limitations

This study, like many other research enterprises, encountered some challenges. For example, literature was difficult to come by and most of the literatures obtained were those from outside Ghana. As a result, it was very difficult to relate the findings of these literatures to the Ghanaian setting and Tamale Polytechnic in particular. Other challenges were associated with field data collection and logistical constraints. However, all challenges encountered were resolved to the best ability of the researcher thereby minimizing their negative effects on the outcome of the study.

Scope/Delimitations

The study considers the experiences and views of staff of Tamale Polytechnic on leadership styles by gender. The study compares staff leadership styles by gender to transformational and transactional leadership styles which serve as a continuum within which all other leadership styles fall.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview of Leadership

Mahatma Gandhi, Winston Churchill, Martin Luther King and Dr. Kwame Nkrumah have been described by many people as great leaders of the world who once lived. This could be so because of their leadership styles. However, search for perfect corporate leadership styles have proved to be endless quest in organisational theory (Handy, 1993:97). Nothing has really challenged researchers in the area of management more than the search for best leadership traits, behaviour or styles (William, James & Susan, 2002:216). Similarly, Adei (2004) argued that competent leaders are scarce. On a related note, Tichy and Cohen (1997) point out that the scarcest resource in the world today is people with leadership talent capable of transforming organisations to win in tomorrow's world.Leadership has been conceptualized in a number of different ways within past theory and research in social and organisational psychology (Berdahl, 1996). Leadership is conceptualized as the behaviour of individuals who are formally appointed to direct, manage, or supervise groups of people engaged in some collective activity (Berdahl, 1996). It is the process by which an agent induces a subordinate to behave in a desired manner (Bennis, 1959). It is also described as an interpersonal relation in which others comply because they want to, not because they have to (Merton, 1969).

On the contrary, Adair (2003) sees leadership as a factor involving the use of both persuasion and compulsion to enable a group of individuals perform a task they might not do on their own volition. In another view, leadership is seen as an act of transforming followers, creating visions of the goals that may be attained, and articulating for the followers, the ways to attain those goals through direction and coordination of the group members (Bass, 1985; Tichy & Devanna, 1986; and Fiedler, 1967).In another perspective, Benjamin (Daily Graphic, 2010) claims that leadership definitions focused on control and centralization of power. However, in explaining corporate leadership, Mullins (2005:281) argues that it could be interpreted as "getting others to follow" or "getting people to do things willingly" or "the use of authority in decision making." He added that leadership is not only associated with command and control but with inspiration and creating a vision to facilitate the realisation of group goals.In this debate of describing who a leader is and what constitute leadership, divergent opinions are expressed by various scholars. It is however imperative to incorporate these views into identifying the key characteristics that could make an individual an efficient leader of a corporate organisation. To the researchers, corporate leadership involves the way and manner and the extent to which a person's traits and behaviour influences how he or she directs and influences the group being led to achieve the vision and corporate success of the organisation.

LEADERSHIP THEORIES

Trait theories

This leadership approach assumes that leaders are born and not made (Mullins, 2005). Early trait theories promoted the idea that leadership is innate, instinctive quality that you either have or do not have. It involves the abilities, values, personality traits and several other characteristics of people that lead to efficient and superior performance (McShane & Von Glinow, 2000:435). According to mindstools.com (2011), trait theories help us identify qualities that are helpful when leading others and together these emerge as a generalized style and these include empathy, assertiveness, good decision-making and likability. Similarly, other leadership characteristics associated with trait theory of leadership include self-confidence, initiative, intelligence and belief in one's actions (Mullins, 2005).

Through his work at Henley Management College, Turner (1999) identified seven traits of effective project managers and leaders: problem-solving ability; results orientation; energy and initiative; self-confidence; perspective; communication and negotiation. He recommends that a leader who exhibits more of the above leadership characteristics is more likely to be effective. However, Mullins also criticized the trait theory for possessing a number of weaknesses. First, there is bound to be some subjective judgment in determining who is regarded as a good or successful leader. The second limitation, according to him, is that the list of possible traits tends to be very long and there is not always agreement on the most important.

Contingency theory

The contingency theory of leadership was popular in the 1970s. The theory suggests that what makes an effective leader would depend on the situation, hence the contingency approach (Fiedler, 1967;House, 1971). The leadership style a leader applies on his or her followers depends on the situation at hand. The contingency school of thought examines a leader's leadership style in three cardinal dimensions (Fiedler, 1967). These include: assessing the characteristics of the leader; evaluating the situation in terms of key contingency variables; seeking a match between the leader and the situation at hand.

Fiedler (1967) also identified task focus, people focus, and power focus as being the three potential focus areas of leader.The path-goal theory has proven as one of the most popular contingency theories as it is being used by many leadership researchers (House, 1971). The idea is that the leader must help the team find the path to their goals and help them in that process.

According to House (1971) and (Fiedler, 1967), the path-goal theory identifies four leadership behaviours, namely: Directive leaders, Supportive leaders, Participative leaders and Achievement-oriented leaders. Fiedler (1967) recommends different leadership styles, depending on the favourability of the leadership situation. He identified three major variables to determine this favourability, which then affects the leader's role and influence. These include Leader-member relations, Task structure and position power. He explained that the leader-member relation examines the degree to which the leader is trusted and liked by members of his or her group whilst the task structure also explains the degree of clearness of a task and instructions given by the leader. He concludes that the position power involves a situation in which a leader exhibits his or her power by virtue of the position of his or her organisation. For example, a Chancellor of a University is more likely to possess more powers than a Head-Teacher of a Secondary School.

Behavioural theories

The behavioural leadership school of thought assumes that effective leaders adopt certain styles or behaviours and that, unlike the trait theories, effective leaders can be made (Adair, 1983; Blake & Mouton, 1978; Hershey & Blanchard, 1988). They argue that leaders who practice behavioural styles as characterized by: concern for people or relationships; concern for production; use of authority; involvement of the team in decision-making; involvement of the team in decision-taking and flexibility versus the application of rules.

The study of Ohio University on leadership styles and Michigan University study in 1947 were related to the behavioural school of thought. The focus of the study was on the effects of leadership styles on group performance and revealed two dimensions of leadership behaviour; consideration and initiating structure. The latter refers to the extent to which a leader 'structures his or her own role and those of his or her subordinates towards goal attainment' (Fleishman & Peters, 1962:130). Consideration is 'the degree to which the leader pays regard to the comfort, well-being, status, and satisfaction of the followers' (House & Baetz, 1979:360).

Functional/action-centred leadership theories

This type of leadership approach, according to leadership writers, focuses attention on the functions of the leader and not his or her personality. The functional approach views leadership on how the leader's behaviour affects, and is affected by, the group of followers, hence it focuses on the 'content of leadership' (Mullins, 2005). The functional theory is associated with Adair's idea on action-centred leadership. Adair (1979) postulates the effectiveness of a leader in an organisation as being dependent on three areas of need. These include the need to achieve the common task, the need for team maintenance and the needs of individuals who constitute the group. Adair illustrates these needs in three overlapping circles and defines the functions of each need as follows.He recommends that the ideal position is where complete integration of the three areas of need is achieved. In any corporate organization or working group, the most effective leader is the person who sees that the task needs, the needs of the group and those of the individual are all adequately met. The effective leader solicits the support, ideas and contributions of group members and comes out with a unique leadership style that can move the group forward.

In another view, Hersey and Blanchard (1988:169) developed a new model of leadership style called 'Situational Leadership' which works on the premise that leaders can adapt their leadership style to meet the demands of exigency of time. They identified two forms of leadership behaviour; directive and supportive behaviour. The former refers to a situation in which the leader clearly spells out what has to be done to subordinates. Example, what to do, how to do it, when, where and who to do the job at hand. On the other hand, they described supportive behaviour as one that has to do with the leader engaging in two-way communication characterized by listening, facilitating and supporting.

Transformational leadership styles

The concepts of transformational and transactional leadership were coined by McGregor and Burns (1978) in his work 'Leadership'. Transformational leadership is a leadership style that focused on effecting revolutionary change in organisation through commitment to the vision of

that organisation (Sullivan & Decker, 2001; Nayab, 2010). It is a people centred type of leadership that encourages innovation among subordinates and improvement at workplace environment (Bass, 1997). There are four basic elements illustrating concept of transformational leadership. These include creating a strategic vision, communicating the vision, modeling the vision and building commitment toward the vision (McShane & Glinow, 2000). On his part, Kotter (1990) adds that this type of leadership evolves around three central processes. These include establishing direction, aligning people and motivating and inspiring people around him or her to work.

They argue that the changing nature of the US economy in the early 1980s required a revision of the organisational culture of the American companies to make them more competitive in the world market. For this, Tichy and Ulrich (1884) call for a new breed of leaders whom they describe as Transformational leaders. They asserted that these leaders can help an organisation develop a strategic new vision, gather support from stakeholders, improve human resource capacity of employees and possess the capacity to institutionalize changes in the work environment over time. They also bring about fundamental changes in the organisation's basic political and cultural systems. They conclude that a transformational manager makes adjustments to the organisational mission, structure and human resources.

Transactional leadership style

On the other hand, transactional leadership is based on the use of legitimate authority within the bureaucratic structure of the organisation (Mullins, 2005). The fact is that team members agree to obey their leader in all legitimate situations when they accept an offer of employment. The sustainability of this obedience by the subordinates is based on a relationship of mutual trust and the ability of the leader to fulfil promises made. In his article 'Developing Tomorrow's Transformational Leaders Today,' Covey (2007) asserted that many researchers today are of the view that transactional leadership can encompass the following types of behaviour:

1. **Contingent Reward**– To influence behaviour, the leader clarifies the work needed to be accomplished. The leader uses rewards or incentives to achieve results when expectations are met.

2. **Management by Exception:**

Passive - To influence behaviour, the leader uses correction or punishment as a response to unacceptable performance or deviation from the accepted standards.

Active - To influence behaviour, the leader actively monitors the work performed and uses corrective methods to ensure the work is completed to meet accepted standards.

3. **Laissez-Faire Leadership**– laissez-faire leaders avoid attempting to influence their subordinates and shirk supervisory duties. They bury themselves in paperwork and avoid situations that preclude any possibility of confrontation. They leave too much responsibility with subordinates, set no clear goals, and do not help their group to make decisions. They tend to let things drift, since their main aim is stay on good terms with everyone.

Female and Male Leadership Characteristics

Gendered research concerns very much with the question of degree to which women and men are different and whether this influences their behaviour towards their ways of working and leading others (Rosener, 1990; Butterfield & Grinnell, 1999; and Eagly, Johannesen – Schmide& Van Engen 2003). However, Park (1996) postulates that leadership style and gender are related and this ultimately influences decision making in an organisation. These gender researchers and authors suggest that societal norms promote a general stereotype of gender roles cultured through a process of social learning. These socialization practices encourage the development of skills, traits and behaviours that men and women exhibit differently, which in the eyes of many men and women are perceived as contrary to those required in management circles (Kanter, 1997).Adler and Izraeli (1988) assert that there are basically two contrasting views regarding women in management namely; equity and complementary-contribution views. The equity view assumes similarity between male and female contributions and strives to provide equal access and identical norms for men and women and its effectiveness is based on a male referent and historical male norms (Gibson, 1995). The complementary-contribution view, on the other hand, assumes differences between male and female contributions and strives to recognize the value of these differences and its effectiveness is also based on norms that are unique to males and females and expected behaviour is differentiated by gender. Eagly (1987) described assertive, goal directed and controlling tendency behaviours 'agentic behaviour' and that its qualities include aggressiveness, ambition, dominance, independence, self-reliance, self-sufficiency, directness, and decisiveness. Eagly (1987) and Gibson (1995) concluded that various studies have demonstrated that, in general, males are more often characterized by these 'agentic' qualities.

Other authors (Helgesen, 1990; & Mullins, 2005) suggested that women have a different leadership style which can bring benefits to the organisation. In their view, women are more inclined to take a fresh perspective, identify what is not working and develop new solutions. Helgesen (1990) further argued that compared with their male peers, women leaders are more willing to share power, make decisions and solve problems based on shared ideas and information. Similar report is made by ButterField & Grinnell (1995). Women are also willing to encourage participation of subordinates at workand allow free expression where as men are

less likely to do same (Newman, 2005). Women also prefer organisational structures that enable consensual working whilst men prefer the traditional hierarchical structures of leadership and Helgesen (1990) described this as 'the female advantages'. However, in writing on the second generation of senior women managers who have more recently achieved positions at the top level of management, Rosener (1990) commented that these women do not adopt a stereotypical masculine style of corporate behaviour. Rather they attribute their leadership power to the interpersonal skills, attitudes, expertise and skills that are developed by women's shared life experiences outside of positions of power. Adkins (2002) agreed that it is not feminization of workers that is being prized but the ability to bring shared experience to bear on the job which women have.

Rosener (1990) describes the style adopted by women as an 'interactive leadership style' consisting of behaviours that represent power-sharing, energizing, encouraging participation, mutual trust and respect, and enhancing self-worth. She stated that the women 'described themselves in ways that characterize "transformational" leadership – getting subordinates to transform their own self-interest into the interest of the group through concern for a broader goal' (Rosener, 1990:120). On the contrary, male managers, according to her, were more likely to use their positions as a source of power and employ methods based on formal authority. In short, men are more likely to adopt 'transactional leadership' methods whilst women practice transformational leadership style (Rosener, 1990; & Bass, 1990)

Appelbaum and Shapiro (1993) also hold the view that women have an interactive style of leadership that includes more people oriented and participative in nature than men. They suggested that women are more relationship oriented, cooperative, nurturing and emotional in their leadership roles than men and these views are similar to Rosener's (1990). These arguments are consistent with sex role stereotypes which include the notion that men tend to be more task oriented whereas women also tend to be more people oriented (McShane & Glinow, 2000).However, many organisational researchers see these stereotypes of female leaders as incorrect. To McShane and Glinow (2000), leadership studies have generally found that male and female leaders do not differ in their levels of task oriented leadership. In agreement with these views, Powell (1990) and Dobbins and Platts (1986) also added that the reason why men and women do not differ in leadership styles is that real world job require similar behaviour from male and female workers. For example, a military person in the Ghana Armed Forces, whether male or female, would have to obey commands and behave in the same way.

In examining gender and transformational leadership, Komives (1991) reported that male and female managers exhibit transformational leadership style and that collaborative style built on consensual relationships was important to effective leadership. Padavic and Reskin (2002) also agreed that both men and women can be well integrated at work to ensure effective organisational growth. This is to emphasize that the issue of how a woman or man leads does not matter but the ability to integrate their leadership styles to enhance growth. Collins and Singh (2006) again refuted the claim of Rosener (1990) and concluded that there is little evidence of gender differentiated leadership traits between men and women. Ferrio (1994) also reported that though women exhibit greater transformational leadership behaviour, no much difference exists in the transformational behaviour shown by men.

In a related study conducted by Northwestern University on transformational, transactional and laissez-fair leadership styles discovered that women are more likely than men to use transformational leadership styles (www.money-zine.com, 2004-2010). The study further established that even when women practice transactional leadership style, there were more likely to focus on the reward and not the punishment component of it. On the other hand, men were reported to be focusing on the practice of transactional leadership style. The study concluded that differences between leadership styles of men and women exist, but where they practice the same leadership styles, women always exceeded their male counterparts in the positive ways.

In effect, different authors of leadership styles by gender have been divergent. There are differences as well as similarities between ways women and men lead. Studies reviewed in the above also show that it is difficult for a particular leader to stick to one particular leadership style. That is, leaders adopt different leadership characteristics but others practice more of a particular leadership style than others, hence the assumption that they are said to be practicing a particular leadership style. However, regardless of which leadership style a leader adopts, it will be imperative to focus on the weaknesses and strengths of that leadership in order to ensure efficiency of that leadership style.

Leadership Styles and Productivity

Leadership styles may not be practiced by corporate leaders for practice sake. They may be practiced because of their ability to help a particular leader realise his or her strategic vision. Different studies of leadership styles have produced findings which are in consonance with the idea that different leadership styles have multiple and diverse effects on variables such as rewards, commitment and flexibility of corporate leaders and their efficiencies as well as productivities (Goleman, 2000). Ogbanna and Harris (2000) similarly argue that organisational

culture is influenced by leadership style and leadership style also affects organisational performance. Leadership styles have strong influence on effectiveness of corporate organisations and determine individual's approach to clients needs thereby impacting greatly on results of their organisation (Pedraja& Rodriguez, 2005; Rahman, 2001).

The success of every organisation largely depends on how effectively it is managed by its leader (Kristina, 2010). Muna (2010) tried to identify strengths and weaknesses of the two main leadership styles. According to her, the main advantage of transactional leadership style is that it clearly defines the roles and expectations from the leader and the followers. 'In-your-face approach' as she describes it, implies these types of leaders are very strict on reward for success and punishment for failures.

Writing on transformational leadership, Kristina (2010) argued that leaders practicing this leadership style work as role models and motivators, thereby encouraging the followers to work hard for the love of their work and not for punishment or rewards. In this regard, the leader knows strengths and weaknesses of his or her followers and assigns them the right jobs to work at their best, hence increasing productivity. She concluded in her article that there is no clear winner and loser in the transactional vs. transformational leadership styles debate and that most leadership experts suggest that the two leadership styles incorporated by supervisors and leaders to ensure efficiency at work. To this end, Ingress (1995) argued similarly that it is difficult to establish the supremacy of one leadership style over another.

However, effectiveness of a particular leadership style is defined in terms of employee productivity, motivation, job satisfaction and turnover (Gibson et al.,1979). Managers with high consideration respect their subordinates and attempt to develop relationships with subordinates that are based upon trust and open communication (Fleishman & Harris, 1962; Fleishman & Peters, 1962). Keegan and den Hartog (2004) postulated that a project manager's leadership style needs to be more transformational than transactional to ensure higher productivity. Nguni, Sleegers and Denessen(2006) similarly reported that transformational leadership has a positive influence on personal outcomes and productivity.

Burns (1978) also argued that transformational leadership is more effective than transactional leadership, where the appeal is to more selfish concerns. According to him, transformational leaders appeal to social values thereby encouraging people to collaborate, rather than working as individuals than transactional leaders. Bass (1990:23) concludes "the real movers and

shakers of the world are transformational leaders" and yet most researchers tend to concentrate on transactional leadership.

On the contrary, other leadership writers have suggested that transformational leadership style is not anything better. For example, Gronn (cited in Stewart &CJEAP, 2006) charges transformational leadership with being paternalistic, gender exclusive, exaggerated, having aristocratic pretensions and social-class bias, as well as having an eccentric conception of human agency and causality. Gronn outlined numerous shortcomings of transformational leadership: a lack of empirically documented case examples of transformational leaders; a narrow methodological base; no causal connection between leadership and desired organisational outcomes; and the unresolved question as to whether leadership is learnable.

From the literature, divergent views are expressed with respect to which leadership style leads to more efficient management and productivity. However, the literature shows that many researchers are of the opinion that transformational leadership style is more efficient and leads to higher productivity in organisations than transactional leadership style. Teams are productive to the degree their leaders succeed at managing a range of responsibilities such as setting clear goals, seeking members support, defining decision making authority and facilitating differing points of view (Pennington &Haslam, 2004). They further argued that when members respect one another's proper level of involvement in the decision making process, the result is less confusion and conflict about roles and responsibilities, and greater productivity.

The responsibility of the leader is to promote respectful communications among team members and as such, it is incumbent upon each leader to not only hear what is being said but what is not being said (Pennington &Haslam, 2004). They concluded that leaders of a productive team often set a tone by their presence and maturity by the way they facilitate the setting of goals and by the way they handle authority and the expression of differing opinions, especially those different from their own.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

In this study, descriptive survey was used to describe respondents' views on staff leadership styles by gender. Researchers often use this design to gain in-depth understanding of events, processes and situations involving a specific case study area (Trochim, 2006).

Target population

The target population used was staff of Tamale Polytechnic with the total population of 478 and this was made up of 381 male staff and 97 female staff, representing 80% and 20% respectively (Tamale Polytechnic Planning Unit, 2010). About sixty-nine positions of responsibility existed in the Polytechnic. With this number, only ten (10) were females whilst the remaining fifty-nine (59) were males, representing 16.5% and 85.5% respectively. Samples were selected from this population to identify staff leadership styles by gender in the Polytechnic.

Sample size determination

Using a confidence level of 95% to give an estimated average value of the true population of staff of Tamale Polytechnic and a sampling error of 5% (Cochran, 1963; & Yamane, 1967), the researchers determined the sample size of the study area by using Cochran's (1977) formula ;

$n = \dfrac{N}{1+N(e)^i}$ where N= Target population (478), e=Sampling error and n= sample size.

Therefore, $n = \dfrac{478}{1+478(0.05)^i} = \dfrac{478}{2.195} = \underline{\textbf{218}}$.

Based on the above, a sample size of 218 was selected for the study. Due to the limited number of female staff in the Polytechnic (381 males and 97 females), 70 respondents were selected from female staff and the remaining 148 from the male staff. The sampling of both male and female staff were done purposively. This was to ensure that enough female respondents were included in the study.

Purposive sampling of female respondents

The total number of female staff in the Polytechnic was 97 representing 20% of the entire staff population. This comprised 70 female junior staff, 23 female senior staff and 4 female senior members. The researchers used purposive sampling technique to select all the 23 and 4 of the female senior staff and senior members respectively for the study. In addition, 43 respondents were also selected purposively from the female junior staff to add up the female respondents. That is; 43+23+4=70 female respondents. In this regard, female staff in the fifteen academic departments and eleven administrative units in the Polytechnic were identified using their list as contained in the Polytechnic's Staff Profile Policy Document where staff by names, sex, qualifications, date of births and ranks are indicated.

Stratified random sampling of male respondents

Due to the share large number of male staff in the Polytechnic (381 or 80%), the researchers used stratified random sampling for the study. By this, the researchers first grouped the male

staff into three (3) strata based on ranks. These included male junior staff (155), male senior staff (161) and male senior members (65) and proportional allocation of sample size to each stratum was performed using $n_i = n(N_i/N)$, (Douglas & George,1994;Bernett, 1991**)** as follows:

Given that:

 N= Male population (381)

N_i= Strata (i=1, 2 & 3)

n= Male sample size (148)

Proportional Allocation (n_i) ⇒n_i $= n\dfrac{Ni}{N}$; (i=1, 2, 3, 4)

For N_1=Male Junior Staff (155), $n_1 = n\dfrac{N_1}{N}$ = $148\left[\dfrac{155}{381}\right]$=60

For N_2=Male Senior Staff (161), $n_2 = n\dfrac{N_2}{N}$ = $148\left[\dfrac{161}{381}\right]$=63

For N_3=Male Senior Members (65), $n_3 = n\dfrac{N_3}{N}$ = $148\left[\dfrac{65}{381}\right]$=25

Therefore; $n=n_1+n_2+n_3$

n=60+63+25= 148 elements

With the male sample size of 148 out of its target population of 381, sample sizes of 60, 63 and 25 elements were allocated to each stratum of male junior staff, male senior staff and male senior members respectively for study. A systematic random sampling method with sample fraction of N/n=381/148 and sampling interval of 3 was used to select respondents from each stratum given their sample sizes. With this sampling interval, the 3rd element of every stratum was selected for inclusion in the study starting from the first element when counting. The elements included in the list through the above means were made to complete questionnaires each and the views expressed used for the study.

Research instrument

Questionnaire was used as research instrument. In using a questionnaire as a research instrument to carry out the study, the researchers used semi-structured questions and administered them to 218 respondents. Both closed-ended and opened-ended questions were used to derive answers from respondents. As a way of minimizing researcher bias, the open-ended questions provided an opportunity for respondents to elaborate and provide further details while the closed ended questions gave respondents time to provide appropriate answers to the questions by choosing from possible options made available to them. This conforms to Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Lowe's (1991) view that the use of open questions should help to avoid bias. The closed ended questions were meant to minimize the rate of some respondents'

failure to provide answers to questions due to time constraint and other unknown challenges (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe & Lowe, 1991). The researchers did this by carefully formulating the questions in very clear and sequential manner to ensure that respondents understood them with minimum difficulty.

Data processing and presentation

Quantitative method in the form of descriptive statistics was used to analyse data from closed-ended questions. By this, computer software, Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 16 was used to process questionnaire data into frequencies and percentages. The data collected were converted into tables, frequency distributions, bar-charts, pie-charts and other pictorial figures to aid in the analyses. Subjective opinions of respondents on open-ended questions as contained in the questionnaire were analysed. By this, the researcher interpreted and explained divergent opinions of respondents in such a manner that could give clear and unambiguous meanings to the information obtained.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Female Leadership Characteristics

This section presents analyses and discussions of data on leadership characteristics of female staff in Tamale Polytechnic. Consensus building is mostly arrived at in any human establishment through popular participation by members of the group. However, the extent to which the group leader exercises his or her discretion by allowing subordinates to participate in consensus building may depend on the leader's gender. On that basis, the study sought the views of respondents on whether female supervisors do use participation to build consensus with subordinates at work. Four (4) objective variables were presented to respondents to choose from. From analyses of their responses, it was found that female leaders mostly used participation to build consensus with their subordinates. Statistically, 78% of the respondents agreed with the assertion that female supervisors in Tamale Polytechnic did use participation to build consensus with their subordinates as indicated in Table 1.

Table 1: Female staff and use of participation at work

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
strongly agree	78	36
Agree	92	42
Disagree	32	15
strongly disagree	16	7
Total	**218**	**100**

From Table 1, one can observe that only 22% of the respondents expressed contrary view by disagreeing with the assertion. From the results, there was an indication that female supervisors in the study area used participation to build consensus with their subordinates. However, non-usage of participation in consensual building by female supervisors cannot also be ruled out completely. This also attests to the fact that women in Tamale Polytechnic are more transformation since they are more likely to adopt consensus in decision making. This revelation agrees with the view of Rosener (1990) that female leaders were more likely to consensus building to achieve results at the workplace.

More so, gender and leadership researchers have identified power sharing and delegation of power to subordinates to take decisions as critical leadership characteristic (Goleman, 2000; & Mullins, 2005). In the light of this, the study examined female leadership characteristics in the Polytechnic by taking into consideration how they apply power sharing and delegation of subordinates in decision making. It was revealed that female supervisors in the study area shared power with their subordinates and delegate them to take decisions on their behalf. As shown by the field data, 80%of the respondents agreed that female supervisors shared power with their subordinates and delegate them to take decisions on their behalf. Only 20% of the respondents indicated a contrary view as they suggested that female staff were less likely to share power with their subordinates and delegate them to take decisions. The results are shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Sharing of power and delegation of subordinates by female supervisors
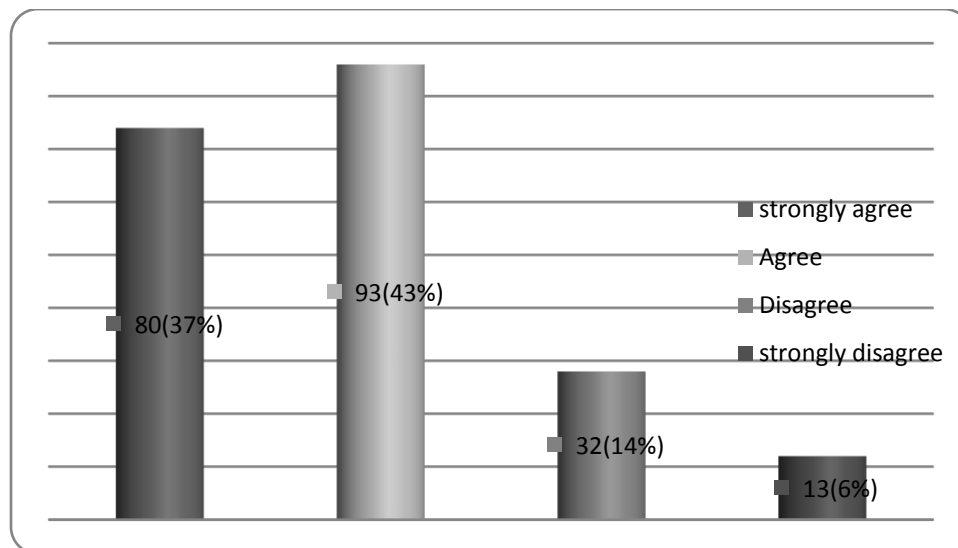
As captured in the literature, Helgesen (1990) argued that compared with their pears, women were more willing to share power with subordinates and Rosener (1990) also asserted that

women had interactive leadership style that encourages power sharing and enhancing self-worth. On these bases, the discovery that female supervisors shared power with their subordinates and delegate them to take decisions in the Polytechnic agreed with findings of Rosener (1990) and Helgesen (1990). It could therefore be stated that female staff of Tamale Polytechnic practiced transformational leadership style as they were more willing to share power and delegate subordinates to take decisions on their behalf.

In addition, leadership writers classified monitoring of subordinates' mistakes, irregularities and deviations as behavioural characteristics of Transactional leadership style (Mcshane& Von Glinow, 2000; Mullins, 2005). The study compared these leadership characteristics to behavioural characteristics of female staff in the Tamale Polytechnic and it was revealed that female supervisors were less likely to exhibit these leadership characteristics as illustrated in Table 2. For instance, 42% of the respondents agreed that female supervisors did monitor subordinates' irregularities, mistakes and deviations.

Table 2: Monitoring of Subordinates' and spelling out rules by Female Supervisors

Monitoring subordinates	Frequency	Percentage (%)
strongly agree	38	17
Agree	54	25
Disagree	88	41
strongly disagree	38	17
Total	**218**	**100**

On the contrary, 58% of the respondents disagreed with the assertion to suggest that female leaders in the Polytechnic did not focus their attentions on subordinates' mistakes, irregularities and deviations. In this sense, Bass' (1990) assertion that women are less transactional in leadership style holds true with findings of the study. This therefore gives an indication that female supervisors in Tamale Polytechnic do not concentrate on subordinates' mistakes, irregularities and deviations at work. Hence, they are less transactional in their style of leadership in this regard.

Similar to the above, the study analysed the extent to which female staff exhibit a transactional leadership style of spelling out clear rules and enforcing them on subordinates. Analysis of the field data revealed that female staff in the Polytechnic did practice this type of leadership style (as illustrated in Table 3). Statistically, 64% of the respondents agreed that female supervisors in the Polytechnic always spelt out clear rules and enforce them on subordinates.

Table 3: Female supervisors and spelling rules and enforcing them on subordinates

Spelling out rules	Frequency	Percentage (%)
strongly agree	68	31
Agree	72	33
Disagree	48	22
strongly disagree	30	14
Total	**218**	**100**

It is also worth noting that an insignificant number of the respondents expressed opposing views on the assertion, giving the indication that female staff were more transactional in the use of spelling out clear rules and enforcing them on their subordinates. Contrary to the earlier revelation that female staff adopted more transformational leadership characteristics in their positions of leadership, one stands to agree with the assertion of Natalia (2010) that females often adopt multiple leadership styles and apply each of them to different situations.

Male Leadership Characteristics

This section presents analyses and discussions of data obtained on leadership characteristics of male staff in Tamale Polytechnic. Leadership writers (Mullins, 2005; & Hall et al, 2005) held the view that use of participation with subordinates by a group leader is a sign of transformational leadership style. In trying to find out male supervisors' way of leading in relation to participation by subordinates in decision making process and policy formulation, views of the respondents were elicited in this regard.

The respondents were of the view that male supervisors in the study area always used participation as a way of involving subordinates in decision making processes. In comparison, the male staff were practicing similar transformational leadership style like their female counterparts since both of them used participation to involve their subordinates in decision making.

As illustrated in Figure 2, 78 %of the respondents agreed that male supervisors used participation to build consensus in policy formulation.

Figure 2: Use of participation and sharing of power by male staff
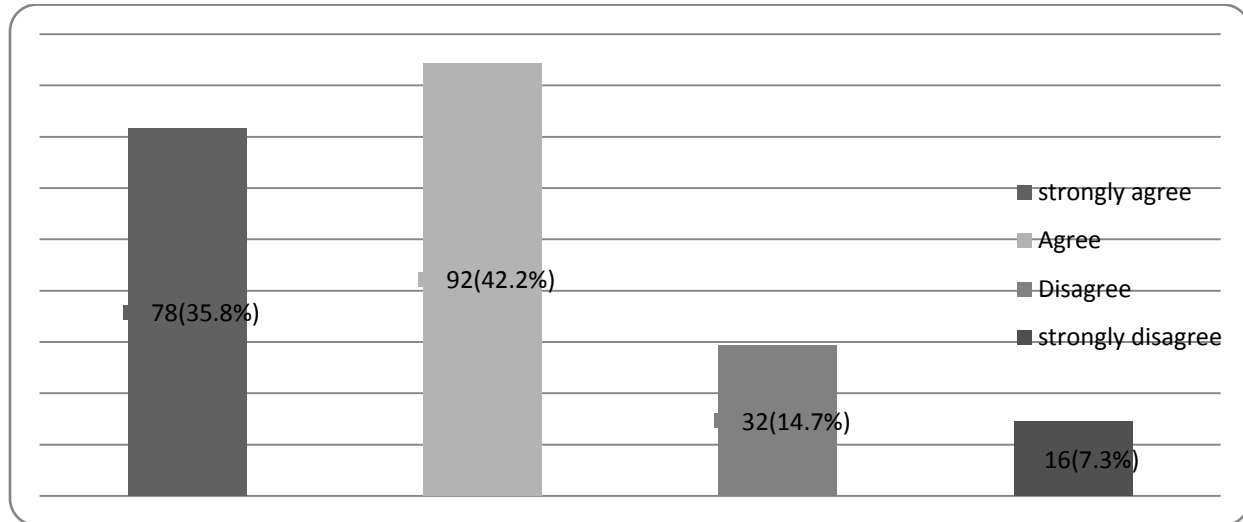
On the contrary, only a few of the respondents objected to the view that male staff use participation to take decisions with subordinates. The finding agreed with Powell (2003) and Dobbins and Platts' (1986) views that men and women's leadership styles do not differ at work as both of them are found to be practicing similar leadership style in the use of participation of subordinates in decision making.

In a related manner, the study sought views of respondents on whether male supervisors did share powers with their subordinates and as well delegate them to take decisions in Tamale Polytechnic. The results are illustrated in Table 4. Analyses of responses obtained from the respondents suggested that male supervisors in the study area did share power with subordinates and as well delegated them to take decisions on their behalf.

Table 4: Sharing of power and delegation by male supervisors

Sharing of power	Frequency	Percentage (%)
strongly agree	80	36.7
Agree	93	42
Disagree	32	14.7
strongly disagree	13	5.9
Total	**218**	**100**

Statistically, the field results indicated that 78.7%of the respondents agreed with the assertion that male supervisors shared power with their subordinates and delegated them to take decisions on their behalf. On the other hand, less than 20% of the respondents reported that male supervisors in the study area did not share powers with or delegate subordinates to take

decisions on their behalf. In effect, both male and female staff were found to again practice common leadership characteristic in the use of power sharing and delegation of subordinates in decision making.

As a way of assessing the male leadership characteristics in relation to transactional leadership styles, their behaviour in respect of monitoring of subordinates' irregularities, mistakes and deviations were assessed. From the field data, 42% of the respondents agreed that male supervisors normally monitor subordinates' irregularities, mistakes and deviations at the workplace. The results are shown in the Table 5.

Table 5: Monitoring of subordinates' irregularities, mistakes and deviations by male supervisors

Monitoring subordinates	Frequency	Percentage (%)
strongly agree	38	17
Agree	54	25
Disagree	88	41
strongly disagree	38	17
Total	**218**	**100**

However, majority of the respondents were of the opinion that male supervisors did not monitor subordinates' irregularities, mistakes and deviations at work, as indicated by 58% of the respondents. This finding therefore refuted the augments of Hakim (2000), Rosener (1990) and Helgesen (1990) who in their works postulated that male supervisors or male leaders were more transactional in their style of leadership. In this respect, though male staff slightly dominated, a comparison of the responses further indicated that both male and female staff are less likely to monitor subordinates' irregularities, mistakes and deviations at work. Probing further, respondents' views were elicited on whether male staff in Tamale Polytechnic always spelt out clear rules and enforce them on subordinates (as seen in Table 6). According to the data obtained from the study, 64.2% of the respondents indicated 'strongly agree' and 'agree'. The remaining 35.8% however indicated 'disagree' and 'strongly disagree'.

Table 6: Male supervisors and spelling of rules and enforcing them on subordinates

Spelling out rules	Frequency	Percentage (%)
strongly agree	68	31.2
Agree	72	33
Disagree	48	22
strongly disagree	30	13.8
Total	**218**	**100**

By indication, majority of the respondents suggested that male supervisors in the study area always spelt out clear rules and enforce them on subordinates. In this regard, the male staff differs from their female counterparts in the practice of this transactional leadership characteristic.

Leadership Styles and Productivity

This section presents findings and discussions on how leadership styles practiced by staff in Tamale Polytechnic influence staff performance and productivity. As captured in the literature, consensual leadership style through participation of subordinates strengthens group connections (Maushart, 2003). As to how this leadership characteristic affects productivity in the study area, respondents were asked to evaluate how participation in consensus building could influence efficient performance of staff in Tamale Polytechnic. The results indicated that the morale of staff would be boosted to efficiently perform if supervisors allowed them to participate in decision making processes thereby leading to an increase in productivity. As illustrated in Figure 3, 81%of the respondents agreed with the assertion that when those in leadership positions allow their subordinates to participate in decision making and as well share power with these subordinates, it was likely to impact positively to productivity.

Figure 3: Use of Participation and Power sharing on Productivity
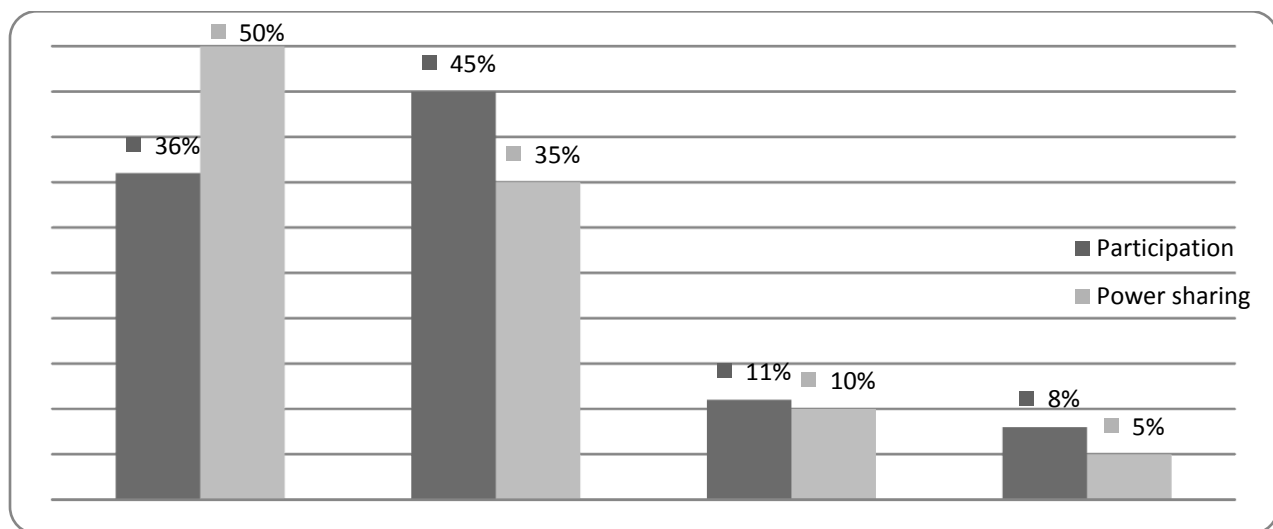
In another view, an insignificant number of the respondents refuted the claim that participation and consensus building could bring about efficient performance as contained in the results displayed above. From the analyses, it is clear that consensual decisions through the use of participation of subordinates could impact positively on their performance and this is in tandem with Burns' (1978) assertion that transformational leadership style which involves consensus

building through participation is more effective than transactional leadership style in which the leader discourages participation and consensus building.

Furtherance to the assessment of leadership characteristics on performance and productivity, the study also solicited views of respondents on power sharing and delegation of subordinates to take decisions and how they influence performance. Data obtained indicated that 85% of the respondents agreed that delegation and sharing of power with subordinates could improve staff innovation and performance. As indicated earlier, female staff were found to have dominated their male counterparts in sharing of power and delegation of subordinates to take decisions. However, with the limited number of female staff in the Polytechnic, one could assume that there would be limited number of staff who are willing to share power and delegate their subordinates to take decisions. In effect, this will therefore pose negative implication on the productivity levels in the Polytechnic.

In examining how transactional leadership characteristics influence performance and productivity, the study assessed the effects of concentration of subordinates' irregularities, mistakes and deviations by supervisors on general productivity. The analyses of the data showed an inverse relationship between concentration of subordinates' mistakes, irregularities as well as deviations and their performance level. The results are illustrated in the Table 7. That is, 37% of the respondents indicated that they agreed with the assertion that supervisors paying attention on subordinates' mistakes, irregularities and deviations could lead to efficient performance of the supervised staff.

Table 7: Influence of irregularities, mistakes and deviations on performance

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
strongly agree	26	12
Agree	54	25
Disagree	84	38
strongly disagree	54	25
Total	**218**	**100**

On the other hand, 63% of the respondents indicated their disagreement with the assertion, suggesting that paying attention to irregularities and deviations of subordinates by supervising staff could not enhance job performance. As captured in the literature, leadership styles influence efficiencies and productivities (Goleman, 2000). Therefore, one could argue that too much attention on subordinates' irregularities, mistakes and deviations by leaders could lower

their performance and hence low productivity. The discovery made in this wise confirms Muna's (2008) assertion that transactional leadership styles have been ineffective in providing satisfaction to employees to perform.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of Findings

The study assessed leadership styles of Tamale Polytechnic staff by gender. The study established that female staff in Tamale Polytechnic adopt more of transformational leadership behavioural traits than transactional leadership characteristics as they use consensus building through participation and sharing of power with subordinates than their male counterparts.

Conversely, male staff dominated in the practice of transactional leadership style as they spelt out clear rules and enforced them on subordinates and also monitored their mistakes. However, both male and female supervisors practiced some form of both transactional and transformational leadership characteristics. The study further established that transformational leadership characteristics such as the use of participation, sharing of power with and delegation of subordinates in decision making promote higher productivity than transactional leadership characteristics.

Conclusions

The study assessed leadership styles of Tamale Polytechnic staff by gender. The key areas the study analysed include analyses of how gender relates to staff leadership styles in Tamale Polytechnic as well as ways men and women lead in the institution. The study concludes by examining the relationship between leadership styles being practiced by staff and their efficient performance and productivity.

It was discovered that gender determines staff leadership styles. Although both male and female staff in the Polytechnic practiced transformational leadership characteristics than transactional behavioural traits, female staff slightly dominated their male counterparts in the practice of transformational leadership styles whilst the male staff also exceeded the female staff in the practice of transactional leadership styles. The study concludes that transformational leadership styles were more likely to promote efficient performance and productivity of staff than transactional leadership styles.

Recommendations

On the bases of the above findings, the following recommendations are made.

From the findings made in the study, it is recommended that the Polytechnic authority should not concentrate on monitoring staff mistakes, deviations and irregularities as these would demoralise and reduce their efficient performance. The authorities should rather allow self-direction among staff so as to encourage innovative behaviour among them.

In addition, the Polytechnic authority should encourage the use of consensus building in decision making and also allow participation of all staff, irrespective of their sex or ranks, in policy formulations and implementations. These would inculcate into the staff a sense of belongingness and the need for them to contribute their quota to the development of the Polytechnic. Also. there is the need for the Polytechnic authority to encourage female-staff participation in Academic Board and its sub-committees so that the they would not only be liberated from marginalisation but would also access the necessary platform to influence the developmental change the institution wants to achieve.

The study also proved that transformational behavioural characteristics lead to more efficient performance and productivity among staff than transactional leadership styles. For this reason, the study recommends that staff should adopt more of leadership characteristics which are transformational in nature than transactional leadership characteristics.

It is further recommended that the Polytechnic authority and employers in general should regularly offer leadership trainings to staff. These will expose them to knowledge of best leadership practices required for efficient performance and productivity in corporate institutions.

Finally, it is recommended that further research be conducted into other aspects of leadership such as leadership styles of public and private sector workers, leadership styles and religion, factors influencing people's leadership styles and effects of leadership styles on labour turn-over in the Ghanaian tertiary institutions.

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