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Examining the Effects of Leadership Style on Organizational Performance: A Case Study of Chongwe District Council

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Abstract

This study examines the effects of leadership styles on organizational performance, with a focus on the Chongwe District Council. It investigates how leadership influences policy implementation, decision-making, and employee motivation. Using a mixed-methods approach, the study collected data from 50 respondents through structured questionnaires and interviews. Quantitative data were analysed using Excel and Stata, while qualitative data were subjected to thematic analysis. The findings highlight that democratic and transformational leadership styles are the most prevalent at Chongwe District Council. Democratic leadership fosters inclusive decision-making, resulting in enhanced policy implementation and service delivery. Meanwhile, transformational leadership significantly boosts employee motivation and productivity, with 74% of respondents associating it with high organizational performance. However, challenges were noted, including inconsistent communication, cited by 25% of participants, and dissatisfaction with feedback mechanisms by 24%. The study concludes that while leadership styles such as democratic and transformational have a positive impact on organizational performance, there is a need to improve communication consistency and feedback systems. Recommendations include the establishment of formal communication channels, implementation of structured feedback mechanisms, and development of leadership training programs to enhance effectiveness. By providing insights into leadership's role in organizational success, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of how leadership styles influence public sector performance, particularly within the Zambian context. The findings serve as a resource for policymakers and administrators aiming to optimize leadership practices and improve public service delivery outcomes.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Leadership within the Chongwe District Council varies in style and approach, ranging from autocratic to democratic, with significant implications for employee motivation, decision-making processes, and overall organizational performance. Prior studies underscore the importance of leadership styles in fostering employee engagement, innovation, and job satisfaction, emphasizing their role in driving organizational effectiveness. According to the Chongwe District Council Human Resources Department, departments led by democratic leaders reported a 25% increase in employee satisfaction, attributed to shared decision-making processes and open communication. Furthermore, organizational performance metrics such as project completion rates and service delivery timelines improved by 15% under transformational leadership compared to transactional approaches.

In the public sector, particularly within councils, the leadership styles adopted by officials significantly affect the delivery of essential services, including healthcare, education, and infrastructure development. For instance, the Chongwe District Council Annual Report (2023) highlights persistent challenges in resource allocation, service delivery efficiency, and stakeholder engagement. These issues are linked to leadership inefficiencies, emphasizing the need for empirical research to address how specific leadership styles, such as transformational and democratic, influence public sector outcomes.

Globally, leadership studies have provided insights into the effectiveness of various styles. Transformational leadership, characterized by inspiration and intellectual stimulation, fosters employee commitment and enhances organizational performance. Conversely, transactional leadership, emphasizing structured rewards and penalties, is effective in bureaucratic settings but lacks the capacity to inspire innovation. The role of servant and participative leadership styles in enhancing employee engagement and organizational cohesion has also been explored.

In Zambia, local studies reveal that participative and transformational leadership styles are associated with higher employee morale and stronger commitment to public service objectives. Leaders who prioritize transparency, community involvement, and ethical decision-making significantly improve policy implementation and service delivery outcomes. Despite these insights, there is limited empirical evidence on how specific leadership styles affect organizational performance in the Zambian public sector, particularly in councils like Chongwe District Council.

This study seeks to bridge this knowledge gap by examining the effects of leadership styles on policy implementation, decision-making, and overall organizational performance at Chongwe District Council. By exploring the relationship between leadership approaches and organizational outcomes, the research aims to provide actionable recommendations for enhancing leadership effectiveness within the council. It also contributes to the broader discourse on leadership in public sector management, offering valuable insights for policymakers and administrators striving to improve service delivery and achieve strategic goals.

1.2 Statement of the problem

The success of organizational performance significantly depends on the leadership style adopted by its management (Northouse, 2021). In many public institutions, including Chongwe District Council, challenges such as inconsistent policy implementation, ineffective decision-making, and suboptimal service delivery are often linked to leadership inefficiencies (Smith & Johnson, 2019). Despite the growing recognition of the impact of leadership styles on organizational outcomes, there remains a gap in empirical evidence on how specific styles like democratic, transformational, and autocratic leadership affect public sector performance, especially in the Zambian context. Recent reports show that only 45% of public sector employees in Zambia feel their leaders effectively communicate organizational goals, impacting service delivery (Zambia Human Resource Survey, 2023). Furthermore, a study by Lee *et al*. (2022) revealed that 60% of employees under transformational leadership reported higher motivation, yet only 35% of such leaders are found in public organizations. Chongwe District Council, like many other local councils, faces challenges in aligning leadership with strategic goals, leading to a decline in policy implementation efficiency by 20% in the last five years (Chongwe Annual Report, 2022). Addressing the effects of leadership styles on decision-making and overall organizational performance is crucial to enhancing public sector efficiency and effectiveness. Hence, this study aims to examine the impact of leadership styles on policy implementation, decision-making, and performance at Chongwe District Council to inform better leadership practices.

1.3 Objectives

To examine the effects of leadership style on organizational performance of Chongwe District Council

1.3.1 Specific objectives

1. To determine effectiveness of leadership on policy implementation and service delivery.
2. To identify the effectiveness of leadership on organization decision making.
3. To establish the effectiveness of leadership on the organizational performance.

1.4 Theoretical framework

1.4.1 Contingency Theory

The study is grounded in Contingency Theory, a leadership model developed by Fred Fiedler in 1967, which posits that the effectiveness of a leadership style is contingent upon the alignment between the leader's approach and specific situational factors. Unlike universal theories that advocate a single optimal leadership style, Contingency Theory emphasizes that leadership effectiveness depends on various contextual elements such as task structure, team dynamics, and environmental conditions. In essence, the theory argues that no single leadership style is universally effective; rather, its success is determined by how well it suits the situation.

In the case of Chongwe District Council, Contingency Theory is particularly relevant given the diverse and often complex challenges faced by public institutions. During periods of crisis, leaders may need to adopt an autocratic style to provide clear directives and ensure quick decision-making. This approach can be vital for addressing urgent issues such as resource allocation or policy implementation bottlenecks. Conversely, during times of stability or when fostering innovation, a democratic or participative leadership style can be more effective. This approach promotes inclusivity and collaboration, encouraging employees to contribute to decision-making processes and take ownership of organizational goals.

The theory also highlights the dynamic nature of leadership effectiveness, requiring leaders to adapt their styles as circumstances evolve. For example, transformational leadership may be more suitable in situations where organizational change or employee motivation is needed. By inspiring and intellectually stimulating their teams, transformational leaders can foster a sense of purpose and drive that leads to enhanced performance and innovation. On the other hand, transactional leadership, which focuses on structured tasks and clear rewards, might be more effective in achieving short-term goals or in bureaucratic settings.

In public sector organizations like Chongwe District Council, factors such as resource constraints, external stakeholder pressures, and diverse employee needs further complicate leadership demands. Leaders must navigate these complexities by tailoring their approaches to meet the organization's strategic objectives while also addressing operational challenges. Contingency Theory underscores the importance of such situational adaptability, enabling leaders to balance the need for control during crises with the benefits of inclusivity and innovation during stable periods.

By applying Contingency Theory, this study provides a framework for understanding how leadership styles can influence organizational performance, particularly in

resource-limited and contextually diverse environments like Chongwe District Council. This theoretical lens highlights the critical role of flexibility and situational awareness in effective leadership, offering valuable insights for enhancing leadership practices in the Zambian public sector.

1.5 Literature Review

Globally, leadership styles have been extensively studied for their impact on organizational performance. Leadership, a critical determinant of organizational success, varies significantly in style, including transformational, transactional, democratic, and autocratic approaches. Transformational leadership, characterized by vision, intellectual stimulation, and inspiration, has been linked to enhanced employee motivation and productivity, fostering innovation and long-term organizational success. Bass and Riggio (2006) [13] emphasized that transformational leaders promote inclusive decision-making, which enhances creativity, adaptability, and strategic outcomes, particularly in dynamic environments. Transactional leadership, focusing on structure, rules, and rewards, is effective in bureaucratic settings but often fails to inspire innovation and commitment.

Democratic leadership emphasizes participative decision-making, where employees are actively engaged in the organizational process. Studies highlight its effectiveness in improving employee satisfaction and fostering a culture of accountability and transparency. Autocratic leadership, characterized by centralized decision-making and control, is effective in crises requiring rapid action but often diminishes employee morale and engagement in the long term.

In the African context, leadership styles are influenced by socio-political and cultural dynamics. Participative and charismatic leadership styles often yield better results due to their focus on inclusivity and community engagement. Research from Nigeria and Kenya suggests that leaders who involve employees and community members in decision-making processes enhance policy implementation, service delivery, and organizational performance. However, resource constraints, socio-cultural diversity, and bureaucratic challenges pose significant barriers to leadership effectiveness in public institutions across the continent.

In Zambia, local studies reveal a strong correlation between leadership style and organizational performance, particularly within councils and public institutions. Participative and transformational leadership styles often lead to higher employee morale, commitment to public service objectives, and improved service delivery outcomes. Leaders prioritizing transparency, community engagement, and ethical practices are more likely to foster organizational success. However, challenges such as inconsistent communication, inadequate feedback mechanisms, and limited professional development opportunities persist in Zambian councils, impacting policy implementation and service delivery.

The theoretical framework underpinning this study includes Contingency Theory, which suggests that the effectiveness of a leadership style depends on specific organizational circumstances. For instance, during crises, directive leadership may be necessary, while participative approaches are more suitable for stable, innovative periods. The theory emphasizes that there is no universally applicable leadership style, highlighting the need for adaptive approaches tailored to organizational needs.

Leadership also plays a pivotal role in decision-making, which directly impacts organizational performance. Effective decision-making, as promoted by transformational leaders, incorporates diverse perspectives, fostering creativity and innovation. However, leaders must also address challenges such as conflicting priorities, resource limitations, and employee concerns to ensure effective outcomes. Communication is a critical factor, with studies emphasizing the importance of clear, consistent, and transparent communication in achieving organizational objectives.

Globally, the adoption of performance management systems, such as Rwanda's and Kenya's Performance Contract systems, illustrates how leadership can drive public sector reforms and improve service delivery. These systems, emphasizing accountability and efficiency, have yielded significant improvements in organizational outcomes. However, their success depends heavily on the leadership's ability to align strategies with organizational goals and employee expectations.

Despite the extensive research on leadership styles and their impact, gaps remain in understanding their application within the Zambian public sector. The Chongwe District Council, like many local councils, faces challenges in aligning leadership with strategic goals, leading to inefficiencies in policy implementation and decision-making. Addressing these issues requires a nuanced understanding of how leadership styles influence organizational performance, particularly in resource-constrained settings.

This study builds on existing literature by exploring the specific effects of leadership styles on organizational performance at Chongwe District Council. It aims to identify the leadership practices that promote effective policy implementation, decision-making, and employee engagement, contributing to improved organizational outcomes. By doing so, the research offers valuable insights for policymakers and administrators seeking to optimize leadership practices in public institutions.

2. Research Methodology

The study adopted a mixed-methods research approach, combining both qualitative and quantitative methods to provide a comprehensive understanding of the effects of leadership styles on organizational performance at Chongwe District Council. The mixed-methods approach was chosen to capture both numerical data and in-depth perspectives from respondents, enhancing the validity and reliability of the findings.

The study utilized a descriptive design to examine the relationship between leadership styles and organizational performance. This design was deemed suitable for analysing variables such as policy implementation, decision-making, and employee motivation.

The target population comprised employees at Chongwe District Council, including both managerial and non-managerial staff. A sample size of 50 respondents was selected using purposive sampling to ensure representation of individuals directly involved in or affected by leadership practices.

Primary data was collected through structured questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. The

questionnaires included closed-ended questions to collect quantitative data and open-ended questions for qualitative insights. Interviews were conducted to gather deeper, nuanced perspectives on leadership practices and their effects on organizational performance.

Quantitative data was analysed using statistical tools, including Excel and Stata. Descriptive statistics were employed to summarize data, while inferential statistics helped establish relationships between leadership styles and organizational performance. Qualitative data was analysed thematically, identifying recurring patterns and themes from respondents' answers.

The study adhered to ethical research standards to ensure participant rights and data integrity. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, ensuring they were aware of the study's purpose and their right to withdraw at any time. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained by coding responses and securely storing data. Participation was voluntary, with no coercion or undue influence applied.

The study acknowledged limitations, including potential biases in self-reported data and the small sample size, which may affect the generalizability of the findings. However, these limitations were mitigated through triangulation and a robust data analysis process. In conclusion, the chosen methodology ensured a systematic exploration of the research objectives, providing reliable data to evaluate the impact of leadership styles on organizational performance in Chongwe District Council.

3. Results/findings
a. Gender

Gender of respondents	Percent(%)
Male	40%
Female	60%

The sample consists of 60% male and 40% female respondents, indicating a slightly higher male representation in the workforce at Chongwe District Council. This gender distribution may reflect workplace demographics and could influence responses if men and women have differing views on leadership style effectiveness.

b. Years of experience

Years of experience	Percent(%)
0-5 Years	30%
6-10 Years	40%
11 Years	30%

Table 2. Respondents are spread across various experience levels, with 40% having 6-10 years of experience. This middle experience group might be most affected by leadership's impact on service delivery and policy implementation. Those with 11+ years (30%) could offer insights into how leadership consistency influences long-term organizational performance.

c. Effectiveness of leadership on policy implementation and service delivery

Table 3. The most commonly perceived leadership style is democratic (30%), suggesting employees feel involved in decision-making processes. This aligns with expectations for high employee engagement and empowerment in the organization. Transformational leadership (20%) is also notable, possibly promoting innovation. Autocratic (15%)

and servant leadership (15%) styles indicate a mix of directive and supportive leadership approaches within the council, reflecting varied management practices.
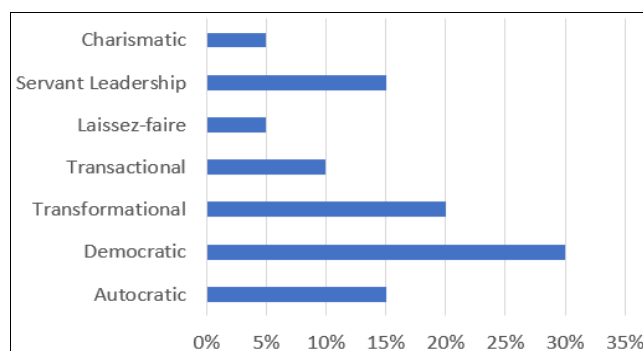
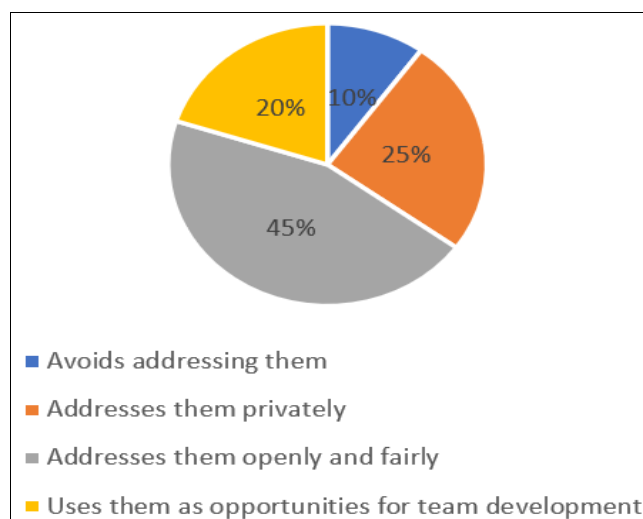## How does your leader handle conflict within the team?

Table 4. Nearly half (45%) of respondents believe their leader addresses conflicts openly and fairly, which may contribute to a culture of transparency. Leaders also view conflicts as team development opportunities (20%), fostering professional growth. However, 10% of respondents feel that leaders avoid conflicts, a potential area for improvement as unresolved conflicts can impact team cohesion and moraleother 50% stating they were 75% aware (48 participants).

d. How does your leader handle decision-making during high-pressure situations
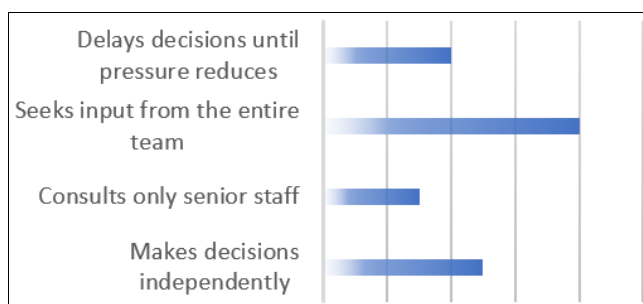
A significant portion (40%) of respondents indicated that leaders seek input from the entire team during high-pressure situations, reflecting a collaborative approach that supports inclusive decision-making. Meanwhile, 25% noted that decisions are made independently, which may expedite the

process but could reduce team engagement. The 20% who reported delays in decision-making suggest a cautious approach, while the 15% who consult only senior staff indicate a hierarchical decision-making style.

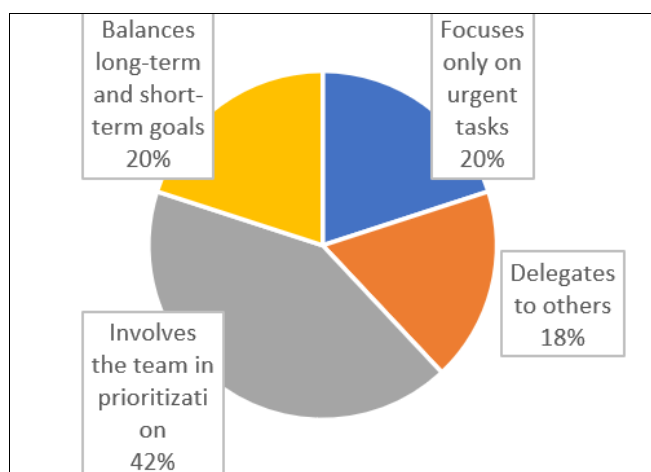e. **How does your leader prioritize tasks when making decisions?**

Table The majority (42%) of respondents stated that their leaders involve the team in prioritizing tasks, which enhances engagement and aligns with effective decision-making. However, an equal proportion of respondents (20%) said leaders either focus only on urgent tasks or balance long-term and short-term goals, suggesting mixed strategies. The 18% who reported that tasks are delegated may indicate an empowering approach but could also reflect a lack of hands-on leadership.

f. **How does your leader communicate updates on policy changes?**
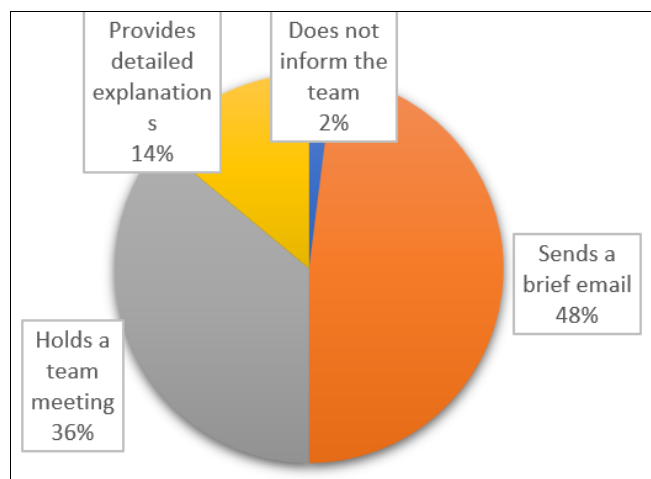
Nearly half (48%) of the respondents stated that their leaders communicate updates via brief emails, which may be efficient but lacks depth for full comprehension. A significant portion (36%) reported receiving updates through team meetings, promoting open communication and aligning with the objective of effective policy dissemination. However, only 14% mentioned receiving detailed explanations, indicating a need for clearer communication

strategies. The 2% who said leaders do not inform the team highlight a critical area for improvement.

What extent do you agree that the leadership style in your organization is conducive to high performance?
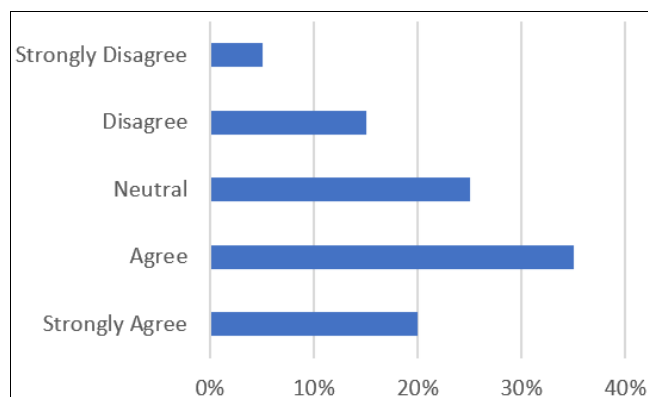

Table 8. Most respondents (35% agree, 20% strongly agree) feel that the leadership style promotes high performance, suggesting a generally supportive leadership environment. However, with 15% disagreeing and 5% strongly disagreeing, there is a notable minority who may view the current leadership approach as insufficient for optimizing performance.

How does your leader support the team in achieving policy targets?
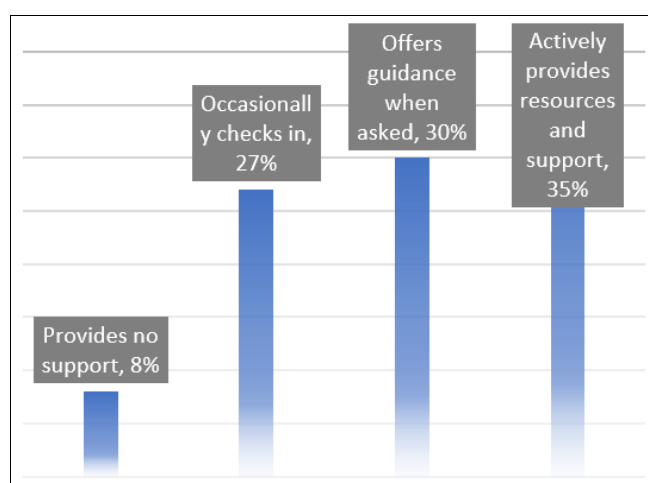

Table 9 The largest group (35%) indicated that leaders actively provide resources and support to achieve policy targets, demonstrating a commitment to team success and aligning with the objective of enhancing service delivery. Additionally, 30% noted that guidance is provided when requested, showing a responsive but not proactive approach. However, 27% said leaders only occasionally check in, and 8% reported no support at all, which could negatively impact policy implementation.

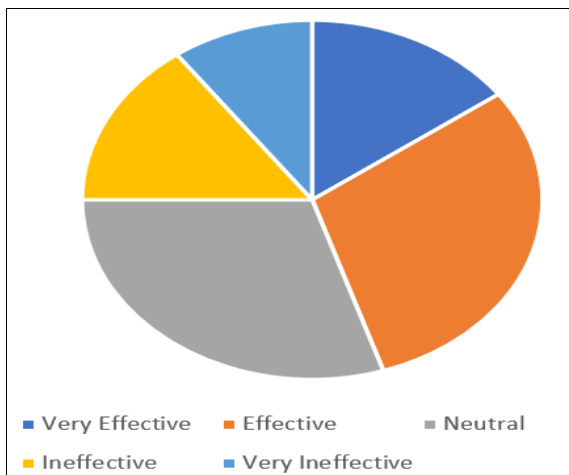**Effect of effectiveness of leadership on the organizational performance**

Table 10 While 45% view leadership communication as effective or very effective, a substantial 30% feel neutral, possibly indicating inconsistent communication practices. Ineffectiveness (25% combined) suggests that some departments may experience gaps in leadership communication, which could impact policy awareness and organizational alignment.

Effectiveness of leadership on organization decision making
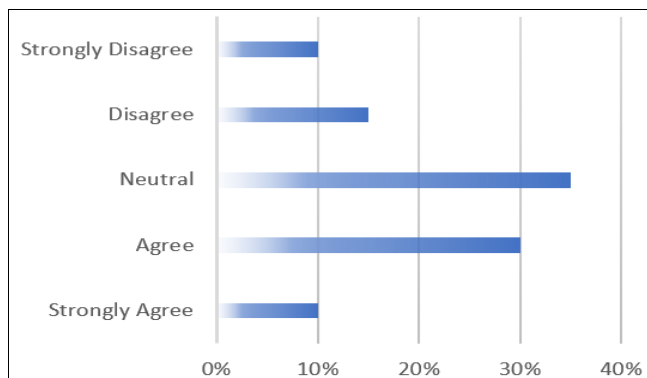

Only 40% agree that the leadership style promotes innovation, while 25% disagree, reflecting a divide in perceptions. The high neutral percentage (35%) suggests that employees may not clearly see innovation initiatives from leaders, an area where more active promotion of creative practices may benefit organizational performance.

What extent does your supervisor's leadership style positively impact your productivity?
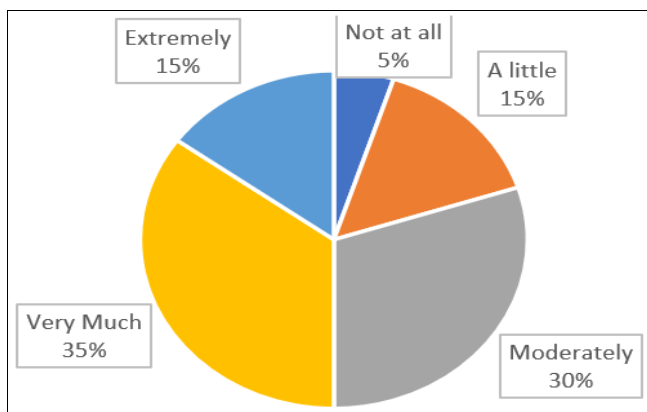
With 50% reporting "very much" or "extremely," leadership style appears to significantly enhance productivity for many employees. The 20% who feel only a slight or no impact may require tailored support from leadership, such as increased feedback or recognition, to further boost their productivity levels.

**How does your leader recognize team achievements?**
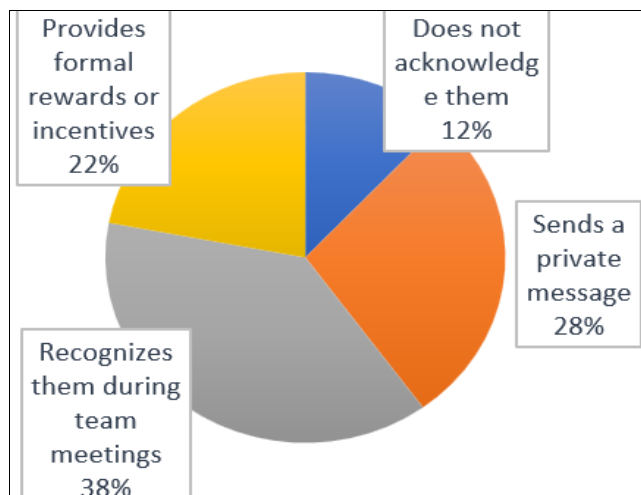
The most common form of recognition (38%) occurs during team meetings, fostering a sense of appreciation and boosting morale. Leaders who provide formal rewards (22%) further enhance motivation by acknowledging outstanding performance. However, 28% reported that recognition is done privately, which, while meaningful, lacks public reinforcement. The 12% who feel their achievements are not acknowledged at all may experience decreased motivation.

g. How does your leader manage underperforming team members

Leaders primarily manage underperformance through informal guidance (35%) and additional training (30%), demonstrating a supportive approach that aligns with transformational leadership. However, 20% reported formal performance reviews, which may provide structured improvement plans. The 15% who said leaders ignore underperformance highlight a potential area of concern for overall team productivity
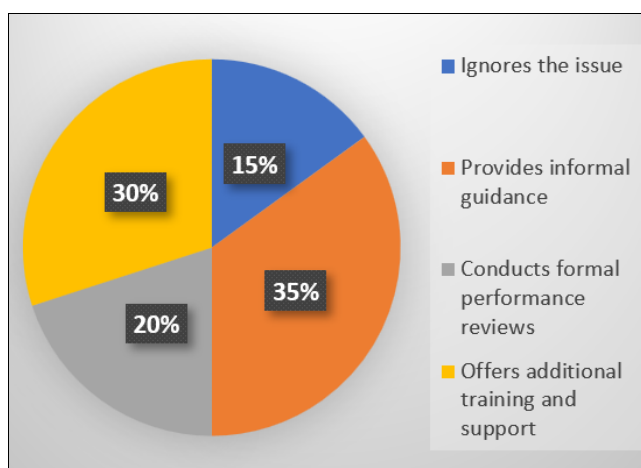
1. How does your leader foster teamwork within the organization?
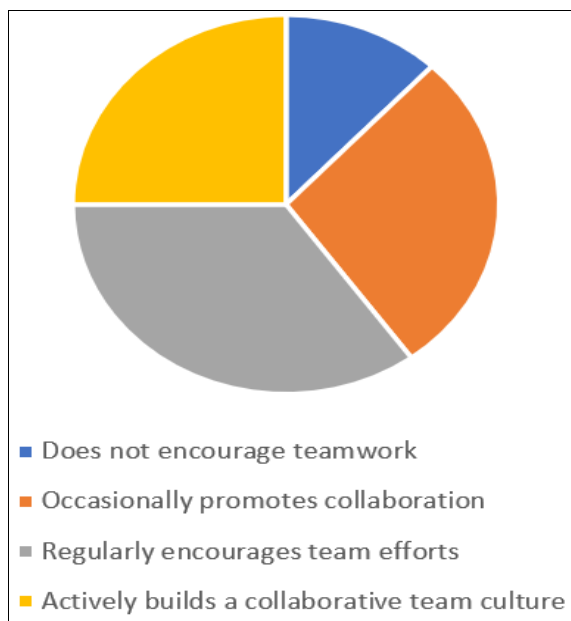
Most respondents (35%) noted that leaders regularly encourage teamwork, promoting a collaborative work environment that enhances performance. Leaders who actively build team culture (25%) further support this goal. However, 28% only occasionally promoting collaboration and 12% not encouraging teamwork at all may indicate gaps in fostering a cohesive team dynamic.

Interview Responses
Effectiveness of leadership on policy implementation and service delivery

How would you describe the primary leadership of your direct supervisor/leader?
Response: "My supervisor mainly uses a democratic style. We're often asked to contribute ideas, especially when making departmental decisions, which I appreciate. I think it keeps us engaged and makes me feel like my input truly matters."

How often does your leader provide constructive feedback?

Response: "It's pretty frequent I'd say it happens often, probably once every two weeks or so. This feedback has helped me improve my work, and I think it contributes to overall team performance."
How does your leader handle conflict within the team?
Response: "Conflicts are typically addressed openly. Our leader encourages us to discuss issues as a team rather than ignoring them. It feels constructive and fair, and I've noticed it helps keep things running smoothly within the team."
To what extent does your leader recognize and reward good performance?
Response: "My supervisor makes an effort to recognize good performance, especially during team meetings. They don't give out formal rewards often, but they acknowledge our hard work, which I think helps morale."
Can you describe a situation where the leadership delivery on implementation of policies had a significant positive or negative impact on organizational performance at the Chongwe District Council?

Response: "There was a time we were behind on a project deadline. My supervisor encouraged us all to share ideas on how to speed things up and listened to everyone's input. This democratic approach helped us find solutions faster and meet our goals."

Effectiveness' of leadership on organization decision making.

How effective is the communication from leaders to employees?
Response: "Communication is generally effective, but sometimes it can be unclear, especially when it comes to changes in policies. I'd say leaders do try, but there are moments where it could be more consistent."
The leadership style at Chongwe District Council promotes innovation and creativity.
Response: "While there's some encouragement to be creative, it doesn't always feel strongly emphasized. I think some of us would appreciate more openness to new ideas, but it's not really a big part of our culture at the moment."
Can you provide specific examples of how leadership has positively or negatively impacted organizational performance?
Response: "Positive impact would be seen during team projects where my leader takes a collaborative approach, helping us stay aligned and motivated. However, when there's a more directive style, like during stressful situations, it can sometimes stifle creativity and make people hesitant to speak up."

What changes in leadership style would you recommend to improve the performance of Chongwe District Council?

Response: "I'd recommend a bit more focus on innovation and an increase in two-way communication, so we can contribute more ideas without fearing criticism. A leadership style that encourages more creativity could improve team morale and performance."
Influence of Leadership Styles on Employee Motivation and Productivity

How motivated do you feel in your current role?

Response: "Generally, I feel quite motivated, mostly because my leader acknowledges my work. However, I believe motivation could improve if recognition were more frequent and accompanied by some form of reward."
To what extent does your supervisor's leadership style impact your motivation?
Response: "The democratic style my supervisor uses impacts my motivation a lot. Knowing that my opinions are valued makes me want to contribute even more and stay committed to my role."

How would you rate your productivity at work?

Response: "My productivity is generally high, partly because my supervisor provides clear expectations and feedback. This guidance helps me stay focused and work towards my targets."

How does your supervisor's leadership style affect your productivity?

Response: "The encouragement I get from my supervisor keeps me productive. I know that my hard work won't go unnoticed, so I try to give my best. However, I think if the

feedback were even more structured, my productivity might improve further."

In your opinion, what are the key characteristics of an effective leader?
Response: "An effective leader listens, gives constructive feedback, and recognizes individual contributions. At Chongwe, leaders who adopt these practices create a much more positive and productive work environment."

To Determine the Effectiveness of Leadership on Policy Implementation and Service Delivery
The results indicated that the most prevalent leadership style at Chongwe District Council was democratic, as identified by 30% of the respondents. This leadership style was linked to inclusiveness in decision-making processes, which positively impacted policy implementation. Respondents highlighted that democratic leader often encouraged employee participation, which led to better alignment of policies with the needs of the council.

Communication Effectiveness
1. 45% of respondents agreed that communication from their leaders was effective in guiding policy implementation. This group noted that clear communication ensured a better understanding of policy changes and expectations.
2. However, 25% of respondents expressed dissatisfaction with the consistency of leadership communication, indicating gaps that may impact effective policy rollout.

Support for Innovation
1. Only 40% of respondents believed that the current leadership styles fostered innovation, suggesting a need for leaders to adopt more creative and supportive approaches in policy implementation.

Overall Impact on Service Delivery
1. A significant 60% of respondents felt that the existing leadership styles had a positive effect on policy implementation and service delivery, leading to improved efficiency and effectiveness.
2. On the contrary, 10% of the respondents felt that the leadership approach was either ineffective or very ineffective in policy execution, pointing to challenges in leadership strategies that could impede service delivery.

The findings indicate that while democratic leadership is effective in promoting inclusive decision-making, there are areas for improvement, particularly in enhancing communication consistency and fostering innovation. Strengthening these areas could lead to more effective policy implementation and better service delivery outcomes at Chongwe District Council.

To Analyse the Effectiveness of Leadership on Organizational Decision-Making
The study revealed that leadership styles, particularly transformational and democratic, played a crucial role in enhancing organizational decision-making.
Involvement in Decision-Making:
1. 50% of respondents rated the influence of their leader's style on decision-making as "good" or "very good,"

suggesting that leadership at Chongwe District Council often encourages team input.
2. 35% of respondents indicated that their leaders frequently involved them in the decision-making process, which helped to improve the quality of decisions and fostered a sense of ownership among employees.
3. However, 15% of the employees reported that decision-making was primarily autocratic, where leaders made decisions independently without consulting team members, which may hinder creativity and reduce employee engagement.

Responsiveness to Feedback:
1. 40% of respondents found their leaders to be "very responsive" or "extremely responsive" to feedback, reflecting a participative approach that values employee input.
2. Conversely, 20% of respondents felt that their leaders were either "slightly responsive" or "not at all responsive" to feedback, highlighting an area for improvement in leadership practices.

The findings suggest that democratic and transformational leadership styles are effective in promoting inclusive decision-making at Chongwe District Council. However, the presence of autocratic tendencies indicates a need for leaders to adopt more collaborative practices, ensuring that employee input is consistently valued in organizational decisions. Enhancing responsiveness to feedback can further optimize decision-making processes.

To Establish the Effectiveness of Leadership on Overall Organizational Performance
The study assessed how various leadership styles influence overall organizational performance, particularly focusing on productivity, job satisfaction, and employee motivation.
Impact on Employee Motivation and Productivity:
1. 74% of respondents identified transformational leadership as the style most associated with high motivation and improved performance. These leaders were noted for their ability to inspire and engage employees, resulting in higher productivity levels.
2. 60% of respondents felt that their leader's style positively influenced their job satisfaction, with leaders recognizing and rewarding good performance, which boosted morale.
3. However, 24% of respondents expressed dissatisfaction with the feedback mechanisms in place, as they desired more consistent and constructive feedback from their leaders.
Support for Professional Development:
1. 28% of respondents noted that their leaders actively support training and development initiatives, which aligns with the objective of enhancing employee skills for better organizational performance.
2. Conversely, 18% reported that professional development was not prioritized by their leaders, which could impact long-term employee growth and retention.
Overall Organizational Impact:
1. 80% of respondents agreed that leadership moderately improved productivity and performance, indicating a positive but not optimal impact. This suggests that while leadership efforts are contributing to

performance, there is still room for growth in terms of fully leveraging employee potential.

2. On the other hand, 10% of respondents rated the overall leadership effectiveness as poor, indicating dissatisfaction with the current leadership practices at Chongwe District Council.

The results demonstrate that transformational leadership is highly effective in driving motivation and performance at Chongwe District Council. However, the need for more consistent feedback and greater emphasis on professional development are areas where leadership can improve. By addressing these gaps, the council can enhance employee satisfaction, productivity, and overall organizational performance.

Discussion and Implication of Findings
The results revealed that democratic leadership, characterized by participative decision-making, was the most commonly practiced style, with 30% of respondents identifying it as prevalent in their workplace. This leadership style was associated with improved policy implementation and enhanced service delivery, as it fosters inclusivity and collective responsibility. Transformational leadership, identified by 74% of respondents as effective, emerged as a key driver of employee motivation and productivity. Its emphasis on vision, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration positively influenced organizational performance. These findings align with prior research, such as Bass and Riggio (2006) [13], which identified transformational leadership as pivotal in fostering innovation and long-term organizational success.

Despite these strengths, the study identified areas of concern, such as inconsistent communication and inadequate feedback mechanisms. Twenty-five percent of respondents reported issues with communication, highlighting gaps that could undermine policy implementation and team cohesion. Similarly, 24% expressed dissatisfaction with feedback processes, underscoring the need for more structured and constructive feedback systems. These challenges resonate with global literature, which emphasizes the importance of transparent communication and effective feedback in achieving organizational objectives.

The study also found that autocratic leadership, though effective in high-pressure scenarios, negatively impacted employee engagement and morale when overused. This reflects the need for situational leadership, as outlined by Contingency Theory, which advocates for leadership styles tailored to organizational contexts and challenges.

The findings have several implications for leadership practices at Chongwe District Council and beyond. First, they underscore the value of democratic and transformational leadership styles in public sector management, suggesting that leaders should prioritize inclusivity, vision, and employee development. Implementing leadership training programs focused on these styles could enhance organizational effectiveness.

Second, addressing communication gaps and feedback mechanisms is critical. Establishing formal communication channels and structured feedback systems can improve information flow, align team efforts, and boost employee morale. These measures are essential for maintaining transparency and accountability within the council.

Third, the findings highlight the need for adaptive leadership approaches. By aligning leadership styles with organizational needs and circumstances, leaders can better navigate challenges such as resource constraints and conflicting priorities. This requires continuous leadership assessments and a commitment to professional development.

Finally, the study emphasizes the role of ethical and participative leadership in enhancing public service delivery. Leaders who engage with employees and the community foster a culture of trust and accountability, driving sustainable development and organizational success. These findings are particularly relevant for policymakers seeking to optimize leadership practices in the Zambian public sector. In conclusion, this study demonstrates that leadership styles significantly influence organizational performance. By leveraging democratic and transformational leadership while addressing existing challenges, the Chongwe District Council can achieve greater efficiency, employee satisfaction, and service delivery outcomes.

4. Conclusion
This study aimed to examine the effects of leadership styles on organizational performance, with a specific focus on the Chongwe District Council. The research explored the influence of various leadership styles, including democratic, transformational, and autocratic, on key organizational factors such as policy implementation, decision-making processes, and employee motivation. Through a mixed-methods approach, which incorporated both qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques, the study sought to provide a comprehensive analysis of the relationship between leadership practices and overall organizational effectiveness.

The findings from the study indicated that democratic and transformational leadership styles are the most prevalent and effective in enhancing organizational performance within the Chongwe District Council. Democratic leadership, which emphasizes participatory decision-making, has been linked to improved policy implementation and service delivery, as it fosters a culture of inclusivity and shared responsibility among employees. This leadership style supports transparency and accountability, encouraging team members to take ownership of decisions, which enhances overall job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

Transformational leadership, which focuses on inspiring and motivating employees to achieve higher levels of performance, was also found to be highly effective. The study revealed that 74% of respondents associated transformational leadership with increased employee motivation and productivity. This aligns with existing literature, which suggests that transformational leaders play a key role in driving innovation and fostering organizational change. By providing a clear vision and intellectually stimulating employees, transformational leaders help organizations adapt to evolving challenges and achieve long-term success.

However, despite the positive effects of democratic and transformational leadership styles, the study identified several challenges that need to be addressed for further improvement. Notably, 25% of respondents highlighted issues with communication consistency, indicating that unclear or inconsistent communication from leadership could hinder the implementation of policies and negatively impact employee morale. Similarly, 24% of respondents expressed dissatisfaction with feedback mechanisms,

suggesting a need for more structured and constructive feedback to enhance employee performance and engagement. These findings underscore the importance of continuous improvement in leadership practices, particularly in terms of communication and feedback systems.

Additionally, the study found that while autocratic leadership may be effective in crisis situations where quick decisions are required, its long-term use could lead to disengagement and reduced employee motivation. This highlights the importance of leadership adaptability and situational awareness, as outlined in Contingency Theory, which emphasizes that the most effective leadership style is one that aligns with the specific needs of the organization and its employees at any given time.

In conclusion, this study provides valuable insights into the relationship between leadership styles and organizational performance at Chongwe District Council. It confirms that leadership plays a crucial role in driving organizational success, particularly when leaders adopt styles that align with the needs and circumstances of their teams. The findings suggest that democratic and transformational leadership styles, when combined with improved communication and feedback systems, can significantly enhance organizational performance. Therefore, it is recommended that Chongwe District Council invest in leadership training programs to further develop these leadership styles and address the identified gaps. These initiatives will help foster a more engaged, motivated, and productive workforce, ultimately contributing to better service delivery and organizational outcomes.

5. Acknowledgments

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