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**INFLUENCE OF LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS ON EMPLOYEE
ENGAGEMENT: A CASE OF STRATHMORE UNIVERSITY**

EMILY AKOTH



**A RESEARCH DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MASTERS IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
AT STRATHMORE UNIVERSITY**

2024

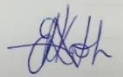
DECLARATION

I declare that this work has not been previously submitted and approved for the award of a degree by this or any other university. To the best of my knowledge and belief, this project contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference in the project itself.

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Date: 29th November 2022

Approval

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ABSTRACT

There is a significant increase in the demand for programs that enhance leadership in the past decades. This popularity has led to a discovery of innovative and creative ideas that enhance the professional relationship that exists between employers and employees. Because leadership goes beyond management, more studies are focused on the competency and problems that occur in the work-life. Thus, the current study examined the influence of leadership development program on employee engagement in Strathmore University. Specific objectives were: To establish the influence of leadership development program design on employee engagement at Strathmore University. To determine the influence of Action Learning Projects in the Leadership Excellence Acceleration Program on engagement of employees at Strathmore University. To evaluate the influence of integration of Coaching in the Leadership Excellence Acceleration Program on employee engagement in Strathmore University. The study was based on three component theory of engagement and transaction leadership theory. The study applied descriptive research design and a census of 99 participants of leadership development program in Strathmore University. Primary data was collected through administration of questionnaires. Data was analyzed through descriptive and inferential statistics while qualitative data was thematically analyzed. The findings were presented in figures and tables. Correlation analysis depicted that there was a positive statistically significant influence of leadership development program design on employee engagement at Strathmore University. It was revealed that there was a positive statistically significant influence of action learning projects in the leadership excellence acceleration program on engagement of employees at Strathmore University. There was a positive and statistically significant influence of integration of coaching in the leadership excellence acceleration program on employee engagement in Strathmore University. There is need for adoption of strategies that would enhance leadership program design so as to enhance connectivity with vision and mission of an organization and increase willingness and commitment to serve in Strathmore for long. Measures should be taken to integrate hand on and experimental approach in the curriculum so as to enable it to optimize its value contribution amongst its participants. There is need for agreement on measures and strategies that would nurture confidentiality and trust during the implementation of coaching program.

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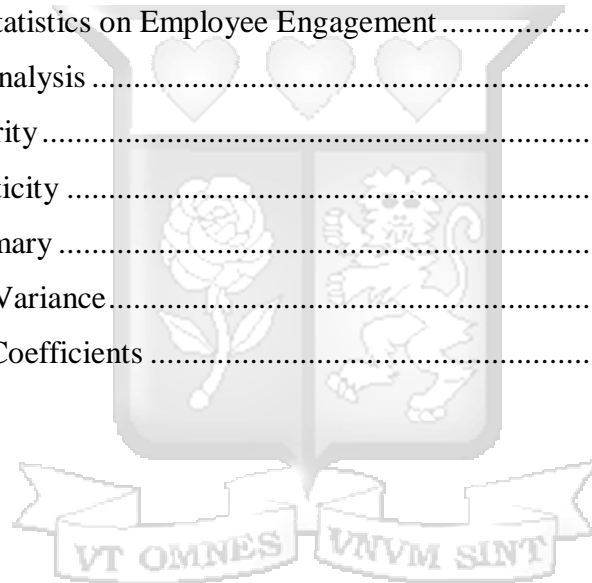
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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ALP	Action Learning Projects
LDP	Leadership Development Programs
LEAP	Leadership Excellence Acceleration Program
NACOSTI	National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation
PLP	Personal Leadership Program
ROI	Return on Investment
SPSS	Statistical Packages for Social Sciences



OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

- Action learning projects** These are practical in nature and leave a positive impact on employees' abilities to critically think and evaluate situations presented to them. It encourages employees to apply the theoretical knowledge they had gained in the classroom (Smith, 2016).
- Coaching** According to the International Coaching Federation (2021), coaching is the partnership arrangement between external parties, who act as a source of inspiration, with employees within an organization.
- Employee engagement** These are the employee's connectivity with the mission and vision statement. It manifests commitment and willingness to serve an organization for long (Peláez, Coó & Salanova 2019)
- Leadership excellence acceleration program** These are customized leadership acceleration programs that are undertaken in different groups dependent on qualifications, experience and the impact they are expected to cause in an organization (Center for Management & Organization Effectiveness, 2020).
- Leadership development programs** These are leadership programs conducted internally or externally by corporate entities to cultivate good and sound management practices and administrative effectiveness, encouraging employees to develop new ideas, initiate changes, and contribute creative input to the organization (Chandani, Mehta, Mall, & Khokhar, 2016).

Project design

Leadership development programs are structured to fit a specific category of employees. They may be categorized into strata depending on their qualifications, experience and the impact they are expected to cause in an organization (Maak & Stahl, 2011).



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

As much as there are these few definitions, scholars on this area have not agreed with one definition fit for purpose to explain Leadership (Kirchner & Akdere, 2014). A number of authors have attempted to define leadership development programs such as Kirchner & Akdere who argued that leadership development programs refer to individuals and organizations concerted, formalized efforts towards leader improvement. Also, The Leadership Network (2021) defines leadership as a deliberate effort to equip those in top positions with a chance to experience change as they are exposed to an environment of learning. This contributes to their growth in the long-term. Organizations, through Human Resources Development/ Learning and Development experts are tasked to determine what leadership programmes should be offered in an organization, the nature of these programs, who should attend, and more importantly, how they can demonstrate, in real terms, a Return on Investment (ROI).

Engaging employees is a concept which defines the intrinsic motivation and attitude that employees have towards their job, how committed they are to the organization, and how intentional they are at putting effort into their work (Mann & Harter, 2016). Employee engagement involves creating a workplace approach that results in the optimal conditions for the organization's members to perform excellently. It also involves creating a workspace where employees have the motivation to increase success in their organization and are satisfied with their well-being at the place of work (Anna, 2021). An internally motivated workforce understands the dynamics within which they work and maintain mutually respectful relationships with other employees. This has a positive impact on the overall organizational performance. Employee engagement is directly linked to organization productivity and productivity (Saks, 2021).

1.1.1 Leadership Development Programs

Leadership development programs define activities undertaken to improve the skills, abilities, and confidence of leaders. The programs aim to equip leaders with the specific skills, tools, and behaviour that they need to lead others and lead others confidently to increase performance

and meet the organization (Moldoveanu & Narayandas, 2019). Leadership development began in the 1930s when scientists began to examine the concept of leadership as something that can be learned. Thus, leaders' formal training and development began to thrive, producing excellent leaders who ran successful businesses.

A study by Roupnel, Rinfre & Grenier (2019) examined leadership development programs or interventions which could be regarded as operational to the extent of enhancing the strong leadership knowledge and attributes. According to the authors, coaching, mentoring, and action learning are among the leadership programs that effectively develop successful leaders. There is a significant increase in the demand for programs that enhance leadership in the past decades. This popularity has led to a discovery of innovative and creative ideas that enhance the professional relationship that exists between employers and employees (Kirchner & Akdere, 2014). Because leadership goes beyond management, more studies are focused on the competency and problems that occur in the work-life (Dhammika, 2016). Organizations apply leadership development through executive education programs.

More recently, coaching has become an important addition to Leadership Development Programs (LDP). This has been applied through Action Learning Projects (ALPs) where participants can pick a management challenge and work on a project around the topic. The project should address a real organizational issue to demonstrate a return on investment on the part of the organization. Research by Abner, Valdez and Perry (2021) show that without the ROI, LDPs would not be funded, and making a value proposition for the program unrealistic, it may lead to an inefficient allocation of resources and organizations may be producing ineffective leaders for the 21st Century challenges. As much as the research context is the public sector, the same would be said for the private sector organizations.

Coaching has been found as a value add when integrated in leadership development programs (Chelagat, Kokwaro, Onyango & Rice 2021). The impact of coaching, especially when institutionalized, is creating a coaching culture where the employees and the leaders co-create the organization's mission. According to the International Coaching Federation (2021), coaching is the partnership arrangement between external parties, who act as a source of inspiration, with employees within an organization. Nurturing and maintaining the relationship is done with the intention of enabling them to reach their potential. This is a departure from

mentoring, which may involve more telling and directing as opposed to engaging. When used as a leadership management tool, coaching has the potential of having the employees more engaged and having the projects for the organizations sustained (Chelagat et. al, 2021).

1.1.2 Employee Engagement

Employee engagement is crucial in achievement of organization goals. Its paramount, since it affects morale, productivity, and likelihood of employee retention. Engaging employees and ensuring that their intellectual and emotional abilities have been maximized to enhance their commitment to the firm contributes to the success of the organization (Baumruk 2004; Richman 2006; Shaw 2005). In some instances, employee engagement has been seen in the lenses of intrinsic motivation in the sense that the amount of discretionary effort put by staff helps determine their level of engagement and connectivity with an organization (Khan 1990). Khan further summarizes this concept as employees having passion for work (ibid, 1990).

Profit and non-profit organization have recently embraced employee engagement as a source of competitive advantage (Nagesh et al., 2019). Highly, engaged employee will always outperform and comply with quality standards. Engaged employees reflect the quality of their engagement on quality of services that they accord to customers and levels of participation in organization activities (Jayasena et al., 2023). Through, their engagement, employees nurture patronage and customer loyalty that enhances revenue and profitability. The impact of employee engagement on productivity is an important study in the field of organizational management. Employee engagement has become a key business priority for senior leaders. They recognize the possibility that a highly engaged employees can intensify innovation, productivity, and bottom-line performance while minimize costs related to recruitment and retention in highly competitive talent markets (Sibanda, 2014).

Engagement is a workplace approach which ensures to make employees committed toward organization's goals and motivated to give extra effort toward organizational success, and similarly enhances the sense of wellbeing on them (MacLeod and Clarke, 2009). Now-a-days it has been an emerging debatable issue for human resource managers (Baldev and Anupama, 2010). It refers to the extent to which employees feel passionate and committed toward their

job. It puts discretionary effort into their work. It has become a top priority for the business leaders in the organization.

1.1.3 Leadership Development Programs and Employee Engagement

Leadership development contributes to employee engagement by creating a perspective that motivates and directs individuals toward meeting its goals. The other ways that leadership development contributes to employee engagement is through empowerment, coaching, participation, training, development, and delegation (Dhammika, 2016). Through these key concepts, leadership development ensures that people are not aloof and are obliged to learn. Leadership Development Programs (LDP) create an environment where employees can achieve purpose and meaning for their careers while they retain connectivity to the organizational goals. Through these programs, employers can identify employees with high potential and inspire them to grow (Chandani, Mehta, Mall, & Khokhar, 2016). This results in employees learning new things and becomes more motivated, creating employee satisfaction. Leadership development programs cultivate good and sound management practices and administrative effectiveness, encouraging employees to develop new ideas, initiate changes, and contribute creative input to the organization. Thus, leadership development is critical to ensuring employee engagement.

Noting the important role that managers play as the link between the formulation of strategies by the senior management and its execution, Strathmore University started a program to train all managers within the institution on leadership and management. The program, started in 2018, was dubbed Leadership Excellence Acceleration Program (LEAP). The format of this program has been two modules of a week each with four coaching sessions. The coaching sessions are held in a team setting, each team consisting of about 6-8 participants, coached on an organizational challenge they would like to solve. Once completed, each team has to make a presentation to the management.

One of the most important influences on employee engagement and productivity is the connection and bond that a member of staff has with their direct supervisor (Milan, Chadburn & Smith, 2021). Milan et. al., further argued that leaders need to be good managers and mentors and be visionaries who pass on their vision for employee engagement. Leadership

development programs provide leaders the skills necessary to interact with their employees (Kirchner & Akdere, 2014). Through leadership development programs, leaders gain essential skills, such as coaching employees. Coaching enables managers to unlock what gives employees meaning and purpose in their work. Leaders who coach their employees can increase their employees' performance, resulting in better employee engagement (Popli & Rizvi, 2016). Leadership development programs enable a leader to develop the ability to retain talent in the organization. Employees need reassurance that their employers care about them and are invested in the future of their careers. Thus, leadership development programs serve as a strategy that makes employees feel valued and worthy of increasing employee engagement. As such, this study aims to examine the influence of leadership development programs on employee engagement at Strathmore university.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In today's competitive business environment, organizations are increasingly recognizing the importance of employee engagement (Roupenel, Rinfre & Grenier (2019). Engaged employees are more productive, satisfied, and less likely to leave their jobs. Leadership development programs are seen as a way to improve employee engagement by equipping leaders with the skills and knowledge they need to motivate and inspire their teams (Bhardwaj, Mishra & Jain, 2021; Gómez-Leal et al, 2022). However, according to Cheche, Muathe, & Maina (2019) there is a lack of consensus on the effectiveness of leadership development programs in improving employee engagement. Some studies such as the study by Shuck and Herd (2012) and another by Li et al (2021) have shown a positive correlation between the two, while others have found no such relationship. There is also some evidence that leadership development programs can actually have a negative impact on employee engagement, if they are not designed and implemented effectively.

In Africa, the issue of employee engagement is particularly important as the continent experiences economic growth and development. African businesses are facing a skills shortage, and they need to find ways to attract and retain top talent (Cheche, Muathe, & Maina, 2019). Engaged employees are more likely to be innovative and productive, which is essential for African businesses to compete on the global stage (Schaufeli, 2021). However, there are a

number of challenges to implementing effective leadership development programs in Africa (Kivuli, Kokwaro, Onyango & Rice, 2020). These challenges include a lack of qualified trainers, a lack of funding, and cultural differences. It is important to develop leadership development programs that are tailored to the specific needs of African businesses and cultures.

In Kenya, employee engagement is a major concern for businesses. A study by Rotich, & Rotich, (2016) found that only 14% of Kenyan employees are engaged at work. This is a significant problem, as disengaged employees are less productive and more likely to leave their jobs. There are a number of factors that contribute to low employee engagement in Kenya. These factors include poor leadership, lack of career development opportunities, and a lack of work-life balance (Mutunga, 2009). Leadership development programs can play a role in improving employee engagement in Kenya by equipping leaders with the skills and knowledge they need to create a more positive work environment for their employees.

LEAP program (Developed by Strathmore Business School for Strathmore University managers) was introduced to enhance engagement in employees at manager level while they also become champions of the institutional culture. As mentioned earlier, leadership development and employee engagement are closely related (Projectionsinc, 2021; Anna 2021). The extent to which staff are engaged is expected to be strongly affected by the type and level of leadership being implemented at the organization (Saks, 2021). Since leaders directly affect and determine the behaviour of the employees, these two variables are likely related. The experiment conducted by Shuck and Herd (2012) examined whether a relationship exists amongst the various leadership theories, and the extent to which employees are engaged. The study showed that leadership development strongly affects the employee engagement. Similarly, Papalexandris & Galanaki (2009) also showed that leadership strongly affects employee engagement. There is limited research regarding the format of this program owing to its design and roll out. Thus, the current empirical study examined the influence of leadership development program on employee engagement in Strathmore University.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1.3.1 General Objective

The main objective of the study was to examine the influence of leadership development program on employee engagement in Strathmore University.

1.3.1 Specific objectives

- i. To establish the influence of leadership development program design on employee engagement at Strathmore University
- ii. To determine the influence of Action Learning Projects in the Leadership Excellence Acceleration Program on engagement of employees at Strathmore University
- iii. To evaluate the influence of integration of Coaching in the Leadership Excellence Acceleration Program on employee engagement in Strathmore University

1.4 Research Questions

- i. What is the influence of leadership development programs on employee engagement at Strathmore University?
- ii. What is the influence of Action Learning Projects in the Leadership Excellence Acceleration Program on employee engagement at Strathmore University?
- iii. What is the influence of integration of Coaching in the Leadership Excellence Acceleration Program on employee engagement in Strathmore University?

1.5 Significance of the Study

Results and findings of the study is critical for the following:

Strathmore University: The area of Leadership Development Programs and employee engagement has generated interest in the research world. However, integration of a Leadership Development Program- the training aspect with Action Learning Project and coaching for a program run by the institution to its staff is a unique phenomenon that has not received attention in research. Chelagat et. al (2021) reviewed this phenomenon from a healthcare systems sustainability perspective with their findings critical on leadership and sustainability in healthcare. As research has proven the importance of LDP on organizations trained through

Strathmore Business School, the institution stands to benefit as they get answers to whether the training has a Return on Investment.

Policy makers: Understanding how different programs influence employee engagement can inform workforce development policies. Organizations can design and implement training, coaching, and mentoring programs tailored to enhance employee engagement levels. This can contribute to the continuous improvement of employee skills, job satisfaction, and commitment to the organization. Employee engagement is a key driver of performance. Policies related to performance management can be informed by research on the influence of programs on engagement. Organizations can establish clear performance metrics aligned with engagement goals and implement programs that support employees in achieving their objectives.

Academics: The study increased the knowledge in the leadership industry that has great potential for growth and influencing policy on Learning and Development in institutions that develop curriculum for employee engagement. Kirchner (2014) decries that the lack of clarity on LDPs could be attributed to the in-class training that disappears quickly. He proposes that research be conducted on the factors that may contribute to a leader's stability and that which engages the leader beyond the training.

1.6 Scope of the Study

The research was biased on Leadership Excellence Acceleration Program (LEAP) offered to the Strathmore University staff with an aim of seeing the contribution of the program to employee engagement for the staff at managerial level. There are other programs target other levels of leadership in the institution which include Senior Leadership Program (for Management Board), Personal Leadership Program (PLP) for individual contributors and will not be part of this study as their target is other levels of management. This study focused on the Leadership Excellence Acceleration Program because it targets managers who are the drivers of the institutional strategy. In addition, the study restricted itself to the program design, i.e., two training modules with coaching embedded and Action Learning Projects (ALPs), the Coaching element and the ALPs contribution to employee engagement. In addition, the study was limited to the years 2018-2020 as this is the only period that the LEAP classes had taken

place. Data was gathered from people who have been participants in the class and currently working at Strathmore University.

1.7 Chapter Summary

The current chapter has presented background of the study, problem statement, significance of the study, problem statement and scope of the study.



CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This section evaluates past work which has been researched. The study used previous researchers that have written about the connection and link between engagement of employees and the leadership development programs extended to them. A theoretical framework that describes the existing relationship between these variables. This chapter increased the knowledge about leadership and employee engagement, while research gaps were identified that acted as motivation for the study.

2.2 Theoretical Review

This section will explore two relevant theories: the three-component theory of engagement and transactional leadership theory. The three-component theory identifies vigour, dedication, and absorption as essential for employee engagement. Transactional leadership focuses on exchanges between leaders and followers, with styles like contingent reward and management-by-exception influencing performance. By examining these theories, the study gains valuable insights into how leadership development programs impact employee engagement at Strathmore University.

2.2.1 Three Component theory of Engagement

Schaufeli and Bakker (2004) developed this theory based on the fact that satisfaction from the workplace could be linked to the retention, power and commitment that individuals possessed. People that desire to make a difference in their lives have high levels of flexibility in their mental capacities. Hence, their commitment to improve themselves could be closely attributed to the energy, motivation and pride they possess. Affection: A deep connection, which could be emotional, to the kind of work that a person does could be described as affection. Such an employee feels that they can continue working at the facilities for a relatively long time, as they ensure they are aware of the goals and financial objectives of the firm. Job satisfaction makes employees work with no or minimal supervision.

Fear of loss: Every employee reaches a point where they deliberate on the advantages and shortcomings of leaving an organization, which influences the commitment they make. The options that exist include, staying at the organization and assuming that one would get promoted, or leaving and then probably remaining unemployed for some time. The fear of loss could be monetary or non-monetary in nature. For instance, a person may have to lose their professional positioning in the industry or the contact they have formed with their colleagues over the years. Commitment from an employee is likely to be intrinsically felt if one is successful in their position.

Sense of Obligation to Stay: At some point, employees may feel like they have a responsibility towards their employer. This affects their ability to make an independent decision to leave a workplace even if they are getting mistreated or not being paid enough. For instance, one might feel they cannot change their careers or be transformed from this workplace since they have invested their time and experience in the same organization, or that they have received training, at the expense of the firm, and they would betray such dynamics if they were to leave. The inability to leave the organization may also be attributed to the fact that one may feel some sense of responsibility to remain loyal to their employer, and as such, leaving may not be actualized.

The theory is relevant in the study since there is need for employees to express levels of engagement and association in their places of work. This was achievable if the organization endeavours to create opportunities that can enable employees to experience sense of ownership and career growth and development. With leadership development programs, the leaders at the organisation are able to ensure that the employees are engaged thereby improving the level of association at work.

2.2.2 Transactional Leadership Theory

This study was also informed by transactional leadership theory. Bernard Bass in the later 20th century in 1981, and Max Weber earlier in the 20th century in 1947, introduced the concept of transactional leadership styles (MacNeill, Silcox, & Boyd, 2018). This method captures the actual motivation and sense of direction leaders extend to their followers. This is done with self-interests by the management team. Responsibility and power are the main sources of

authority the management team as they make major decisions on behalf of the employees. Followers are obligated to follow the guidelines and rules of the leader.

According to Odumeru and Ogbonna (2013), transactional leadership theory is developed based on the idea that leaders may promote compliance through implementation of a systems with rewards and punishments. Through these strategies, it becomes easier for the leaders to keep the employees motivated especially in the short term. Therefore, it is likely that transactional leadership theory can help understand the relation between leadership and employee engagement.

As noted by Blomme, Kodden, and Beasley-Suffolk (2015) effective transactional leadership focuses on the transformations on employees in terms of their psychological perceptions, as well as encouraging a balance amongst staff in terms of the benefits they get, against the costs incurred to train them. Therefore, when the employees view the leadership style as one where benefits are likely to emerge, they will show greater motivation and engagement. If the work-related resources provide credits, rewards, or benefits to the employees during the relation between leaders and their employees, levels of engagement are likely to be improved. On the other hand, hindrances especially in accessing or owning resources that improve the skills and knowledge by employees, which include benefits attract detrimental effects on employee engagement abilities. Transformational leadership theory on the other hand focuses on the fact that a leader must provide sufficient motivation to the employees through positive influence, motivation through inspirational messages and talks, stimulating the mind and through a personalized consideration of employees (Ghasabeh, Soosay, & Reaiche, 2015). The elements are important in allowing the leader to enhance the extent to which employees are engaged. Based on the theory, a leadership style in which the leader convinces followers of the need for the change including an explanation of its necessity is likely to improve engagement levels (Blomme, Kodden, & Beasley-Suffolk, 2015).

The theory was appropriate since there is need for an organization to embrace project design, action learning projects and coaching strategies that are aimed at promoting employee engagement. This was achievable through employee alignment with organization culture, connectivity to the mission and vision statements and commitment and willingness to serve in an organization for long.

2.3 Empirical Review

2.3.1 Leadership Excellence Acceleration Program Design and Employee Engagement

The extent to which engagement is displayed by the staff is a crucial factor that determines organizational success (Saks, 2019). However, the employee engagement will depend on several factors including leadership development. Leadership development programs refer to the types of programs or interventions implemented by the organizations to enhance the characters, skills, and knowledge of the leaders (Black, & Earnest, 2009). Leadership development includes both formal and information training programs as well as programs that focus on development at the professional level which are structured to assist workers to develop strong leadership styles.

The type of leadership development program and the resulting leadership style implemented by the leaders will determine whether employee will be engaged with their work at the organization or not (Meng, Reber, & Rogers, 2017). Employee engagement is also dependent on culture present at an organization. In an organization where a culture of collaboration, recognition and support to the employees is present, higher level of employee engagement could be recorded. Blomme, Kodden, & Beasley-Suffolk (2015) argued that organizational culture is a major moderator of the connectedness that exists between engaging employees and those in leadership positions with emphasis being put on the leadership style that give power to the employees and recognizes their efforts.

Leadership development programs are structured to fit a specific category of employees. They may be categorized into strata depending on their qualifications, experience and the impact they are expected to cause in an organization (Center for Management & Organization Effectiveness, 2020). These would be high potentials, who are really the support staff in an organization, new leaders at the entry level also known as individual contributors. Such leaders work under the supervision of a manager, which takes us to the next level of middle management who are essentially the drivers of an organization's strategy. There follows the Senior Management, which may form part of the exco and finally the board. The approaches, in terms of content development, the level of engagement, case studies where applicable is influenced by the level of staff one is engaging. Evidence from companies suggests that

corporations have prioritized a common leadership model based on global capabilities and a common corporate culture (Maak & Stahl, 2011). Some of these models must support the development of a program that aligns with the company's current leadership competency model or objectives. Career planning and succession planning have become an important factor for many organizations. Research also depicts that the commitment and willingness to directly and actively involve leaders in educating and creating awareness of leadership skills within an organization has an effect on the impact the program has on employees (Lafrance, 2021).

Strong leadership is required for firms to reach their financial objectives as well as establish themselves in the industry amidst the aggressive competition, taking into consideration that the corporate world continues becoming complex. Firms have a responsibility of being ahead of others and being proactive, which could improve their positioning in the industry. It also means a firm will survive when faced with anticipated labor shortages. According to Drengler (2001) program design is a prerequisite to the achievement of strong leadership if an organization is to achieve consistent growth through employees who are engaged to the mission and the vision of the organizations. Drengler further argues that in addition to more traditional kinds of training, the development process must include work experiences that would help to the development of leadership programs and leadership qualities. The idea that each person is unique necessitates development approaches that are diverse enough to accommodate varying personalities, skill levels, and learning styles.

A longitudinal study by Smith and Johnson (2018) examined impact of leadership development programs on employee engagement. Surveys and interview guides were used to gather data. Through, regression analysis it was documented that leadership programs significantly increased employee engagement. It was recommended that there is need for sensitization in participation of leadership programs. The study has methodological gap since it relied on longitudinal data unlike currently that was based cross sectional data.

Through use of mixed methods approach Garcia and Martinez (2019) evaluated the effect of leadership programs impact on employee engagement. Correlation and regression analysis depicted that there was positive association between participation in leadership development program, employee engagement and organization performance. The study has conceptual gap

since it examined mediating role of employee engagement and currently it was considered as response variable.

Wang and Liu (2020) applied quasi experimental design while evaluating the effectiveness of leadership programs in enhancement of employee engagement. Pretest and post-test design with control group was applied in examination on the effectiveness of leadership programs. It was documented that participation in leadership enhanced employee engagement and those who participated in the program were more engaged. It presents methodological gaps since the current study adopted descriptive research design and the former had experimental approach.

Cheng and Zhang (2017) applied case study research approach while exploring the impact of leadership development programs on employee engagement. Qualitative data was collected using interviews and focus groups. It was documented that participation in leadership programs enhanced employee engagement by increasing motivation, job satisfaction and employee commitment. Since the study applied qualitative research design it presents methodological gaps since the current study applied quantitative data.

Adisa and Olufemi (2016) examined the effect of employee engagement on organization performance in Nigeria banking sector. The study applied descriptive cross sectional research design and relied on quantitative data sourced using questionnaires. It was documented that there is need to stimulate employee engagement and leadership has crucial role in fostering it. The study has conceptual and contextual gaps. Conceptually, it considered employee engagement as a predictor while currently it is a response. The study was limited to banking sector and currently data was sourced from education institution.

2.3.2 Action Learning Projects and Employee Engagement

According to Smith (2016), ALPs, which are Action Learning Projects, are practical in nature, and leave a positive impact on employees' abilities to critically think and evaluate situations presented to them. It encourages employees to apply the theoretical knowledge they had gained in the classroom. Their difference with class projects is that the class project is more theoretical while the ALP is based on a challenge a specific institution is facing and how that interacts with the knowledge gained in class. Kivuli et. al (2020) refers to them as institutional

improvement projects aimed at helping the leaders attending the program implement the organizational plans of action. Other scholars have termed this concept ‘experiential learning.’ Action Learning Projects is a kind of learning in which a person learns by reflecting on a specific experience, generating abstract concepts from it, and then putting those ideas to the test by acting on them (Smith, 2016). ALPs establish real situations for learning by allowing employees to integrate the information they studied and have gained over the years to practical use. This means the focus should be on the actual business activities through identification of problems and formulation of solutions. It involves being always responsible with the assigned duties– in teams or individually with a faculty advisor or a certified coach. The three areas where executive abilities and leadership are affirmed to be effective and practical are within consultancy services, initiating and supporting change, and in entrepreneurship. The Action Learning Projects focus on these three areas (Smith, 2016).

Experiential learning, according to Pulakos et al. (2015), is important for organizations since it improves teamwork. This is since most experiential learning needs people to work in groups. According to Smith (2016), putting a focus on cooperation and teamwork helps to boost employee engagement. Because the majority of employees do not work alone and must interact with others to achieve their objectives, experiential learning enables workers to work well with others and so has a good impact on employee engagement (Leal-Rodrguez & AlbortMorant, 2019). In a study, Leal-Rodrguez and Albort-Morant (2019) noted that Action Learning Projects are more effective in businesses since they result in higher employee engagement and retention than traditional learning approaches.

According to Pulakos et al. (2015), the more personnel work in an organization, the more they become involved in its operations and feel like a part of the team, resulting in increased employee engagement. Workers can use experiential learning to realize and achieve both corporate and personal career goals, according to Smith (2016). This concept is appreciated as shared value and can make employees find meaning and purpose for their work. Action Learning Projects, for example, can serve as a link between theoretical principles and practical application (Pulakos et al). Employees can gain first-hand experience of putting what they've learnt in theory into practice through experiential learning. Because experiential learning incorporates several competencies such as decision-making, creative thinking, and problem-

solving, according to LealRodrguez and Albort-Morant, it enhances employees' learning processes and allows them to actively participate in organizational problem-solving, thereby improving employee engagement.

Peddler (2017) examined the effect of learning culture and organizational performance. The study applied cross sectional descriptive research design and primary data. The study found that engagement of employees in action learning projects improves their skills, motivation, and commitment. The trio has significant contribution on performance and employee engagement. Isamil and Mohammed (2019) investigated the effect of action learning on employee engagement in a manufacturing company in Malaysia. The study was based on quantitative data that was collected using questionnaires. Results of the study found that participation in action learning projects influences employees' perceptions on work environment, job satisfaction and commitment to an organization.

Marquardl and Waddil (2017) investigated the effect of action learning on employee engagement. Descriptive cross sectional research design was applied, and primary data collected through use of questionnaires and interview guide. Results of the study revealed that action learning significantly affected employee engagement, satisfaction, and job performance. Saunders and Holman (2019) adopted longitudinal research design to examine longterm effect on employee engagement and performance. Results of the study depicted that there was a statistically significant effect of action learning on employee engagement. Yan and Al-Hawamdeh (2020) adopted qualitative research design to examine contribution of action learning on employee engagement. It was found that employees participate in action learning activities so as to foster job satisfaction, commitment and motivation.

2.3.3 Coaching and Employee Engagement

Life coaching, according to Peláez, Co, and Salanova (2019), focuses on aiding individuals in achieving personal and organizational career goals by providing them the required instructions. Life coaching, according to Ladyshefsky and Taplin (2017), is a sort of counselling that tries to assist individuals in overcoming obstacles and achieving their work or life goals. According to Bachkirova et al. (2015), when a company provides this form of

coaching to its employees, they feel appreciated and are more receptive and devoted to the organization's goals.

Apart from coaching, Action Learning Projects, also referred to as institutional improvement programs, have been embedded in LDPs to demonstrate a return on investment (Chelagat, 2020). Here, participants choose a project that is supposed to meet a need in their organizations and tackle it individually or in a team set-up. Participants are supported by accredited coaches to clarify the feasibility of the project they hope to undertake as part of the leadership development program and how to operationalize it. The operationalization then demands management buy in so the participant must grasp the project clearly and demonstrate how it contributes to the stipulated vision and mission statements of a firm. Chelagat (2020) also argued that a coach plays the role of a sounding board, partnering with the participants to clarify the goals and objectives of the project and how it speaks into the organization's pain points. Beyond responding to the pain points, the participant gets an opportunity to interact with the organizational issues making them more connected and engaged. The projects are later to be presented to the management for feedback and implementation. The team working on the project is encouraged to work on a project they can directly influence its implementation.

In their study on team coaching in program development, Kivuli et. al (2020) argue that team coaching's main purpose is to connect the modules from the program with the organizational goals. It is important to factor in the relationships and results that are desired as they act as motivation to get change in the short-term and in the long-term. A behavioural shift and the construction of a mutual framework that takes into consideration the important characteristics like organizational goals and objectives, as well as the implementation of the changes become the expected outcomes of team coaching discourse. Business coaching differs from other types of coaching, according to Neupane (2015), because it focuses on both the corporate and individual goals. Business coaching practices, according to Enslin and Schulz (2015), enable workers to grasp how altering individual attributes and perspectives can affect both personal and organizational processes. As a result, successful business coaching aids employees in achieving agreed-upon organizational results, and employees become more motivated and dedicated to achieving corporate goals. Employee engagement improves as a result of such devotion and dedication, according to Baran (2017).

Jones and Woods (2018) studied the relationship between coaching and employee engagement in large organization. The study applied survey research design and sourced primary data using questionnaires. Through, regression analysis the study depicted that there was a statistically significant effect of coaching on employee engagement. Courtesy of coaching there were notable positive changes in job satisfaction and commitment to an organization. Robertson and Galbraith (2019) applied longitudinal design to explore the effect of coaching on employee engagement. Panel data was collected and analyzed using regression analysis. Results of the study showed positive statistically significant effect of coaching on employee engagement. The study has methodological gaps since it relied on secondary data unlike the current use of primary data. Smith and Brown (2017) adopted mixed methods approach was evaluating the effect of coaching on employee engagement. Results of the study depicted that participation in coaching programs significantly affected employee job satisfaction, commitment, and motivation.

Makhado and Thwala (2016) applied qualitative research design while exploring the effect of coaching on employee engagement in Africa. Data was collected using interview guides and focus group discussions. Results of the study revealed that coaching enhanced employees' engagement and improved organization outcomes. Wambua and Mutisya (2018) investigated the effect of coaching on employee engagement in Kenyan organization. Qualitative data was collected using interviews. It was documented that coaching enhanced employee engagement, job satisfaction and commitment.

2.4 Research Gaps

In a study by Jain and Khurana (2017) on the effect of undergoing an extensive training through leadership development. The authors focused on the impact of employee engagement, with a bias on their level of satisfaction they felt, the affection attached to their jobs and intentions to stay within the workplace. The study showed that leadership development programs in an organization have significant effects on employee engagement. This sample was conducted on working professionals in different organizations India. A sample of 450 employees was collected and analyzed using regression analysis. Overall, the result also showed that there is a strong positive correlation between leadership programs and job satisfaction and

organizational pride which were parameters for this study. The results however showed that there is weak correlation between leadership programs and emotional connect. The study proposed among the many factors that employee engagement can be enhanced in an organization, leadership development programs ought to be given significant attention. Organizations that invest in developing their employees are bound to have more motivated employees. The study, however, did not factor in the design of the training programs and coaching.

Khan and Azad (2018) in their study on engagement of the employee, training and employee performance in Malaysia found out that the factors that influence employee performance was coaching, training & development, participant, delegation. Training and development got a mean score almost moderate at 3.49, which the authors argue was not satisfactory at all. They recommended that the organization should focus development of the training program within the organization noting that every employee should be well trained to increase performance of the organization.

A separate study was done to study the effect development and training of employees has on Uganda's health sector by Sendawula, Kimuli, Bananuka & Muganga (2018). Employee performance is predicted by training programs and employee engagement by 44.7 percent, with employee engagement being a strong predictor of employee success. According to correlation, the results revealed that a strong relation and association exist between the stipulated training programs and employee's performance. The study concluded that in the context of healthcare workers in Uganda, training would improve service delivery. Improved service delivery is seen as a consequence of engaged healthcare workers. This study, just like the previous one, did not focus on the program design, action learning projects or coaching. This research hopes to bridge this gap.

A study in Kenya by Chelagat, Kokwaro, Onyango and Rice (2021) evaluated the role of leadership programs on the health sector and its performance in the devolved governments in the country. The main aim of the study was to identify whether or not leadership development programs have had an influence on the performance of the healthcare industry as well as the actual indicators of such a development therein. This was compared with managers in the sector that had limited training on the argument that the poor healthcare system in Kenya was

linked to poor leadership hence the case of leadership programs. The study concluded that when compared to non-trained managers, workers in the healthcare industry who have received training have a high probability and motivation of executing the projects assigned to them. In the long-term, there are positive changes in the healthcare industry that also affect the quality of health amongst the public.

2.5 Summary of the Literature Review

The table below summarises the core studies that informed the literature review. It is evident from the table that many authors report a relationship between employee engagement and leadership style. Even though the approaches taken by these studies may be different, a commonality among the studies is the fact that a leadership style or approach that listens to the employees or given them the chance to participate in the organizational matters will improve engagement levels. However, very few studies have examined the effects of leadership development programs on employee engagement. Therefore, this study will seek to fill this particular gap.

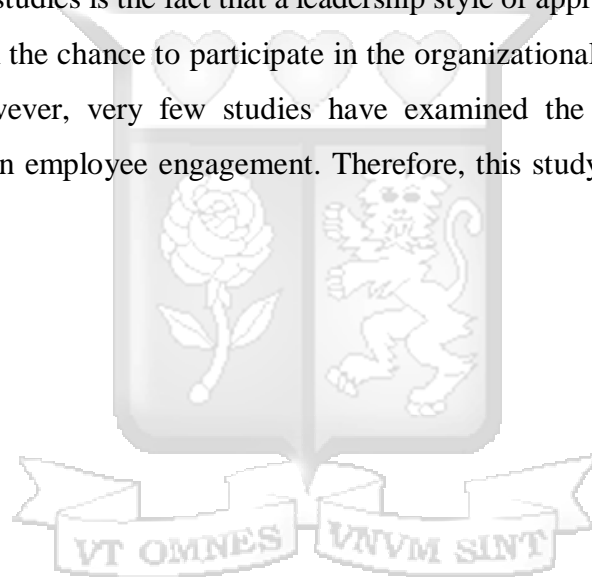


Table 2.1: Summary of Empirical Literature and Research Gaps

Author()	Objectives/Purpose	Key Findings	Research Gaps	Focus of this Study
Chelagat, Kokwaro, Onyango and Rice (2021)	evaluated the role of leadership programs on the health sector and its performance in the devolved governments in the country.	Poor leadership programs were blamed to deterioration of quality of services provided.	Methodological gap associated with use of qualitative data.	Mixed approach in examination of the influence of leadership development program on employee engagement in a learning institution.
Jain & Khurana (2017)	The effect of undergoing an extensive training through leadership development.	The study showed that leadership development programs in an organization have significant effects on employee engagement.	The study presented contextual gaps since it drew data from non-education sector.	Mixed approach in examination of the influence of leadership development program on employee engagement in a learning institution.
Kivuli et. al (2020).	Effect of team coaching on organization goals.	argue that team coaching's main purpose is to connect the modules from the program with the organizational goals	The study presented contextual gaps since it drew data from non-education sector.	Mixed approach in examination of the influence of leadership development program on employee engagement in a learning institution.
Sendawula, Kimuli, Bananuka & Muganga (2018).	Effect development and training of employees has on Uganda's health sector	Employee performance is predicted by training programs and employee engagement by 44.7 percent, with employee engagement being a strong predictor	Health sector may have different heterogenous aspects compared to education institution.	Mixed approach in examination of the influence of leadership development program on employee engagement in a learning institution.

		of employee success.	
Taruru, Keriko, Ombui, Karanja and Tirimba (2015)	The effect of coaching programs on employee performance in Nairobi County.	It was found that executive, business and individual coaching had positive and significant effect on employee performance. Results of the study indicated that coaching and mentorship positively and significantly affected employee performance in UK hotel industry in UK. Enable workers to grasp how altering individual attributes and perspectives can affect both personal and organizational processes.	The study presented contextual gaps since it drew data from non-education sector. Mixed approach in examination of the influence of leadership development program on employee engagement in a learning institution.
Neupane (2015)	The effect of coaching and mentorship on employee performance in UK hotel industry.	The study presented contextual gaps since it drew data from non-education sector. Enable workers to grasp how altering individual attributes and perspectives can affect both personal and organizational processes.	Mixed approach in examination of the influence of leadership development program on employee engagement in a learning institution. Mixed approach in examination of the influence of leadership development program on employee engagement in a learning institution.
Enslin and Schulz (2015),	Effect of training on organization success	Effect of training on organization success	Mixed approach in examination of the influence of leadership development program on employee engagement in a learning institution.

2.6 Conceptual Framework

Figure 2.1 illustrates the relationship between variables in the study. It is evident from the conceptual framework that the employee engagement and leadership development are related. The type of organizational culture being implemented at the organization is a major driver of the relationship between variables in this study. With an appropriate culture which also include the presence of organizational support, leadership development initiatives can be supported. The type of leadership style, collaborative as opposed to command and control, will also determine whether the leadership development program will improve employee engagement levels.

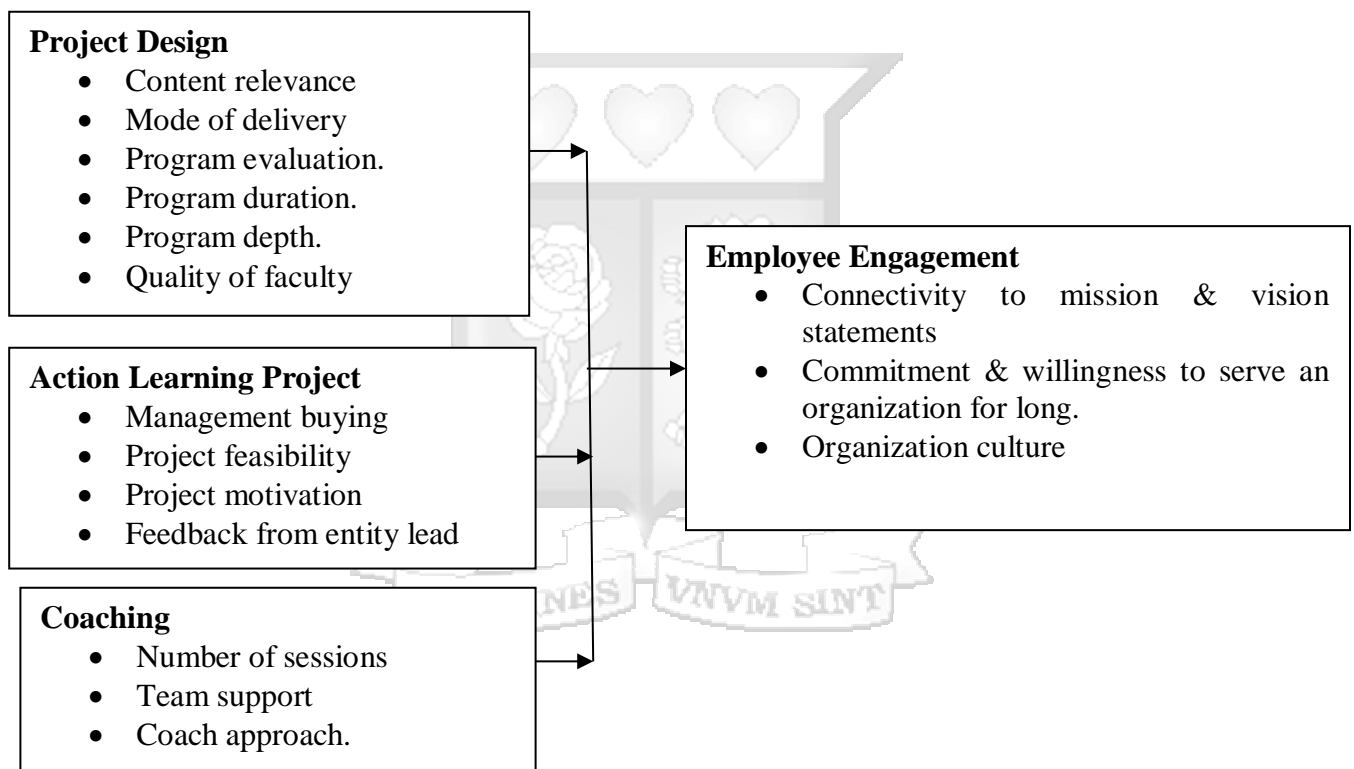


Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework (Source: Researcher, 2024).

2.7 Operationalization and Measurement of Variables

Table 2.2: Operationalization and Measurement of Variables

Variable	Definition	Measurement scale	Source
Dependent			
Employee engagement	Connectivity to the mission and vision statements The commitment and willingness to serve the organization for long Organizational culture	Likert scale	(Kahn, 1990) (Rothbard, 2001) Kerr (2004)
Independent			
Program design	Content relevance Mode of delivery Program evaluation Program duration Program depth Quality of faculty	Likert scale	(Maak & Stahl, 2011)
Action Learning Projects	Management buying Project feasibility Project motivation Feedback from entity head	Likert scale	Chelagat et. al (2021)
Coaching	Number of sessions Team supports through the sessions The coach's approach	Likert scale	Ladyshevsky and Taplin (2017) Chelagat (2020)

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This section highlights the methodology for the research, it includes research philosophy, target population from whence a sample was deduced, including the procedures for sampling, collection, and analysis of data, as well as the ethical rules followed to be observed while conducting this study.

3.2 Research Philosophy

Research philosophy focuses on the nature, origin, and the development of information. This increases the understanding and knowledge related to a concept. It is an approach that demonstrates how information could be collected, analyzed, and then make meaningful conclusions (De Vaus, 2009). Research philosophy is deemed to be a framework stipulating how data can be gathered and processed in response to research questions (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2014). It can be perceived to be the source of the methodological foundation that avails minimize variations and hastens understanding of empirical issues under examination (Sekeran & Bougie, 2013).

According to Creswell (2014), there are four different research philosophies, namely positivism, constructivism, critical realism, and pragmatism. Positivism research philosophy alludes that reality will always be stable, observable and be easily described in an objective point of view (Saunders et al., 2014). It is mostly applicable when issues under examination can be observed repetitively and notable differences avails information of elements under examination (Sekaran & Bougie, 2013). Though, applicable is social sciences it is not void of short comings since it relies on past predictions, but some may have had unmeasurable attributes. Interpretivism argues that to fully comprehend the research under interest then there is need for subjective interpretation. In this situation, the study ought to be carried out in nature settings where research implementers have no capacity to influence attributes under examination (Bryman & Bell, 2015).

The research philosophy of this study was positivism which takes a purely quantitative approach to investigating phenomena. Positivism provides a strong foundation for the research into leadership development programs and employee engagement. This philosophy prioritizes

objective, measurable data, which aligns perfectly with the approach of using questionnaires (Creswell, 2014). Questionnaires provide standardized responses that can be quantified, allowing you to statistically analyse the relationship between program participation and employee engagement. Furthermore, positivism emphasizes generalizable findings. By collecting data from a representative sample of Strathmore employees, the study has the potential to reveal insights about program effectiveness that can be applied more broadly across the university. This focus on measurable outcomes, generalizability, and hypothesis testing makes positivism a well-suited research philosophy for your investigation.

3.2 Research Design

According to De Vaus, (2009), is an outline and guideline of what and how a researcher intends to do as they evaluate the variables to the extent that data is coherent and logical. The research questions and objectives identified at the beginning are evaluated to establish a connection between them. This simplifies the process of collecting, measuring, and analysing data. This study incorporated a descriptive cross-sectional research design. A descriptive cross-sectional research design is a good option for this study since the aim is to understand employee engagement at Strathmore University and how it is related to participation in leadership development programs. This approach offers a cost-effective way to gather data from a large sample of employees at one point in time (Kothari and Guarav, 2014). This allows the researcher to capture a snapshot of current employee engagement levels and explore potential relationships with participation in leadership programs (Bell, 1993). While it cannot definitively establish cause-and-effect, it provides valuable insights for further research or informing program adjustments.

3.4 Target Population of the Study

The target population denotes the specific group to be studied within a population. The target of the study were all current managers who were participants in the LEAP program cohort 1 and 2. The program has only run two cohorts so far in 2019 and 2020. Based on information from the Strathmore Business School, the 2019 cohort had 47 managers while the 2020 cohort had 52 managers and as such the population for this study is 99 managers at Strathmore University.

3.5 Sampling Design

The study targets managers within Strathmore University. Since the sample size is manageable, the researcher used the census method to collect the data. Managers were selected from the employee grades. The managers were the total number of the managers who have taken the program is as in the table below.

Table 3.1: Sampling Framework

Cohort	Total Number
2019 Cohort	47
2020 Cohort	52
Total	99

Source: Strathmore University Human Resources

As per the above table and that the census method was utilized as below:

Table 3.2: Sample Size

Cohort	Total Number
2019 Cohort	47
2020 Cohort	52
Total	99

3.6 Data Collection Procedure

A semi-structured questionnaire was utilized for this study. According to Cooper & Schindler (2014), a questionnaire is an instrument adopted in research that comprises of structured questions intended to collect information from participants. The questionnaires used for the study will be self-reporting questionnaires administered to each manager by way of googling forms. The questions will be both open and close-ended structured and aligned to the objectives of the study to ensure that the study variables are measured, and feedback collated to explain the relationship between the variables.

The questionnaires were semi-structured with both closed ended and open-ended questions (Kothari, 2014). This encourages respondents to explain at length what they think as the questions

only act as a guide. All questionnaires were similar in nature, allowing some form of standardization. This means all respondents were presented with the same questions. The questionnaires had five sections with the first section containing demographic information questions. The second to fifth sections were like art questions on program design, action learning projects, coaching and employee engagement respectively.

Hyman and Sierra (2016) argued that a close-ended questionnaire has simple and direct questions which respondents are expected to answer. This is then analyzed by the researcher. The ability to express opinions means that critical and rational thinking amongst respondents is encouraged, to the extent that the quality of information provided is relatively high. This will then be rated using the LEAP program on employee engagement. The researcher gave an in-depth explanation of the academic reasons for undertaking the study, and the implications for the data they provide.

After clearance from Strathmore Business School and the National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI), the researcher sought authorization from the Strathmore University Human Resources Directorate. This was followed by a preliminary meeting with the research assistants to align the questionnaire roll out.

The questionnaires were administered, and responses monitored by the research assistants, with an email explaining that this research is being done for academic purposes. This ensured that the data gathered is handled well, and time managed. Screening was done to ensure the respondents are only those that have been in the LEAP program both in 2019 and 2020 cohorts.

3.7. Research Quality

3.7.1 Validity of Research Instruments

De Vellis (2016) stated that the level of appropriateness of a medium to measure, with a high level of precision, what it was intended to measure, is the validity of research instruments. The researcher may have an opportunity to revise and restructure the questionnaire to the extent that it captures the research questions and objectives of the study. The pilot study may be conducted from ten managers who have already gone through the training and are in a better position to tell the clarity of the questions and if there is any ambiguity so that it can be corrected at that point. These respondents will not participate in the main study.

3.7.2 Reliability of Research Instruments

De Vellis (2016) stated that reliability of a research instrument lies in its score on a variance test, especially when it has been administered for many times. It should be regular and consistent, and it should provide similar results, irrespective of the number of times it is used (Dikko, 2016). This study incorporated Cronbach's Alpha (α) test in determining reliability of research instrument. For this research, the suggested value of 0.7 was used as a reliability cut-off. To be accurate, the Cronbach alpha value must be at least 0.7 or greater.

3.8 Data Analysis

Data analysis was done in two distinct phases. Data was collected from the questionnaires were coded in the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software. This was done to protect confidentiality levels in respondents and the responses they give. After coding the complete questionnaires, the data was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as, measures of central tendencies (mean and standard deviation) and frequency distribution. The information was displayed diagrammatically, in the form of tables, bar charts, graphs, pie charts and variable. Additionally, data was also be interpreted in prose to ensure ease of interpretation. These descriptive statistics are useful in analyzing the variables of the study.

The analysis tool, SPSS, ensures the margin of error is minimal and increased accuracy levels. Therefore, the data a correlation analysis will be used to define the level of association of variables. This statistical tool will be further utilized to analyze the strength of the relationships between the independent and dependent variables through linear and multiple regression. Data will be presented in the next chapter in line with the objectives of the study to establish the effect of leadership development program design, learning action projects and coaching on employee engagement. Correlation and regression will also be done to establish the relationship between the variables. The following estimated regression model will be on the following form as suggested by Torres-Reyna (2007):

$$Y = B_0 + B_1X_1 + B_2X_2 + B_3X_3 + e$$

Where;

Y = Employee engagement

X_1 = Program design,

X_2 = Learning action projects,

X_3 = Coaching

B_0 = the constant (y-intercept)

B_1 = slope (regression coefficient) for variable X_1

B_2 = slope (regression coefficient) for variable X_2

B_3 = slope (regression coefficient) for variable X_3

e = Error term

3.9 Ethical Considerations

According to Masic et al. (2014), research ethics directly influence the validity and quality of data since it ensures that collection of data is one in an ethical and considerate manner. It ensures that interests of respondents are protected and there is no taking advantage of their limited knowledge (Robson, 2002). Fairness and respect for all persons should be always prioritized, ensuring that the law has been followed. This justifies why authorization has to be granted and that people of sound mind interact during the data collection process. The researcher will seek clearance from the Institutional Ethical Review Committee at Strathmore University (SU – IREC) then proceed to acquire a research permit at the National Commission of Science, Technology & Innovation.

Respondents were asked for their informed consent. This was done with the assurance that high levels of confidentiality would be followed when handling information they provide, and that it would be for academic purposes. Hence, anonymity was highly encouraged as suggested by Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2010). The following issues were observed:

Informed consent: This is important within any research process, and it involves engaging in a study after being fully informed of what is required of them during the research process. It means that a researcher has explained, at length, the research objectives to the respondents and that they know the role they play in the research study (Bulger, 2002). According to Escobedo et al. (2007), once a participant understands, then they are liberated to give consent, but they can also reject taking part in the study. The researcher will observe this by asking for consent to participate in the research.

Anonymity and Confidentiality: Anonymity is the ability to keep secrets and ensuring that any data related to the respondents that could increase the probability of being identified has been

eliminated. Issues to do with their names, ethnic or cultural backgrounds or any information considered sensitive is not revealed (Mugenda, 2003). This justifies why a researcher must affirm that they will maintain high levels of confidence. In the event that any information will be revealed to third parties, then a consent form must be signed as a confirmation that they gave permission for that. This level of openness is critical to a successful research project, and it also eliminates the probability of respondents being harmed during and after the data collection process. This means that the respondent has the right to anonymity, and this will be observed during data collection.



CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

In this section, data analysis, interpretation, presentation, and discussion of the findings is documented. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used. Descriptive statistics included measures of central tendency and dispersion as well as frequency and percentages. Further, exploratory factors analysis as carried. Inferential statistics included spearman's rank correlation and regression analysis which was preceded by diagnostic tests.

4.1.1 Response Rate

The response rate was 76%, these were 75 questionnaires that were completely filled and returned. The response rate was commendable since Kothari (2014) argues that a response rate of at least 60% in social sciences in good.

Table 4.1: Response Rate

Questionnaires	Frequency	Percentage
Issued and completely filled	75	76
Not returned	24	24
Total	99	100

4.2 Background Information

The study sought the background information of respondents, it included gender, age and number of years they had served in leadership position. Results in Table 4.2 depicts that 50.7% of those in leadership positions were female while 49.3% were male. This depicts that leadership positions in Strathmore were allocated equally amongst male and female. Regarding age, 22.7% aged between 31 to 40 years, 48% aged 41 to 50 years and 22.7% aged 50 and above years. It was important to note that there were 6.7% respondents who were in leadership position a clear depiction of elaborate succession planning strategy. An examination on the number of years the respondents had served in management depicted that 46.7% had served for 3 to 5 years while 29.3% had served

for 5 to 7 years. This indicates that there were some leaders who had served for at least years and indication of desirable levels of employee commitment.

Table 4.2: Background Information

Background Information		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	37	49.3
	Female	38	50.7
Age	21-30	5	6.7
	31-40	17	22.7
	41-50	36	48
	50 and above	17	22.7
	Years in management	<3 years	9
	3-5 years	35	46.7
	5-7 years	22	29.3
	7 years and above	9	12
Total		75	100

4.3 Descriptive Statistics on Program Design

The first objective of the study examined the effect of leadership development program design on employee engagement in Strathmore University. Through a five-point likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree, the respondents rating is Table 4.3. Results of the study depicts that 54.7% of the respondents agreed and 27% strongly agreed that the program model of leadership excellence acceleration program was response to the leadership gap. 39% strongly agreed and 34.7% agreed that the content covered in the leadership program was relevant and supported managerial assignments. 41.3% agreed and 35% strongly agreed that the institution has embraced teaching methods that allows for both physical and virtual attendance. Availability of blended approach may enhance access of the program more so amongst those who may be engaged in activities outside the campus when the program is been delivered.

Further, 71% agreed that they would increase attendance of the program if all sessions were held virtually. Thus, there is need for consideration of either full physical or virtual program delivery so as to optimize its attendance. 63% strongly agreed and 26.7% agreed that the leadership programs implementation team was carefully selected and effective on its mandate. 63% strongly agreed and 30.7% agreed the most effective mode of program delivery was case study

methodology. Thus, there is need for consideration of different case and if possible be customized to local context so as to enhance the program efficiency. 65% strongly agreed and 24.3% agreed that the content delivery of the leadership excellence acceleration program enhanced employees continuous professional training. Thus, there is need for encouragement for participation in the leadership program so as to optimize human capital development and increase odds of employee engagement. Moreover, 34.7% agreed and 28% strongly agreed that leadership acceleration program has created holistic culture of employee engagement and development. 36% agreed that the leadership program design has an evaluation mechanism that aligns it with organization objectives. Majority mean = 3.7 agreed that the leadership program is customized to respond to unique needs of respective departments and mean =4.0 agreed that the program nurtures innovation in response to unique needs of our organizations.



Table 4.3: Descriptive Statistics on Program Design

	n=75					Mean	Std. Dev
	1	2	3	4	5		
The program model for the Leadership Excellence Acceleration Program is responsive to the leadership gap	1.3	1.3	16	54.7	27	4.0	0.8
The content covered is relevant and supports me in managerial assignments		6.7	20	34.7	39	4.1	0.9
The institution has embraced teaching methods that allow for both physical and virtual attendance		4	20	41.3	35	4.1	0.8
I would attend the sessions if they were fully virtual	2.6	0	5.3	21.3	71	4.6	0.9
The faculty in the programs are carefully selected and competent in both delivery	0	2.7	8	26.7	63	4.5	0.8
The case study methodology is effective	0	1.3	5.3	30.7	63	4.6	0.7
Our content delivery enhances employees continuous professional training	0	4.1	6.8	24.3	65	4.5	0.8
Our program has created holistic culture for employee's development and engagement	2.7	16	18.7	34.7	28	3.9	1.1
Our program has evaluation mechanism that enhances achievement of our organization objectives	6.7	20	4	36	33	3.8	1.0
Our program is customized to respond to unique needs of respective departments	10.7	18.7	1.3	40.7	27	3.7	1.3
Our program nurtures innovation in response to unique needs of our organizations	1.3	1.3	17.3	60	20	4.0	0.7
Overall average						4.2	0.9

4.4 Descriptive Statistics on Action Learning Projects

The second objective examined the influence leadership development program action learning projects on employee engagement in Strathmore University. The study evaluated the level of agreement on five-point Likert scale. Results in Table 4.4. depicts that majority mean =3.9 either agreed that they are involved in deciding the topics for action learning programs or they are comfortable in procuring the leadership manual from the management. Majority mean =3.7 either agreed that the concept of the institutional improvement project has been acknowledged and

positively embraced by management at Strathmore University or they always implement the deliverables after implementation. Further, majority mean = 4.0 agreed that there is teamwork among the managers to implement the project or they have clear feedback mechanism for continuous leadership program improvement, or they have created clear communication loop amongst the program beneficiaries.

Table 4.4: Descriptive Statistics on Action Learning Projects

	n=75					Mean	Std. Dev
	1	2	3	4	5		
I am involved in deciding the topic for Action Learning Projects	4	2.7	20	42.7	30.7	3.9	1.0
I do not find it difficult to get a buy in from the management	1.3	5.3	24	41.3	28	3.9	0.9
The concept of the institutional improvement project has been acknowledged and positively embraced by management at Strathmore University	2.7	20	14.7	34.7	28	3.7	1.2
There is teamwork among the managers to implement the projects	4	8	12	41.3	34.7	4.0	1.1
We implement the projects after presentations	8	8	6.7	57.3	20	3.7	1.1
We have clear feedback mechanism for continuous leadership program improvement	5.3	8	4	42.7	40	4.0	1.1
We have clear tools for evaluation of the quality of leadership program	8	10.7	2.7	70.7	8	3.6	1.1
We have clear objectives and expected outcomes for the leadership program	4	12	17.3	54.7	12	3.6	1.0
We continuously evaluate the achievement of program expected outcomes	0	5.3	5.3	30.7	58.7	4.4	0.8
We have clear communication loop amongst those who have participated in the program	4	8	13.3	32	42.7	4.0	1.1
Overall average						3.9	1.0

4.5 Descriptive Statistics on Coaching

The third objective of the study examined the influence of coaching on employee engagement in Strathmore university. Through five-point likert respondents rating was examined as tabulated in

Table 4.5. The scale ranged from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Majority 70.7% agreed and 8% strongly agreed that coaching has been beneficial while engaging in the leadership development project. 70.7% agreed and 6.7% strongly disagreed that they always look forward to the coaching sessions. 72% agreed that their coach's approach in the sessions has made it interesting for them to participate. 64% agreed that they find the number of coaching sessions sufficient for the leadership acceleration program. 68% agreed that coaching is an integrated program that enhances employee engagement.

Further, majority mean = 3.8 agreed that coaching outcomes are linked to clarity of long-term goals with coachee. Majority mean = 3.7 agreed that coaching aids participants in expression of their action plans. Moreover, mean = 4.3 agreed that coaching aids in setting of development goals and objectives and mean = 4.2 agreed that coaching aids in identification of development needs within their organization. Furthermore, majority mean = 3.6 agreed that coaching aids participants in identification of their strengths and weakness.

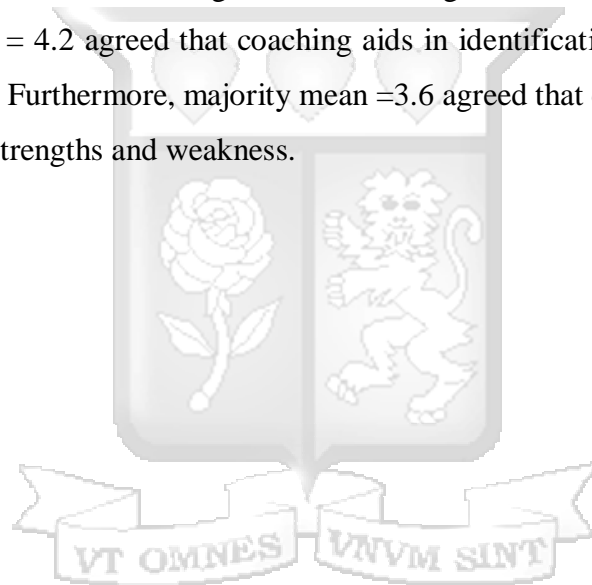


Table 4.5: Descriptive Statistics on Coaching

	n=75					Mean	Std. Dev
	1	2	3	4	5		
Coaching has been beneficial while engaging in the projects.	9.3	5.3	6.7	70.7	8	3.6	1.0
I always look forward to the coaching sessions	6.7	5.3	5.3	70.7	12	3.8	1.0
The coach's approach in the sessions has made it interesting for us to participate	9.3	6.7	6.7	72	5.3	3.6	1.0
I find the number of coaching sessions sufficient for the program	11	6.7	5.3	64	13.3	3.6	1.1
Coaching is an integrated program to enhance employee's engagement	4	5.3	4	68	18.7	3.9	0.9
Coaching outcomes are linked to clarity of long-term goals with coachee	6.7	5.3	6.7	64	17.3	3.8	1.0
Coaching aids participants in expression of their action plans	11	6.7	2.7	65.3	14.7	3.7	1.1
Coaching aids participants in identification of their strengths and weaknesses	6.7	5.3	18.7	61.3	8	3.6	1.0
Coaching aids in setting of development goals and objectives	1.3	1.3	5.3	49.3	42.7	4.3	0.8
Coaching aids in identification of development needs within an organization	0	8	8	40	44	4.2	0.9
Overall average						3.8	1.0

4.6 Descriptive Statistics on Employee Engagement

Descriptive statistics on employee engagement in Table 4.6 depicts that 46.7% agreed and 37.3% strongly agreed that their employer supports career advancement and development and 46.7% strongly agreed that leadership program has created a higher job autonomy. Majority 57.3% agreed and 22.7% strongly agreed that their employer recognizes and rewards good job performance. 56% agreed and 29.3% strongly agreed that courtesy of the leadership employees are equipped with skills that would aid them in responding to sensitive issues affecting them in the work place.

Majority mean = 3.6 agreed that they are highly recognized due to their innovations and initiatives in their workplace. Majority mean = 3.8 either agreed that their management is reliable and trustworthy or its open to new ideas. Further, majority mean = 4.1 agreed that employees are encouraged to openly share ideas in the workplace or mean = 4.2 employees enjoy positive working atmosphere.

Table 4.6: Descriptive Statistics on Employee Engagement

	n=75					Mean	Std. Dev
	1	2	3	4	5		
Our employer supports career advancement and development	6.7	2.7	6.7	46.7	37.3	4.1	1.1
Leadership program has created a higher of job autonomy	6.7	8	8	30.7	46.7	4.0	1.2
Our employer recognizes and rewards good job performance	4	10.7	5.3	57.3	22.7	3.8	1.0
Employees can openly address sensitive issues affecting them in the workplace	6.7	4	4	56	29.3	4.0	1.1
Initiatives and innovations are highly recognized in our workplace	8	8	6.7	66.7	10.7	3.6	1.0
Our management is reliable and trustworthy	5.3	6.7	5.3	66.7	16	3.8	1.0
Our management is open to new ideas	8	4	6.7	58.7	22.7	3.8	1.1
Employees are encouraged to openly share ideas in the workplace	5.3	5.3	6.7	40	42.7	4.1	1.1
Our employees enjoy positive working atmosphere	2.7	1.3	4	62.7	29.3	4.2	0.8
Overall average						3.9	1.0

4.7 Correlation Analysis

Spearman's rank correlation coefficient was adopted to examine the strength of the influence of program delivery, action leadership program and coaching on employee engagement in Strathmore University. Results of the study in Table 4.7 depicts that there is a positive significant effect of program delivery on employee engagement ($\rho = 0.483$, p value < 0.05). Secondly, there was a positive influence of action leadership program on employee engagement ($\rho = 0.571$, p value < 0.05). Further, there was a positive influence of coaching on employee engagement ($\rho = 0.559$, p value < 0.05). Since none of the predictor variables had correlation coefficient greater than 0.7 against each other then there were lower odds of multicollinearity.

Table 4.7: Correlation Analysis

		Employee Engagement	Program Delivery	Action Leadership Program	Coaching
Employee Engagement Program Delivery	Correlation Coefficient	1			
	Correlation Coefficient	.483**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	.		
	N	75	75		
Action Leadership Program	Correlation Coefficient	.571**	.451**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	.	
	N	75	75	75	
	Correlation Coefficient	.559**	.338**	.547**	1
Coaching	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.003	0.000	.
	N	75	75	75	75

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

4.8 Diagnostic Tests

Before regression modelling diagnostic tests were carried out, they included normality test of the error term, linearity test, multicollinearity and heteroskedasticity.

4.8.1 Normality Test

Pictorial presentation in Figure 4.1 depicts that the error term was normally distributed since it has a mean zero and standard deviation of 1.

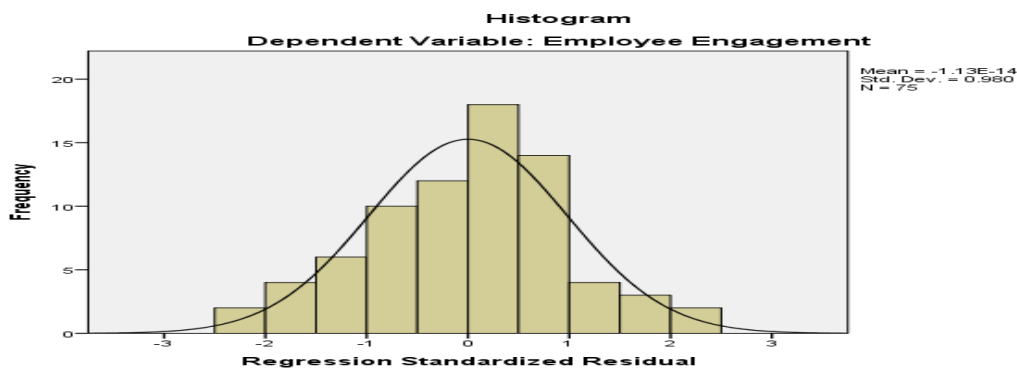


Figure 4.1: Normality Test

4.8.2 Multicollinearity

Multicollinearity was carried out to examine the strength of the relationship amongst independent variables. Results in Table 4.8 has the highest VIF of 2.874 which was less than 5. Hence, it can be concluded that there was no multicollinearity amongst the predictors.

Table 4.8: Multicollinearity

	Collinearity Statistics	
	Tolerance	VIF
Program Delivery	0.476	2.1
Action Leadership Program	0.348	2.874
Coaching	0.416	2.401

4.8.3 Heteroskedasticity

Heteroskedasticity was carried out to examine uniformity of variance of the error term. Results in Table 4.9 has a chi square of 10.47 with p value < 0.05. Thus, we reject the null hypothesis for homoscedasticity and conclude that the variance of the error term was not uniform. Hence, regression model with robust standard errors was fitted.

Table 4.9: Heteroskedasticity

Test	Chi Square	P value
Breusch-Pagan	10.47	0.0012

4.8.4 Linearity Test

Linearity test was examined using scatter matrix graph as shown in Figure 4.2 pictorial presentation in Figure 4.2 depicts that program delivery, action leadership program and coaching had positive effect on employee engagement respectively.

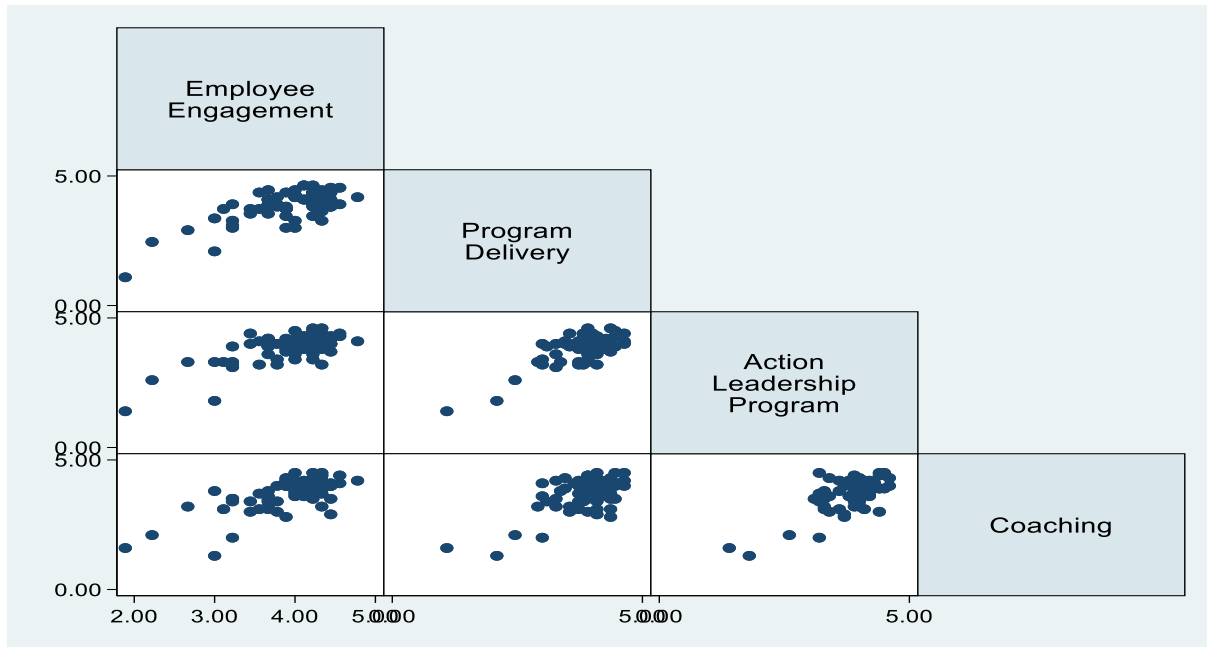


Figure 4.2: Linearity Test

4.9 Regression Analysis

Multiple regression analysis was applied to examine the influence of leadership development program delivery, action leadership program and coaching on employee engagement.

4.9.1 Model Summary

Model summary in Table 4.10 has an R squared of 0.658 that indicates that 65.8% of changes in employee engagement can be accounted for by coaching, program delivery and action leadership program while the remaining percentage is associated with other attributes excluded in the model.

Table 4.10: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.811a	0.658	0.644	0.31534

a Predictors: (Constant), Coaching, Program Delivery, Action Leadership Program

b Dependent Variable: Employee Engagement

4.9.2 Analysis of Variance

Analysis of variance results in Table 4.11 has an F statistic of 45.544, p value of 0.000. This depicts that coaching, program delivery and action leadership has statistically joint significant effect on employee engagement and linear regression analysis was appropriate for analysis.

Table 4.11: Analysis of Variance

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	13.586	3	4.529	45.544	.000b
	Residual	7.06	71	0.099		
	Total	20.646	74			

a Dependent Variable: Employee Engagement

b Predictors: (Constant), Coaching, Program Delivery, Action Leadership Program

4.9.3 Regression Coefficients

Regression coefficients depicts that there was a positive statistically significant influence of leadership program delivery on employee engagement ($\beta = 0.272$, $t = 3.051$, $p \text{ value} < 0.05$). This indicates that unit increase in program delivery while holding constant action leadership program and coaching increases employee engagement by 0.272 units. Secondly, there was a positive and statistically significant influence of action leadership program on employee engagement ($\beta = 0.326$, $t = 2.931$, $p \text{ value} < 0.05$). This indicates that unit increase in action leadership program while holding constant program delivery and coaching increases employee engagement by 0.326 units. Thirdly, there was a positive statistically significant influence of coaching on employee engagement ($\beta = 0.216$, $t = 2.368$, $p \text{ value} < 0.05$). This indicates that unit increase in coaching while holding constant action leadership program and program increases employee engagement by 0.216 units in Strathmore University.

Table 4.12: Regression Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	0.84	0.269		3.124	0.003
	Program Delivery Action Leadership Program	0.272	0.089	0.307	3.051	0.003
	Coaching	0.326	0.111	0.345	2.931	0.005
		0.216	0.091	0.255	2.368	0.021

a Dependent Variable: Employee Engagement



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter summary of major findings, discussion, conclusion, recommendations, suggestions of further studies and limitations of the study.

5.2 Summary of Findings

The foundation of the current study was anchored on existing conceptual, methodological, empirical, and contextual gaps. From existing literature studies have methodological gaps which were anchored on adoption of different research design, use of different data types and adoption of different data analysis techniques. Further, some studies applied qualitative or quantitative research design. Further, conceptual, and contextual gaps arose adoption of different independent variables and attributes while contextual gaps hailed from drawing of data from different sources. The study was based on three component theory of engagement and transaction leadership theory. The study applied descriptive research design and collected primary data through administration of questionnaires that registered 76% response rate.

The first objective of the study aimed at examining the influence of leadership development program design on employee engagement at Strathmore University. The study found that 54.7% of the respondents agreed that the program model of leadership excellence acceleration program was response to the leadership gap. 39% strongly agreed that the content covered in the leadership program was relevant and supported managerial assignments. 41.3% agreed that the institution has embraced teaching methods that allows for both physical and virtual attendance. Availability of blended approach may enhance access of the program more so amongst those who may be engaged in activities outside the campus when the program is been delivered. Further, correlation analysis depicted that there was a positive statistically significant influence of leadership development program design on employee engagement at Strathmore University.

The second objective of the study determined the influence of action learning projects in the leadership excellence acceleration program on engagement of employees at Strathmore University. Results of the study revealed that majority agreed that they are involved in deciding the topics for

action learning programs are comfortable in procuring leadership manual from management. They agreed that their management has agreed with the concept of institutional improvement project that has been embraced positively by Strathmore University management. Correlation and regression analysis revealed that there was a positive statistically significant influence of action learning projects in the leadership excellence acceleration program on engagement of employees at Strathmore University.

The third objective of the study evaluated the influence of integration of coaching in the leadership excellence acceleration program on employee engagement in Strathmore University. Results of the study depicted that majority agreed that coaching has been beneficial while engaging in the leadership development project. Further, majority 71% agreed that they always look forward to coaching sessions. Where majority agreed that their coach's approach in the sessions has made it interesting for them to participate. 68% agreed that coaching is an integrated program that enhances employee engagement. Correlation and regression analysis indicated that there was a positive and statistically significant influence of integration of coaching in the leadership excellence acceleration program on employee engagement in Strathmore University.

5.3 Discussion

5.3.1 Program Design and Employee Engagement

The first objective of the study examined the influence of leadership development program design on employee engagement at Strathmore University. Results of the study indicated that there was a positive statistically significant influence of leadership development program design on employee engagement at Strathmore University. The study findings concur with Shuck and Herd (2012) noted that the type of leadership strongly affects the engagement levels of the employees especially when employees are included in the equation. In another study Papalexandris & Galanaki (2009) examined the effect leadership has on engagement of employees. This was done based on the perspective of entrepreneurs and professional company CEOs. The study noted that the most influential leadership dimensions were being a good leader/mentor, intellectual stimulation, integrity, self-confidence, and articulating vision. These leadership attributes were found to significantly affect employee engagement especially intellectual stimulation through leadership development programs. The existence of a relationship between employee engagement and

leadership was also supported by Carasco-Saul, Kim & Kim (2015) and Popli & Rizvi (2016) who showed that the leadership style being implemented in a particular context directly affects employee engagement.

A trend in most of the studies examined in this review is the agreement that the type of leadership style or strategy being implemented in an organization directly affects the intensity of engagement among the workers. Research by Roupnel, Rinfre and Grenier (2019) examined leadership development programs or interventions that have been regarded as critical in the development of strong leadership knowledge and attributes. According to the authors, coaching, mentoring, and action learning are among the leadership programs that are effective in developing successful leaders. As noted by Blomme, Kodden, and Beasley-Suffolk (2015), very little study conducted to determine the effects of leadership development programs on the employee engagement.

5.3.2 Action Learning Project and Employee Engagement

The second objective of the study determined the influence of action learning projects in the leadership excellence acceleration program on engagement of employees at Strathmore University. The study found that there was a positive statistically significant influence of action learning projects in the leadership excellence acceleration program on engagement of employees at Strathmore University. The study findings agree with Pulakos et al. (2015), is important for organizations since it improves teamwork. This is since most experiential learning needs people to work in groups. According to Smith (2016), putting a focus on cooperation and teamwork helps to boost employee engagement. Because the majority of employees do not work alone and must interact with others to achieve their objectives, experiential learning enables workers to work well with others and so has a good impact on employee engagement (Leal-Rodriguez & AlbortMorant, 2019). In a study, Leal-Rodriguez and Albort-Morant (2019) noted that Action Learning Projects are more effective in businesses since they result in higher employee engagement and retention than traditional learning approaches.

A large amount of literature has been published to identify the connection between engaging employees and leadership within an organization. For instance, the research conducted by Shuck and Herd (2012) intended to explore the link between leadership theories and employee engagement. The study which as a review noted that the type of leadership strongly affects the

engagement levels of the employees especially when employees are included in the equation. In another study Papalexandris and Galanaki (2009) examined the effect leadership has on engagement of employees. This was done based on the perspective of entrepreneurs and professional company CEOs. The study noted that the most influential leadership dimensions were being a good leader/mentor, intellectual stimulation, integrity, self-confidence, and articulating vision. These leadership attributes were found to significantly affect employee engagement especially intellectual stimulation through leadership development programs. The existence of a relationship between employee engagement and leadership was also supported by Carasco-Saul, Kim and Kim (2015) and Popli and Rizvi (2016) who showed that the leadership style being implemented in a particular context directly affects employee engagement.

5.3.3 Coaching and Employee Engagement

The third objective of the study evaluated the influence of integration of coaching in the leadership excellence acceleration program on employee engagement in Strathmore University. Results of the study indicated that there was a positive statistically significant influence of coaching in the leadership excellence acceleration program on employee engagement in Strathmore University. The study found that Hassan and Ahmed (2020) planning for succession was based on factors such as career advancement, job stability, work environment, rewards, and assistance from the supervisor. Further, Njeri, Ngugi and Mathenge (2019) indicated that human resources planning, career development and selection procedures positive affected organization performance in faith-based organizations. Zafar and Akhtar (2020) showed that succession planning in the public and private sectors differed significantly. In Pakistan's governmental and commercial sectors, succession planning has a substantial impact on the expansion of organizations.

5.4 Conclusion

From the foregoing findings the following conclusions can be drawn. Leadership development program design had an influence on employee engagement in Strathmore University. This depicts that leadership development program content relevance, model of delivery, program evaluation, program duration, program depth and quality of faculty positive change positively increases odds of employee engagement in Strathmore University. Hence, there is need for adoption of strategies that would enhance leadership program design so as to enhance connectivity with vision and

mission of an organization and increase willingness and commitment to serve in Strathmore for long.

Secondly, there was a positive statistically significant influence of action learning projects in the leadership excellence acceleration program on engagement of employees at Strathmore University. Thus, it can be concluded that management buying, project feasibility, project motivation and feedback from entity lead positive changes increased the odds for connectivity with organization vision and mission and enhanced willingness and commitment to serve in Strathmore University and aligned itself with organization culture.

Thirdly, there was a positive statistically significant influence of integration of coaching in the leadership excellence acceleration program on employee engagement in Strathmore University. Thus, it can be concluded that positive changes in number of coaching sessions, enhanced team support and customized coach approach enhanced connectivity with organization vision and mission and increased odds of willingness and commitment to service in Strathmore University and compliance with its organization culture.

5.5 Recommendations

5.4.1 Policy Recommendations

Since there was a positive significant influence of leadership development program design on employee engagement in Strathmore University. Then there is need for adoption of talent management strategies that would integrate the leadership development program in career management and succession planning. There is need for customizing leadership development initiatives to respond to heterogenous needs at different levels of an organization since leadership needs may not be homogeneous in different levels of an organization leadership. Further, those involved in the implementation of the leadership development program should devise measures aimed at assessing effectiveness and relevance of the program amongst its participants. Seeking feedback amongst program participants would enable customization and diversification of the program in response to goals and needs of respective participants.

5.4.2 Managerial Recommendations

Secondly, action learning excellence program has positive influence on employee engagement in Strathmore University. Thus, it can be recommended that measures should be taken to integrate hand on and experimental approach in the curriculum so as to enable it to optimize its value contribution amongst its participants. Program promoters should sensitize on the need for diversity in the action learning team through inclusion of heterogenous functions drawn from different departments and faculties so to nurture cross functional teamwork, enhances learning and fostering of employee dynamism in response to organization needs. Moreover, program implementers should develop a culture of continuous monitoring and evaluation so as to enable metamorphosis of the leadership program in response to organization best practices and emerging leadership trends. Continuous program improvement would nurture participants self-evaluation, sharing experiences and sharing insights that would be of value in subsequent tasks.

Positive statistically significant influence of integration of coaching in the leadership excellence acceleration program on employee engagement in Strathmore University. Thus, there is need for evaluation and updating coaching performance and their training program. This would eradicate likelihood of overreliance on coaching approaches that may not be responding to unique needs of the target groups. Human resources department in Strathmore University ought to broaden coaching culture among different employees as per their level of management hierarchy. There is need for establishment of initiatives that creates leadership empowerment, team spirit and cohesion and creation of communication platform that would nurture conflict management and resolutions. Further, there is need for agreement on measures and strategies that would nurture confidentiality and trust during the implementation of coaching program. Moreover, coachee and coach ought to embrace participatory approach while setting goals and executing performance reviews. This would enhance sense of belonging and increase odds of employee engagement.

5.4.3 Theoretical Contributions

Management can also encourage open, collaborative, and participatory management methods that foster individual respect and trust, as well as the development of talent and innovation. Several studies have looked at how to create an organizational atmosphere and arrangement that promotes engagement of employee and as such, creativity. They stressed it is important to consider the firm's

atmosphere and organization that are best suited to the development of imagination (Georgiades, 2015). Firms could also focus on maintaining functional communication, recognizing, and rewarding unique performance, enhance the workplace flexibility in terms of working hours, and eliminate any form of autonomy that could trigger boredom and this, reduce employees from identifying professional growth opportunities (Hill & Levenhagen, 1995).

Human resource managers have gained interested in understanding the role engaging employees plays within an organization (Alias et al., 2016). Employee engagement has attracted the attention of leaders within the past three decades (Kahn, 1990; Rothbard, 2001). This has become essential as organizations want to hire, create commitment, and retain talent. This aspect of creating commitment among the talent is central to employee engagement. When evaluating the potential benefits that an organization gains from engaging employees, it is important to consider whether or not democratic organizational decisions will increase the comparative and competitive edge it will have compared to competition. According to Kerr (2004), there are more benefits and advantages that a firm is likely to generate if it equips employees with creative and innovative language. The justification for this is that such individuals will independently think of new ideas that would be implemented in the organization.

5.5 Limitations of the Study

The study was not void of limitations such as sample size; the study was limited to employees of Strathmore University and who has benefited from the leadership program. This may limitations on generalizability of the current findings in other sectors or institutions since they may be having heterogeneous approach. The current study participants may have exposed the study to subjective selection bias since the results are not true representative of all employees at Strathmore university but limited to those who have undertaken leadership development program. The findings may be challenges by self-reported data since the respondents may have limited their responses to socially desirable aspects instead of the true reflection on the influence of leadership development program on employee engagement. Further, participants may have different needs and may demand for different implementation mantra thus there are lower odds of having homogenous coaching approach this may lead to attainment of heterogenous outcomes amongst respondents.

Since the current study relied on primary data there is need for longitudinal study so as to elucidate the impact of leadership development program over a period of time. The current study was limited to quantitative data subsequent studies may consider drawing data from secondary sources through document content analysis so as to evaluate periodical influence of leadership development program on employee engagement. There is need for consideration of different conceptualization approaches for instance introduction of moderating or mediating variables and comparative approaches amongst different groups that may have undertaken leadership development programs in different time frames.



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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Questionnaire

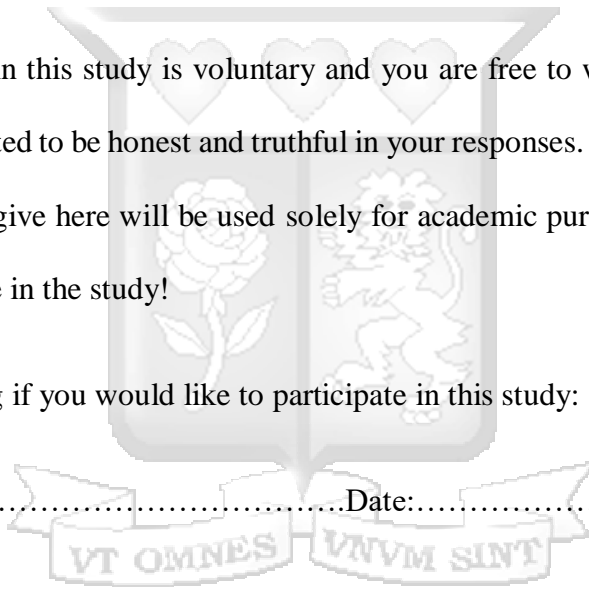
Dear Respondent,

The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect data on the topic “**Influence of Leadership Development Programs on Employee Engagement: A Case of Strathmore University Business School**” You have been selected as one of the respondents and, therefore, requested to take part in the survey.

Remember participation in this study is voluntary and you are free to withdraw any time during the study. You are requested to be honest and truthful in your responses. I would like to assure you that the information you give here will be used solely for academic purposes. Thanks in advance for agreeing to participate in the study!

Please indicate by signing if you would like to participate in this study:

Signature.....Date:.....



Instructions:

Please provide answers in the spaces provided.

PART A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

1. What is your gender? Kindly tick the appropriate box.

i. Male ()

ii. Female ()

2. What is your age?

a) 21-30 []

b) 31-40. []

c) 41-50 []

d) 50 and above []

3. Please indicate the school you work for?

.....
.....

4. What is your department?

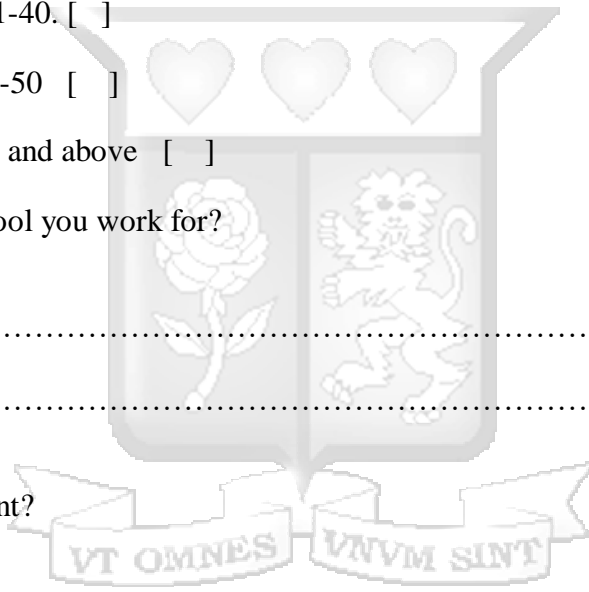
.....
.....
.....

5. For how long have you been a Manager in Strathmore University?

i. <3 years

ii. 3-5 years

iii. 5-7 years



iv. 7 years and above

6. What is your level of education?

- i. Diploma
- ii. Undergraduate
- iii. Masters
- iv. PhD

PART B: PROGRAM DESIGN

The aim of this section is to assess the contribution of the Leadership Excellence Acceleration Program design on employee engagement at Strathmore University. Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with the statement on your left. Kindly use numbers 1-5. 1- Strongly disagree, 2- Disagree, 3-Neutral, 4- Agree, & 5-Strongly agree

	1	2	3	4	5
The program model for the Leadership Excellence Acceleration Program is responsive to the leadership gap					
The content covered is relevant and supports me in managerial assignments					
The institution has embraced teaching methods that allow for both physical and virtual attendance					
I would attend the sessions if they were fully virtual					
The faculty in the programs are carefully selected and competent in both delivery					
The case study methodology is effective					
Our content delivery enhances employees continuous professional training					
Our program has created holistic culture for employee’s development and engagement					
Our program has evaluation mechanism that enhances achievement of our organization objectives					
Our program is customized to respond to unique needs of respective departments					
Our program nurtures innovation in response to unique needs of our organizations					

PART C: ACTION LEARNING PROJECTS

12. Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with the statement on your left. Kindly use numbers 1-5. 1- Strongly disagree, 2- Disagree, 3-Neutral, 4- Agree, & 5-Strongly agree

	1	2	3	4	5
I am involved in deciding the topic for Action Learning Projects					
I do not find it difficult to get a buy in from the management					
The concept of the institutional improvement project has been acknowledged and positively embraced by management at Strathmore University					
There is teamwork among the managers to implement the projects					
We implement the projects after presentations					
We have clear feedback mechanism for continuous leadership program improvement					
We have clear tools for evaluation of the quality of leadership program					
We have clear objectives and expected outcomes for the leadership program					
We continuously evaluate the achievement of program expected outcomes					
We have clear communication loop amongst those who have participated in the program					

PART D: COACHING

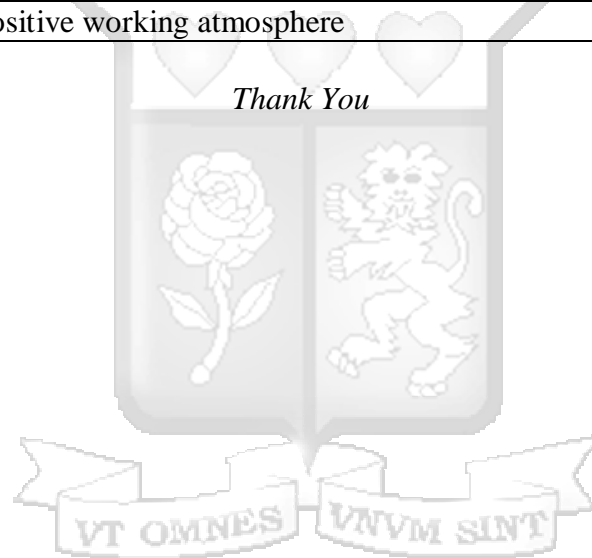
15. The aim of this section is to assess the role of integration of Coaching in the Leadership Excellence Acceleration Program on employee engagement in Strathmore University. Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with the statement on your left. Kindly use numbers 1-5. 1- Strongly disagree, 2- Disagree, 3-Neutral, 4- Agree, & 5-Strongly agree

	1	2	3	4	5
Coaching has been beneficial while engaging in the projects.					
I always look forward to the coaching sessions					
The coach’s approach in the sessions has made it interesting for us to participate					
I find the number of coaching sessions sufficient for the program					
Coaching is an integrated program to enhance employee’s engagement					
Coaching outcomes are linked to clarity of long-term goals with coachee					
Coaching aids participants in expression of their action plans					
Coaching aids participants in identification of their strengths and weaknesses					
Coaching aids in setting of development goals and objectives					
Coaching aids in identification of development needs within an organization					

PART E: EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with the statement on your left on employee engagement in Strathmore University. Kindly use numbers 1-5. 1- Strongly disagree, 2- Disagree, 3-Neutral, 4- Agree, & 5-Strongly agree

	1	2	3	4	5
Our employer supports career advancement and development					
Leadership program has created a higher of job autonomy					
Our employer recognizes and rewards good job performance					
Employees can openly address sensitive issues affecting them in the workplace					
Initiatives and innovations are highly recognized in our workplace					
Our management is reliable and trustworthy					
Our management is open to new ideas					
Employees are encouraged to openly share ideas in the workplace					
Our employees enjoy positive working atmosphere					



Appendix 2: Ethics Approval Letter



16th March 2023

Ms Akoth Emily,
akothe81@gmail.com

Dear Ms Akoth,

RE: The Influence of Leadership Development Programs on Employee Engagement: A Case of Strathmore University Business School

This is to inform you that SU-ISERC has reviewed and **approved** your above **SU- master's** research proposal. Your application reference number is **SU-ISERC1570/23**. The approval period is from **16th March 2023 to 15th March 2024**.

This approval is subject to compliance with the following requirements:

- i. Only approved documents including (informed consents, study instruments, and MTA) will be used
- ii. All changes including (amendments, deviations, and violations) are submitted for review and approval by SU-ISERC.
- iii. Death and life-threatening problems and serious adverse events or unexpected adverse events whether related or unrelated to the study must be reported to SU-ISERC within 48 hours of notification
- iv. Any changes, anticipated or otherwise, that may increase the risks or affect the safety or welfare of study participants and others or affect the integrity of the research must be reported to SU-ISERC within 48 hours
- v. Clearance for the export of biological specimens must be obtained from relevant institutions.
- vi. Submission of a request for renewal of approval at least 60 days prior to the expiry of the approval period. Attach a comprehensive progress report to support the renewal.
- vii. Submission of an executive summary report within 90 days of completion of the study to SU-ISERC.

Before commencing your study, you will be expected to obtain a research license from National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI) <https://research-portal.nacosti.go.ke/> and obtain other clearances needed.

Yours sincerely,

for: **Dr Ben Ngoye,**
Secretary; SU-ISERC

Cc: Mr Ambrose Rachier,
Chairperson; SU-ISERC



Ole Sangale Rd, Madaraka Estate. PO Box 59857-00200, Nairobi, Kenya. Tel +254 (0)703 034000
Email admissions@strathmore.edu www.strathmore.edu

Appendix 3: NACOSTI Permit

Ref No: **369198**

RESEARCH LICENSE



This is to Certify that Ms., Emily Akoth of Strathmore University, has been licensed to conduct research as per the provision of the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 (Rev.2014) in Nairobi on the topic: The Influence of Leadership Development Programs on Employee Engagement: A Case of Strathmore University Business School for the period ending : 05/April/2024.

License No: **NACOSTI/P/23/24684**

369198
Applicant Identification Number

Walter Mwangi
Director General
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

Verification QR Code



NOTE: This is a computer generated License. To verify the authenticity of this document, Scan the QR Code using QR scanner application.

See overleaf for conditions

THE SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION ACT, 2013 (Rev. 2014)
Legal Notice No. 108: The Science, Technology and Innovation (Research Licensing) Regulations, 2014

The National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation, hereafter referred to as the Commission, was established under the Science, Technology and Innovation Act 2013 (Revised 2014) herein after referred to as the Act. The objective of the Commission shall be to regulate and assure quality in the science, technology and innovation sector and advise the Government in matters related thereto.

CONDITIONS OF THE RESEARCH LICENSE

1. The License is granted subject to provisions of the Constitution of Kenya, the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, and other relevant laws, policies and regulations. Accordingly, the licensee shall adhere to such procedures, standards, code of ethics and guidelines as may be prescribed by regulations made under the Act, or prescribed by provisions of International treaties of which Kenya is a signatory to
2. The research and its related activities as well as outcomes shall be beneficial to the country and shall not in any way;
 - i. Endanger national security
 - ii. Adversely affect the lives of Kenyans
 - iii. Be in contravention of Kenya's international obligations including Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO), Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN).
 - iv. Result in exploitation of intellectual property rights of communities in Kenya
 - v. Adversely affect the environment
 - vi. Adversely affect the rights of communities
 - vii. Endanger public safety and national cohesion
 - viii. Plagiarize someone else's work
3. The License is valid for the proposed research, location and specified period.
4. The license any rights thereunder are non-transferable
5. The Commission reserves the right to cancel the research at any time during the research period if in the opinion of the Commission the research is not implemented in conformity with the provisions of the Act or any other written law.
6. The Licensee shall inform the relevant County Director of Education, County Commissioner and County Governor before commencement of the research.
7. Excavation, filming, movement, and collection of specimens are subject to further necessary clearance from relevant Government Agencies.
8. The License does not give authority to transfer research materials.
9. The Commission may monitor and evaluate the licensed research project for the purpose of assessing and evaluating compliance with the conditions of the License.
10. The Licensee shall submit one hard copy, and upload a soft copy of their final report (thesis) onto a platform designated by the Commission within one year of completion of the research.
11. The Commission reserves the right to modify the conditions of the License including cancellation without prior notice.
12. Research, findings and information regarding research systems shall be stored or disseminated, utilized or applied in such a manner as may be prescribed by the Commission from time to time.
13. The Licensee shall disclose to the Commission, the relevant Institutional Scientific and Ethical Review Committee, and the relevant national agencies any inventions and discoveries that are of National strategic importance.
14. The Commission shall have powers to acquire from any person the right in, or to, any scientific innovation, invention or patent of strategic importance to the country.
15. Relevant Institutional Scientific and Ethical Review Committee shall monitor and evaluate the research periodically, and make a report of its findings to the Commission for necessary action.

National Commission for Science, Technology and
Innovation(NACOSTI),
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