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*Review Article*

# The influence of leadership styles on employees performance at Dick Whittington shoes (Pty) Ltd in Pietermaritzburg, Kwazulu-Natal

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## Abstract

Organisations that want to improve performance and productivity can do so through leveraging their most valuable resource, its people. In order to obtain superior performance from human resources, companies have to offer training and development opportunities to employees. The significance of this study is to inform organisations about the important of leadership styles, employee's performance and about the skills shortage in the footwear industry in South Africa. The core problem this study seeks to address is the important of leadership styles on employee's performance. The mixed research method was employed. The purposive sampling was used to select the participants from Dick Whittington Shoes (Pty) Ltd questionnaires, focus group interviews and document reviews were used to gather data. The findings of the study show that the human resource manager is facing a serious challenge from employees, which is a higher rate of absenteeism this hamper the performance of the organisation. The study found that the majority of employees lack skills. In addition, the footwear industry find it difficult to find employees with relevant skills. The organisation will re-employ employees that have taken early retirement on the contract bases precisely because they find it hard to find incumbent with skills. The study recommended the need for a proper framework on continuous training and development of employees in the footwear industry in South Africa. Secondly, the public-private partnership with universities to bridge the skills gap and improve the gross domestic product in South Africa.

**Keywords:** Employee performance, Organisational performance, Training and development, Skills shortage, Management, Policy developers

## INTRODUCTION

Training and development of employees are important to enhance skills and abilities to perform duties effectively. Majoni (2014), pointed out that training and development enhance employee performance. Tereta & Ngirande (2014), affirm that training and development increase the performance of an organisation. In addition, the performance of an organisation rests on the quality and quantity of training they provide to employees. The shortage of skills in South Africa remains a challenge. In addition, every sector in the economy has skills shortages, hence training and development require innovative ways to minimize the impact on organisation performance.

Companies like Dick Whittington Shoes (Pty) Ltd have training and development programmes to bridge the skills gap. The incumbents with the scarce skills that have just left the shores of institutions of higher education come without the prerequisite of work experience, for example, artisan skills. In the footwear industry, it is difficult to find incumbents with the necessary skills, this is due to institutions of higher education not providing in this sector (Maponga, 2015).

## RESEARCH CONTEXT: BACKGROUND

The higher rate of unemployment in South Africa remains a crisis across nine provinces. The root cause is due to the fact that the current labor force is unskilled. The labor

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market does not have proper training, which is required by the manufacturing industry. Training of labor on vital skills like the shoemaker remains a challenge. Footwear industries in South Africa import most of the shoe design and most retailers are selling imported shoes. Furthermore, companies in the footwear industry in South Africa are faced with competition from countries like China, Italy, and the USA. South African companies find themselves outsourcing human resources and equipment to improve productivity in the footwear industry. In addition, employee's performance is vital on the organisational performance poor mastery of some responsibilities, resulting in producing reject products and dismissal of employees due to the fact that they lack skills. After bringing in experts from the subcontinent to help in skills development, this has led South Africa to develop a relationship with the Indian footwear industry. This is an opportunity for South African universities to provide training on footwear making. The core problem which this research address revolves around identifies skills shortage in the footwear industry and how this affects organisations. In addition, evaluate effectiveness strategies used for training and development of employees to improve organisational performance in the footwear industry in South African.

The human resource department within an organisation such as Dick Whittington Shoes (Pty) Ltd is faced with the predicament, whereby they need to develop proper strategies on training and development. In addition, the organisation needs to align its training and development strategy with the skills development act (1998). In South Africa companies with a payroll of more than R500 000 per annual are obligated to contribute 1% towards skills development of employees. According to SDA (1998), companies are obligated to have training and development programmes for staff development, hence proper training is the backbone to organisational performance. The human resource manager has the responsibility to implement training and development within the organisation. Dick Whittington shoes (Pty) Ltd is a manufacturer of high-end footwear and is also a member of South African footwear and leather industries association. DWS is part of the National Bargaining Council for the leather industry of South Africa. In addition, wages and conditions of employment for weekly paid positions within the organisation are conditional by the bargaining council agreement. DWS recognizes that it is paramount importance to adhere to the Skills Development Act (1998) and train and develop employees.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Enojo et al (2015) pointed out that the core benefit of training was to improve the performance of employees, increase the productivity of the organisation and increases global competitiveness. Manzini & Shumba (2014) indicated that there is an association between management

training and development, which improves organisational performance. Furthermore, training must be aligned with the organisational strategy, organisation vision and mission. Enojo et al (2015), argued that training is essential to the efficiency of any organisation. This improves the skill levels of people who are already employed in the business and also increases the number of skilled employees in areas where these skills are scarce. In addition, find out whether there are needs for training to make sure that employees are motivated and have the necessary skills to master the training. Create an environment which is conducive to learning. Ensure that trainees apply the training content to their job. Ensure that they are fully supported by co-workers and manager. Evaluate the program and make changes to improve if necessary. Training must speak to the job description and job specification stated by Ahmed, (Iqbal, Mir, Haider & Hamad, 2014).

### New leadership are developed

The quality of management and leadership has a significant impact on the success or failure of the organisation. Effective managers and leaders create career opportunities for employees, motivating them to achieve the organisation's objectives. Enojo et al (2015) stated the important of understanding the difference between management and leadership. According to Balkaran stated that the shortage of skills in South Africa is challenge to many organisations. In addition, the continuous training of employees to adapt to macro environment challenges is important. Sebola indicates that there is a need to empower employees and managers with relevant skills. In addition, Human Resource Development practitioners and managers of training and skills development should learn how to apply training, skills development and educational concepts in addressing contextual challenges to their day-to-day operations. The Kirkpatrick theory relates to the skills and development of employees to be more productive to the organisation. The theory outlines and evaluates training programmes that can improve employee's performance. According to Enojo et al (2015), Kirkpatrick maintained that developing of employees through training programmes would increase the organisational performance (**Table 1**).

The following leadership styles enable leaders and managers to perform their functions within the organisation effectively and efficiently (**Figure 1**).

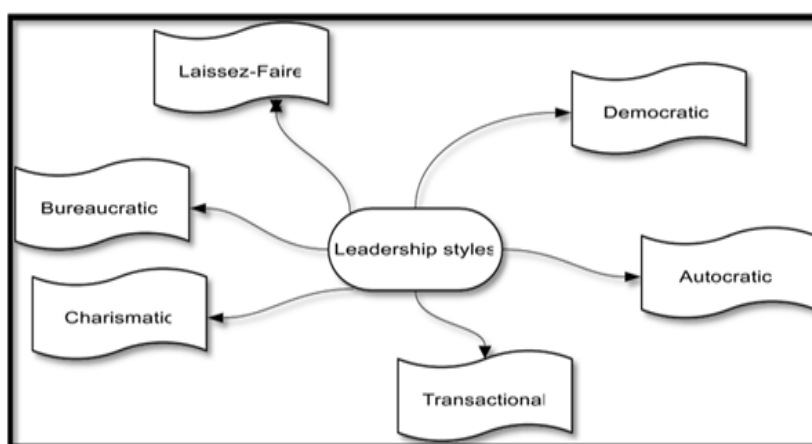
### Democratic leadership style

Employees participate in the decision-making process, so they feel empowered positively; two- way communication ensures group commitment to the final decision (Du Brin, 2010).

**Table 1.** The baobab pulp description along the Kenyan baobab value chain.

<b>Management</b>	<b>Leadership</b>
Influences human behavior.	Guides human behavior.
Encourages new ideas to increase productivity.	Administers plans/programs/tasks to reach targets.
Inspires staff to trust and support each other	Controls systems and procedures to get the job done.
Does the right things.	Does things right.
Guides/Leads people to become active participants.	Manages the process of getting things done by exercising authority.
Motivational/Inspirational in their approach.	Instructional in their approach.
People orientated	Task orientated

\*Source: Self-generated



**Figure 1.** Leadership Styles.

**Autocratic leadership style**

Applying the autocratic leadership style approach result in a quick decision can be taken without consulting employees. Furthermore, direct supervision and strict control ensure high-quality products (Du Brin, 2010).

**Laissez-faire leadership style**

Workers are allowed to make decisions on their own, to benefit the organisation and increase organisational performance. In addition, subordinates have maximum freedom and can work independently (Du Brin, 2010).

**Charismatic leadership style**

The leader sells the vision and achieves excellent results. In addition, employees are motivated as the leader is energetic and inspires loyalty, hard work among employees (Du Brin, 2010).

**Transactional leadership style**

Encourage employees to work hard because they will be rewarded, improve employees' productivity and morale and employees know what is expected of them (Du Brin, 2010).

**Bureaucratic leadership style**

Managers ensure that rules are always followed accurately on the other hand employees know what is expected of them because they receive detailed instructions. In addition, the quality of work can be ensured (Du Brin, 2010).

**It benefits both employees and the organisation**

According to Werner et al (2012), training and development play a pivotal role in changing the attitudes and feelings towards managers and employees. It further changes work behaviour and create a good organisational culture. Branch et al (2012) indicate that training and development is important because it assists the organisation in the realization of its corporate strategy; motivates employees to stay longer in the organisations; benefits not only companies, but society and the country as a whole; is an investment; and maximizes profit and growth for the firm. Training is crucial to all employees at all levels; skills must at all times be replenished to employees because skills become eroded as time goes on as reported by (Kun et al, 2014). The productivity of employees is the ability for them to produce output into the economy. Training helps

employees to be masters in their jobs and thus productivity is increased. Training is a motivating tool. It enhances employee commitment. Training is an instrument through which organisations achieve their goals and objectives. The workforce is efficient and effective only if proper training and development are provided (Kun et al, 2014) (Ahmad et al, 2014). Training improves decision making, teamwork, problem-solving and interpersonal relations among employees and enhances organisational performance. In addition, training is a way of motivating and retaining high quality in human resources in an organisation. Furthermore, development programs are worth investing in in order to have a skilled and knowledgeable workforce and thus increase productivity and competencies of an organisation. As employees become competent, there are advancement opportunities and a reduction in absenteeism. It increases employee's commitment and satisfaction thus helps to reduce turnover (Obi-Anike & Ekwe, 2014).

### **It eliminates fear to attempt a new task**

Once employed the human resources function must ensure that the employees know what is expected of them. The business must also ensure that the employees' conditions of service and labor rights adhere to the following:

1. New employees who are familiar with the business's procedures may easily adapt to his/her new work environment.
2. New employees learn more about the business and understand their role in the business/what is expected in the job.
3. Increased productivity and quality of service/performance.
4. Minimizes the need for on-going training and development.
5. Better focused training may be provided based on the results obtained from the induction process.

New employees will understand rules/restrictions in the business.

### **Public-private partnership in the footwear Industry**

South Africa has developed a relationship with India footwear industry after bringing experts from the subcontinent to help in skills development. The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) has forged a relationship with the footwear design development Institute (FDDI) with the India Ministry of Commerce, industry, and textiles. The FDDI has seconded a team of six professional exports to South Africa National Footwear Leather Cluster (NFLC). The NFLC was established by the DTI at Vaal University of Technology. The FDDI is aiming at training one thousand five hundred professionals annually with the support of India footwear industry. This will train South Africans in footwear design and manufacturing skills, curriculum development for

courses, research programmes and procurement amongst others, as well as train South African lectures and students. In addition, the project of this nature will execute the rapid transfer of skills, curriculum development for courses, research programmes and procurement amongst others as well as train South African lectures and students. The programme will support the development of a standardized compliant with the SAQA. Furthermore, the training and development must from school level to the university level.

## **METHODOLOGY**

An explanatory mixed methods design is chosen for this study. The rationale for using explanatory mixed design for this study it because quantitative data will be analyze using SPSS and then qualitative data will be analyze using themes, ideas, perspectives beliefs, and then as supported by (Fusch & Ness, 2015). for this study purposeful sampling. Sampling was conducted at Dick Whittington shoes (Pty) Ltd in Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu Natal. Data was collected using a range of methods which are interviews, observations, questionnaires, document review and audio-visual. The questionnaire was semi-structured and open-ended. The questions were planned and worded in the home language of the participant to ensure that there was no ambiguity as supported by (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Furthermore, questionnaires were distributed to 51 employees. In addition, for this study purposeful sampling was adopted. Sampling was conducted at Dick Whittington shoes (Pty) Ltd in Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu Natal. Furthermore, sampling included production manager, human resource manager, technical director, supervisors, and employee's shoe makers.

### **Limitations of the Research**

The researcher is aware of the fact that information extracted from documents is not sacrosanct and should delve deeper to avert misinformation happening. According to Clarke (1999) affirm that data received from documents have their limitations which need to be recognized and that documentary material requires careful handling. Documents do not reflect a straightforward, objective description of social reality, but by presenting a particular interpretation of events, they help in constructing a version of reality. It should not be assumed that documents constitute independent, records of events or circumstances as supported by (Simon & Goes, 2013).

## **RESULTS**

### **Results from Questionnaires distributed at Dick Whittington shoes (Pty) Ltd in Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu Natal.**

The first part focuses on the results obtained from the survey conducted sampling included production manager,

human resource manager, technical director, supervisors, and employees shoe makers.

**Table 2** shows the result of Kruskal-Wallis test of age group on the influence of leadership styles on employees performance (Chi-Square=4.104, df=4, *p-value*=0.392). The result shows that there is no statistical difference on challenges by the age group of respondents. The results imply that the age group of respondents has no influence on the employees’ performance.

**Table 3** shows that there is no statically difference on employees performance by the types of employment of respondents (Chi-Square=2.138, df=3, *p-value*=0.343). The result indicates that the types of employment offered at Dick Whittington shoes (Pty) Ltd have no influence on the challenges on employees’ performance.

**Table 4** indicates, does the organisation have a mechanism to promote training and development? Based on the response of the human resource manager: “Yes, the organisation has a mechanism for training and development. This is based on operational requirements. We consider the skills analysis of employees and try to match them to the requirement. Obviously, current operators are given first preference for training opportunities”.

**Table 5** shows the role of technical director is to have knowledge of prevailing trends in terms of operational requirements and be able to match them against regularly update skills analysis requirements. To be aware of changes in the labor compliment, in terms of retirements and impending maternity leave.

**Table 6** indicates that employees perform well when there are mentorship and coaching within the organisation. In addition, the organisation has to develop a mentorship and coaching plan that is in line with the skills development plan of the organisation.

**Table 7** indicates that dedication, a strong will to learn new skills, effort, and the ability to become flexible and to co-operate will enhance organisational performance and increase the profitability of the company.

**Table 8, 9** shows that quantitative measurement system is used to evaluate the performance of employees. Furthermore, broader scope, and the ability to provide specialized skills in a more formal manner. The implications of findings on the organisation would be a proper framework for training and development of employees from all levels of management is vital. Dick Whittington Shoes has a unique and easy to adapt learning cause and strategy which enables new employees to quickly adapt and familiarize themselves which the working conditions in the workplace. In addition, employees who are needed to perform special skills are given special training and some are sent to China to study in-depth skills in the footwear industry.

The training given to these employees is so critical to increasing productivity in the company. It is so important for any company to operate with skilled labor in order to obtain good and a quality end product which will satisfy the customer and minimize reject the product. Trained employees have self-confidence and are contented to be part of the establishment. The establishment is reputable for producing good quality goods. Adams (2002) states

**Table 2.** Age of participants.

Age of participants					
		N	Mean Rank	Kruskal Wallis Test	
	21 - 30 years	5	29.00	Chi-Square	4.104
	31 - 40 years	15	29.30	df	4
	41 - 50 years	20	21.00	<i>p-value</i>	0.392
	51 - 60 years	9	27.94	Comment	No tatically difference
	61 and above	2	35.00		
	Total	51			

**Table 3.** Significance test of employees on working experience.

Significance test of employees on working experience					
Challenges faced by employees					
		N	Mean Rank	Kruskal Wallis Test	
	Less than 1 year	3	35.33	Chi-Square	3.707
	Between 1 - to 3 years	13	27.69	df	4
	Between 3 to 5 years	15	28.30	<i>p-value</i>	0.447
	Between 5 to 10 years	10	23.80	Comment	No statistically significant
	Above 5 years	10	19.75		
	Total	51			

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**Table 4.** Significance test of challenges on type of employment.

Significance test of challenges on type of employment					
Chools		N	Mean Rank	Kruskal-Wallis Test	
	Full time	18	22.64	Chi-Square	2.138
	Casual	2	19.25	df	2
	Part time	31	28.39	Asymp. Sig.	0.343
	Total	51		<b>Comment</b>	<b>No statistically significant</b>

**Table 5.** Ways that training and development in the organisation can be improved.

Themes	Number of coded responses
Explaining the need for training and development	23
Benefits of training and development	15

**Table 6.** The role of technical director on the training and development of employees.

Themes	Number of coded responses
Mentor	1
Facilitator	1
knowledge of prevailing trends	1

**Table 7.** Training expected from employees to perform their duties effectively.

Themes	Number of coded responses
Mentorship	28
Coaching	20

**Table 8.** Training and development enhance organisational performance.

Themes	Number of coded responses
Yes	48
No	0

**Table 9.** System to evaluate the performance of employees.

Themes	Number of coded responses
Worksheet	12
Supervision	15
Annually performance	13
Daily performance	10

that trained employees are knowledgeable and there are fewer mistakes. Furthermore, job satisfaction is increased, employee morality is enhanced. It increases and improves efficiency in processes and financial gain.

## DISCUSSION

As mentioned in the literature review chapter by Raza (2014) affirms that Training is crucial for employees, the organisation and their effectiveness. In addition, Raymond et al (2016) pointed out that training and development activities are important elements of the human management function of an organisation. The objective of this study was the influence of leadership styles on employee's performance. After intensive research the conclusion is that the management must keep on monitoring the progress of its employees and always check

and monitor the performance and the contentment of the employees in so far as what they have been thought adheres to management must always be in touch with the new technology which is constantly developed so that they can let their workforce to be abreast with the technological changes out there. The findings would give management a diagnostic and intervention ways to give toenhancing productivity and job satisfaction to the workforce.

Furthermore, the literature review reveals employees should be kept continuously motivated to ensure that the leadership styles on employee's performance are kept extraordinary to achieve their objectives. Dessler (2015) indicate that if management implement a programme to increase training and development and organisational performance it will lead to additional benefits for nourishing and fostering its success in the establishment.

The research findings presented below to respond to the research question which aims at exploring training interventions programmes are offered by Dick Whittington Shoes (Pty) Ltd management must set aside funds for the skilling and development of employees, in some instances management tend to lack the enthusiasm to pump sufficient funds to skills its employees. This aspect should be taken seriously by management in order to produce a competitive product for the market.

In addition, Dessler (2015) proposed that working conditions for employees must be improved and safety standard must be maintained at all times. Employees must feel comfortable and safe at work. Furthermore, gender balance must be always maintained. There must not be a dominance of one gender to the other. When coming to compensation and benefits there should be a fair and equitable plan. It should be of course commensurate with employee's skills. Management must at all times ensure that communication channels are functioning effectively. Sharing information concerning work should be prioritized to enhance organisational performance and ensure smooth, effective and efficient performance to the tasks on hand. However, the findings from indicate that management must at all-time support the training and development of its employees. It is disastrous for management not to take training and development of its workforce. Training and development of employees are to advance the expertise and thus being profitable to the establishment. Management must ensure that training and development seminars and workshop are aligned with current technology. It must conform to all current training technology and all technological development in the field.

The findings from the primary review revealed that footwear industry in South Africa has a challenge of new incumbents, how does not have a required skill. In addition, management relationship with employees, the findings in this regard is that there is a mutual understanding between employees and management. The objective was to identify the current training and development interventions at Dick Whittington Shoes (Pty) Ltd, the findings were that Dick does provide in-housing training. The findings indicate that working relationship and interpersonal skills amongst co-workers can increase the establishment effectiveness and contribute to the institutions financial well-being. It is thus important for management to organize team building events and social gatherings to maintain and foster harmonious working relationships. In addition, clearly defined criteria must be developing to give opportunities for promotions to employees. Management must ensure that promotions are done fairly and in accordance with good labor practices.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the organisation introduce mentoring and coaching system because research shows that this helps employees to grow whilst developing and learning new skills under the guidance of these professionals. These are the tools to be used by the organisation to support its goals of developing employees thus achieving the intended results of productivity and efficiency. It is essential for the organisation to introduce workplace skills development. This helps an organisation to outline the range of skills development to address training needs. In order for training to be effective, it cannot stand on its own but should be part of the overall development strategy. Launching a successful training programme requires a financial plan. It is thus recommended that the organisation should identify skills employees need to perform their jobs. Furthermore, the organisation must identify where the gaps are and address those gaps. It is important for employees to implement what they have learned in their training.

However, the managers as well should be empowered and should be given mini sessions monthly after training. Furthermore, human resource manager and production manager must formulate a task team to design interventions to support employees on overall organisational performance. The core objective of this study was to evaluate the impact of training and development on organisational performance.

Findings of this research resulted in the following recommendations:

1. The Department of Trade and Industry have must develop a strategic plan to support the footwear industry in South Africa.
2. To develop a theoretical framework for public-private partnership with South African universities to assist the department of trade and industry on skills development.
3. The company must develop strategic planning of training and development on a yearly basis to improve the skills of employees.
4. Create a rewards system to improve employee's performance.
5. Provide employees with bursaries to enhance their skills and knowledge.
6. Create a culture of collective motivation within the organisation through training and development.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion the study revealed that the influence of leadership styles on employee's performance. Continuous training and development of employees can yield positive

results for the organisation. Therefore, it is imperative that the human resource manager develops a skills plan to assist the employees. The organisation must comply with skills development act and implement skills plan. Furthermore, the study undertakes to highlight the importance of training and development on organisational performance. The recommendation is that the organisation must align its skill development plan with the National Skills Development Strategy and a Human Resources Development Strategy. The development of public private partnership with TEVTs and universities will assist the South African footwear industry and the Department of Trade and Industry. This study has the potential to add value to the organisation as a whole.

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