

The Influence of Leadership Styles on Employee Motivation and Engagement: A Comparative Study with reference to fertilise Industry

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Abstract: Employee motivation and engagement are key to an organisation's success. Organisations which produces fertilisers must ensure optimum level of motivation. The current study aims to find out whether transformational, transactional, or laissez-faire leadership affect motivation and engagement of employees at Coromandel International Limited. Study results confirm that transformational leadership and organisational support contribute to motivation and engagement. Leaders who coach their subordinates, promote innovation, and ensure impartiality help increase satisfaction and loyalty. Organisations must invest in leadership programs, fair appraisals, and a strong feedback culture to maximise workforce productivity.

KEYWORDS: Leadership Styles , Employee Motivation , Engagement , Organisational Success

1. Introudiction:

The motivation of employees and their engagement are key factors that could help the organisation be successful, specifically in the fertiliser-producing Industry, where productivity and efficiency are directly related to performance. The style of leadership is traditionally one of the major factors determining the general culture within the organisation, employee attitudes, and job satisfaction. The leader-based behaviour must be effective to build trust, encourage creativity, and commitment to their work. The transformational leadership style is connected to empowerment, motivation, and high engagement levels, while transactional and laissez-faire leadership could lead to different results. Hence, understanding leadership's influence on employee motivation can play a vital role in organisations trying to achieve higher productivity, reduced turnover, and an engaged workforce.

Although substantial research has been done on leadership and employee engagement, in the fertiliser sector very little has been documented on how different leadership styles help boost employee motivation. Several organisations deal with lower engagement, higher turnover, and decreased productivity due to mismanagement of leadership. The absence of a well-structured leadership development program and also that of an open appraisal system further worsen this dire situation. It, therefore, becomes essential to carry out a study that establishes the nexus between the leadership style and the level of motivation of employees at Coromandel International Limited.

The study aims to look at the transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles in relation to subordinates' motivation and engagement. The study aims to establish the most effective leadership style, its relation to feedback and autonomy of decision-making, and to suggest recommendations for a better leadership strategy. This paper tests the hypothesis that leadership style has a statistically significant impact on motivation and engagement with transitional leadership having the strongest positive effect on employee engagement and motivation. The conclusions extracted from the study would help the companies make policies in developing programs for motherland youth that foster motivation, improve job satisfaction, and build better productivity in workforces.

Research Objectives:

1. To examine the impact of different leadership styles on employee motivation in the fertiliser industry.
2. To analyse the relationship between leadership styles and employee engagement in the fertiliser industry.
3. To compare the effectiveness of transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles in influencing employee motivation and engagement.

Research Questions:

1. How do different leadership styles influence employee motivation in the fertiliser industry?
2. What is the relationship between leadership styles and employee engagement in the fertiliser industry?
3. Which leadership style most effectively enhances employee motivation and engagement in the fertiliser industry?

Research Hypotheses:

- H1: Leadership styles significantly impact employee motivation in the fertiliser industry.
H2: Leadership styles significantly influence employee engagement in the fertiliser industry.
H3: Transformational leadership has a greater positive effect on employee motivation and engagement compared to transactional and laissez-faire leadership styles

2. Literature Review:

Leadership is the ability to step outside the culture to start evolutionary change processes that are more adaptive. Leadership is realised in the process whereby one or more individuals succeed in attempting to frame and define the reality of others. (Smircich & Morgan, 1982). Bass (1985) : Proposed a broader vision of transformational leadership to motivate followers to produce changes beyond expectations. Specifically, transformational leaders are viewed as having powers on employees with individual considerations, inspirations, intellectual stimulation, and personal development. As defined by Arnold et al. (1991) and Jones & George (2008), motivation focuses on the psychological drivers that influence behavior. While theories like Maslow's needs theory and Herzberg's two-factor model explore motivation's content, research (Brayfield & Crockett, 1955; Vroom, 1964) shows a limited correlation between job satisfaction and performance, though pay remains a key motivator. Employee engagement is very important for smooth functioning and survival of the business. (Artur, 1994; Becker and Huslid, 2000; Buckingham and Vosburgh ;2001) One way organisations can successfully navigate these challenges and capitalise on their intellectual capital is to foster employee engagement. As defined by Arnold et al. (1991) and Jones & George (2008), motivation focuses on the psychological drivers that influence behavior. While theories like Maslow's needs theory and Herzberg's two-factor model explore motivation's content, research (Brayfield & Crockett, 1955; Vroom, 1964) shows a limited correlation between job satisfaction and performance, though pay remains a key motivator. Bass (1985) : Proposed a broader vision of transformational leadership to motivate followers to produce changes beyond expectations. Specifically, transformational leaders are viewed as having powers on employees with individual considerations, inspirations, intellectual stimulation, and personal development.

A study was conducted on organisational culture, leadership modes, and employee job satisfaction in an electric cable company. Results revealed transformational leadership modes tend to be more acceptable to employees and affect job satisfaction level and innovativeness of

the employee (Chang , 2003) . (Wellins and Concelman 2004). Unsatisfied employees show deviant workplace behavior and exit planning, which in turn decrease service quality and job performance. Hayday (2004) engaged employees are more satisfied with their job and are more committed to the organisation. Expanding on the work of Janssen, Kirkman et al (2004) conducted a study on employee innovative behavior on job performance. Researcher found expectation that performance and innovative behaviour are significantly correlated.

Employees are an asset to an organisation. Using the organisation's intellectual capital has become an important source of competitive advantage.

Saks (2005) emphasises engagement's cognitive, emotional, and behavioral dimensions. leadership (Quinn, 2005) is another notion of positive leadership theory. It can be achieved by bringing elements such as internal directions, external frankness, result orientation and other focuses. Bass & Avolio, 2004 : They attributed Laissez-faire leadership to the leaders who avoid interfering when serious issues arise, this could also be described as non-leadership. Cole (2005) defines Leadership as a dynamic process whereby one man influences other to contribute voluntarily to the realisation and attainment of the goals objectives; aspiration of values of the group that is representing the essence of Leadership is to help a group or an Organisation to attain sustainable development and growth. Saks (2005) emphasises engagement's cognitive, emotional, and behavioral dimensions. Organisations that fail to engage their employees cannot get competitive advantage. Saks (2005) emphasises engagement's cognitive, emotional, and behavioral dimensions. Organisations that fail to engage their employees cannot get competitive advantage. According to Gopalakrishnan (2009) there has been rapid development in recent times all over the world. Management has the Review of Literature 26 capability to engage with the workforce and also to implement the policies humanely in the organisation for achieving goals and objectives. Larkin (2009) has stated that engaged employees are not only happy with their job, but also translate that satisfaction into higher productivity and profitability of the organisation. They think that their work can play an active role in making the organisation a successful one. . The leadership theory with times introduced and developed multiple positive forms of leadership to respond to dynamic organisational changes Avolio, Bruce J., Fred O (2009).

This paper explores how different leadership styles influence employee engagement in response to increasing globalisation and competitive pressures. It emphasises the shift from employee motivation to engagement as a strategic business priority, as organisations seek competitive advantage through talent management. The study focuses on three leadership theories: transactional, leader-member exchange (LMX), and transformational leadership. The findings indicate that transformational leadership, with its focus on trust, inspiration, and individualised support, fosters stronger employee engagement. Leaders who align employee values with organisational goals enhance motivation and reduce turnover, creating a more proactive and committed workforce (Batista-Taran et al., 2009). Azaare and Gross (2011), studied the nature of leadership styles that were used by nurse managers as well described the perceptions of leadership styles. For this interview technique was used on nurse staff through tape recorders in two hospitals in Ghana and analysis of the data revealed four subjects. It was revealed that the nurse manager controlled the employees using intimidation and minimal counseling, as well as indicating a lack of satisfaction and confidence with the current leadership style. As opined by Bhatla (2011) employee engagement has become one of the most leading priorities of human resource practitioners and senior managers in the organisation today. According to Robinson, Perryman, The leadership research elaborates on the detailed

understanding and evolving of the leadership approaches that motivate employees and the organisations to advance towards desirable outcomes. As opined by Bhatla (2011) employee engagement has become one of the most leading priorities of human resource practitioners and senior managers in the organisation today. Organisations that score high on implementing employee engagement strategies have a lower attrition rate. (Rabiyaand and Sange, 2015). Employee Engagement has positive relationship with Job Satisfaction. But no significant relationship was found between Employee Engagement and Employee Motivation. The study also explained that there is a gender difference in the opinion of faculty members for Employee Engagement and Employee Motivation but no difference was found for Job Satisfaction. (Jaiswal, Pathak and Kumari, 2017). Employee engagement is defined as a property of the relation between the organisations with their employees. In other words, employee engagement refers to the intellectual as well as the emotional commitment to an organisation by their employees in their jobs (Amhalhal et. al, 2015). Employee engagement is the illusive force that motivates employees to higher levels of performance. This coveted energy is an amalgam of “commitment, loyalty, productivity and ownership.” they further added that it includes, “feelings and attitudes employees have towards their jobs and their organisation. (Tuna et al., 2016). The literature highlights that employee engagement reflects the energy and initiative employees bring to their roles, becoming meaningful when the workplace is valued beyond a source of income. The International Survey Research (ISR) defines engagement as a process where organisations enhance employee commitment to achieve superior outcomes.

Muktar et al. (2020), study investigated the relationship between Transformational Leadership, Interpersonal Communication, Organizational Conflict and Organizational Effectiveness. The study found a positive effect transformational leadership, interpersonal communication and organisational conflict towards organisational effectiveness. Hastyar et al. (2021), study concluded that ethical and spiritual leadership qualities were needed among all ranks of government and private organisations to improve the performance and restore the trust in public. Muktar et al. (2020) study found a positive effect transformational leadership, interpersonal communication and organisational conflict towards organisational effectiveness. Yunarsih et al. (2020), leadership styles positively impacted the hospital performance.

MK Aribi (2024) This study analyses how different leadership styles and work motivation impact employee performance in PT. Nawasena Putra Windu is a firm distributing fertilisers and other large-scale trade products. It emphasises the importance of leadership in creating a motivated workforce, particularly in industries reliant on employee productivity. The results reveal a direct correlation between leadership style and employee output, highlighting that motivated employees perform better under adaptive leadership frameworks

3. Research Methodology:

Research Design:

This study adopts a quantitative research design to investigate the influence of leadership styles on employee motivation and engagement in the fertiliser industry. A cross-sectional survey will collect primary data from employees across various fertiliser manufacturing and distribution companies.

Population and Sample Size:

Population: Employees working in different departments (e.g., production, sales, HR, R&D) in the fertiliser industry. Sampling Technique: Stratified random sampling to ensure diverse representation from various job levels.

Sample Size: 150–300 respondents, ensuring statistical significance and reliability.

Data Collection Method:

A structured questionnaire will measure leadership styles, employee motivation, and engagement. The questionnaire will include:

Demographic Information (age, gender, job position, work experience).

Leadership Style Assessment (based on Transformational, Transactional, and Laissez-Faire leadership models).

Employee Motivation Scale (self-reported motivation levels using validated scales like Herzberg's motivation factors).

Employee Engagement Scale (Likert-scale-based questions measuring involvement, commitment, and enthusiasm at work).

Measurement Scales:

Leadership Style (Independent Variable) measured using the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ). Employee Motivation & Engagement (Dependent Variables) measured using standardised Likert scales (1–5 or 1–7):

1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree.

1 = Never to 5 = Always (for frequency-based responses).

Data Analysis Techniques:

The collected data will be analysed using SPSS or similar statistical software:

Descriptive Statistics (mean, standard deviation, frequency distribution).

Reliability Analysis (Cronbach's Alpha to test the consistency of measurement scales).

Correlation Analysis (to examine relationships between leadership styles, motivation, and engagement).

Multiple Regression Analysis (to determine the extent to which leadership styles influence motivation and engagement).

ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) (to compare differences in motivation and engagement across different leadership styles).

Ethical Considerations:

Informed Consent: Participants will voluntarily participate in the study after understanding its purpose.

Confidentiality: All responses will remain anonymous and used strictly for research purposes.

Data Protection: The collected data will be stored securely and used only for academic analysis.

Data Interpretation & Result:

Demography Analysis:

Particular	Options	No of Responses	Percentage
AGE	18-25	60	60
	26-35	29	29
	36-40+	11	11
	Total	100	100
GENDER	Male	59	59
	Female	41	41
	Total	100	100

Interpretation by Age: Most respondents (60%) fall into Age Category 1, and 29% fall into Category 2 and 11% in Category 3. This suggests that most respondents fall within this age group, with fewer respondents in the other two categories.

Interpretation by Gender: Category 1 represents 59% of respondents while Category 2 represents 41%. The gender distribution is reasonably proportionate with a slight majority on Category 1.

Role in the organisation

Position	No of Responses	Percentage
Associate	1	1
Electrical Engineer	1	1
Executive	22	22
Fitter	2	2
Individual contributor	25	25
Management trainee	1	1
Manager	18	18
Officer	2	2
Senior consultant	1	1
Software developer	2	2
Student	2	2
Team Lead	21	21
Trainee	2	2
Total	100	100

Data Interpretation:

The majority of the respondents, which was a quarter were Individual Contributors, while the next highest was Executives at 22% and Team Leads at 21%. Overall, this triad shows strong mid-level representation. At 18% further down the chain Managers add the perspective of leadership roles to these findings. The rest of the respondents which equals 14% are roles like Fitter, Officer, Software Developer, Student, and Trainee (all 2%), whereas Management Trainee, Senior Consultant, Electrical Engineer and Associate stand for 1%. With the most individual contributor and mid-level management responses, the distribution provides good context for workplace correlates.

Quantitative Analysis

Case Processing Summary			
		N	%
Cases	Valid	100	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	100	100.0
a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.			

Interpretation

- The dataset consists of 100 valid cases, with 0 cases excluded, meaning that all data points were included in the analysis.

- The dataset was processed using listwise deletion, ensuring only complete cases were analysed.

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardised Items	N of Items
.944	.945	18

Interpretation

- Cronbach's Alpha = 0.944 (Based on Standardised Items: 0.945) for 18 items.
- A reliability coefficient above 0.7 indicates a high level of internal consistency among the items.
- This suggests that the scale used for measurement is highly reliable.

Summary Item Statistics

	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Range	Maximum / Minimum	Variance	N of Items
Item Means	4.257	3.970	4.410	.440	1.111	.015	18
Item Variances	.917	.730	1.227	.497	1.681	.017	18

KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.744
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	168.606
	df	3
	Sig.	<.001

Interpretation

- KMO = 0.744: This indicates a moderate level of sampling adequacy. A value above 0.6 is acceptable for factor analysis.
- Bartlett's Test (Chi-Square =168.606, df = 3, p < 0.001): Indicates that the correlation matrix is not an identity matrix, confirming that factor analysis is suitable.

Correlation Matrix

		TLS	TEE	TM
Correlation	TLS	1.000	.696	.760
	TEE	.696	1.000	.732
	TM	.760	.732	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	TLS		<.001	<.001
	TEE	.000		.000
	TM	.000	.000	

Interpretation

- Significant correlations between variables:
 - TLS& TEE (r = 0.696, p < 0.001)
 - TLS & TM (r = 0.760, p < 0.001)
 - TEE & TM (r = 0.732, p < 0.001)

- These correlations suggest strong positive relationships between the variables.

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
TLS	100	12	30	25.43	4.513	-.923	.241	.094	.478
TEE	100	7	30	25.14	4.325	-1.432	.241	3.046	.478
TM	100	9	30	26.06	4.761	-1.377	.241	1.451	.478
Valid N (listwise)	100								

Interpretation

- TLS: Mean = 25.43 , Std. Dev = 4.513
- TEE: Mean = 25.14, Std. Dev = 4.325
- TM: Mean = 26.06, Std. Dev = 4.761
- Skewness & Kurtosis values suggest the data distribution is moderately skewed

Hypothesis Testing

H1: Leadership styles have a significant impact on employee motivation in the fertiliser industry.

Variables Entered/Removed^a

Model	Variables Entered	Variables Removed	Method
1	TLS ^b	.	Enter

a. Dependent Variable: TEE

b. All requested variables entered.

Model Summary									
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.696 ^a	.484	.479	3.122	.484	92.060	1	98	<.001
a. Predictors: (Constant), TLS									

ANOVA^a

a. Dependent Variable: TEE
b. Predictors: (Constant), TLS

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	897.080	1	897.080	92.060	<.001 ^b
	Residual	954.960	98	9.744		
	Total	1852.040	99			

Interpretation

TLS predicting TEE

- $R^2 = 0.484$: TPAS explains 48.4% of the variance in TEE.
- $F(1, 98) = 92.060$, $p < 0.001$: The model is statistically significant.
- ANOVA results confirm that TLS significantly predicts TEE.

H2: Leadership styles significantly influence employee engagement in the fertiliser industry.

Variables Entered/Removed^a

Model	Variables Entered	Variables Removed	Method
1	TLS ^b	.	Enter

a. Dependent Variable: TM
b. All requested variables entered.

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.760 ^a	.578	.574	3.107	.578	134.348	1	98	<.001
a. Predictors: (Constant), TLS									

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1297.314	1	1297.314	134.348	<.001 ^b
	Residual	946.326	98	9.656		
	Total	2243.640	99			
a. Dependent Variable: TM						
b. Predictors: (Constant), TLS						

INTERPRETATION

b) TLS predicting TM

- $R^2 = 0.578$: TLS explains 57.8% of the variance in TM.

- $F(1, 98) = 134.348$, $p < 0.001$: The model is statistically significant.
- ANOVA results confirm that TLS significantly predicts TM.

H3: Transformational leadership has a greater positive effect on employee motivation and engagement compared to transactional and laissez-faire leadership styles.

This qualitative study explores the impact of transformational leadership on employee motivation and engagement compared to transactional and laissez-faire leadership styles. Data was collected from 107 respondents through open-ended survey responses and thematic analysis was conducted to identify key insights.

4. Methodology: Thematic Analysis:

Data Collection: Open-ended survey responses from 107 employees across different job roles.

Data Familiarisation: Reading and analysing responses to identify recurring themes.

Initial Coding: Assigning labels to key phrases and statements.

Theme Development: Grouping related responses into broad themes.

Interpretation: Analysing the impact of leadership styles on motivation and engagement.

Identified Themes from Employee Responses

Theme	Description	Example Quote
Vision & Inspiration	Employees feel motivated by a leader with a clear vision and strong communication.	My manager inspires us with a long-term vision, making us feel part of something bigger.
Personal Development	Transformational leaders support growth, leading to higher engagement.	I have regular one-on-one mentorship sessions that help me develop professionally.
Recognition & Support	Employees thrive when they receive continuous feedback and encouragement.	Unlike past jobs, my leader here appreciates my efforts and provides valuable feedback.
Transactional Leadership Limits Growth	Employees feel transactional leadership focuses only on tasks, not development.	I do my work, but there's no real motivation or personal connection with the leader.
Laissez-Faire Leadership Reduces Engagement	Lack of guidance from laissez-faire leaders leads to disengagement.	My supervisor is often absent, leaving us unsure about goals or expectations.

Interpretation

- Employees under transformational leaders feel more motivated and engaged due to clear vision, personal development opportunities, and continuous support.
- Transactional leadership, while structured, lacks the emotional connection needed for substantial engagement.
- Laissez-faire leadership leads to low motivation and disengagement due to the absence of guidance and support.
- Findings suggest that transformational leadership has the most positive impact on motivation and engagement compared to the other leadership styles.

4. DISCUSSION:

The research shows that Transformational Leadership Style (TLS) significantly affects Employee Motivation (TM) and Employee Engagement (TEE) in the fertiliser industry. Results show that, transformational leadership style motivates the employees (fosters trust, direction, motivation) which in turn enhances productivity. Transformational leaders are those who envelope the employees with mentoring, inspiring, and innovating while aligning their vision with the organisational goals.

A major takeaway from this research is that employees who have some autonomy in decision-making have higher engagement levels. So, it can be said that empowerment matters. Besides, organisations that give periodic feedback helps to build a positive work culture resulting in better satisfaction and commitment towards the job. The study also makes it clear that employees become more engaged with their work when they find balance in their personal and professional lives.

The correlation analysis shows that significant TLS relates significantly to TM and TEE. This means leadership initiatives directly influence employee engagement. Firms that invest in structured leadership development, fair performance reviews, and participative decision-making create an atmosphere where employees feel appreciated and motivated. Organisations that build a culture of fair, recognition-based and continuous feedback leadership will be successful in the long run.

5. Conclusion:

This research showed that leadership styles correlate with employee motivation and engagement. The most effective transformational leadership style built trust, guided, and inspired employees, gaining their commitment and productivity in return. Leadership empowerment, feedback constructively provided to employees, and decision-making autonomy are valuable strategies with regards to achieving very high levels of engagement. Further quantitative analysis proved that there were strong relationships between the leadership style and motivation and engagement. The external convergence and factor analysis of the data show that the various parameters being studied relate and pertain to reliability measurements. Moreover, it also asserts that feedback quality and perceived fairness have an essential mediating effect on strengthening the relationship between leadership style and employee motivation. An effective feedback culture provides continuous development opportunities and nurtures employee commitment.

Generally, it's found that organisational support moderates the leadership-motivation and -engagement relationship by fostering those positive relationships. In other words, companies that devise leadership development, high-quality feedback, and a supporting environment create a culture for motivation and performance improvements. The insights imply the need for structured leadership development programs that promote participatory decision-making and a transparent appraisal system considered fair by employees. Such a work environment would make employees engage, be satisfied with their job, and function well for long-term benefits.

Suggestions :

- The study focuses on qualitative approach, using the longitudinal research approach might be more beneficial in monitoring how employees' motivation and engagement may vary over time. Instead of a one-time survey, continuing to track the effects of leadership over months or years could provide an opportunity to recognise long-term patterns and sustainability traits.

- Such further research could involve psychological factors such as emotional intelligence, personal characteristics of the leaders, and leader-member exchange theory. If integrated into the research dimension of respect influencing leadership performance and its efficacy deep, it could offer a lot of insight into future research.
- Cultural and generational differences are bound to have a more significant effect on how employees react to differing styles of leadership. Future studies could assess in detail gender-based preferences in leadership styles.
- Building an understanding of the contrast in perception between male and female employees regarding leadership styles would support the creation of leadership strategies that are much more inclusion.
- One of the ways that leadership styles affect motivation and engagement in remote and hybrid work is by influencing communication, feedback, and team cohesion. Adjusting how a leader acts may help organisations create trust, collaboration, and productivity remotely.

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