

# Role of leadership style in shaping employee motivation and engagement.

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## Abstract

Leadership strategies have a significant influence on employee engagement, motivation, and conduct in the workplace. This study examines the impact of different management styles on staff engagement and motivation, as well as the function of these styles in improving business outcomes. Leadership styles, whether transformational, transactional, democratic, or autocratic, and how they contribute to a motivated and engaged workforce are the foci of this research. Primary data for the study came from questionnaires given to employees at different companies; the research strategy was quantitative. Secondary data sources, including books, journals, and reports, round out the analysis. In order to examine the relationships between leadership styles and employee replies, the data is analysed using techniques such as percentage, correlation, and regression analysis. The results show that leadership styles like autocracy have a detrimental impact on employee motivation and engagement, whereas democratic and transformational leadership styles are good. Recognition, open lines of communication, and opportunities for employees to have a say in company decisions are all elements that boost engagement and loyalty, according to the research. The study provides managers and HR professionals with consequences, including the requirement of flexible leadership in modern organisations. It recommends people-centered leadership techniques for sustained engagement and concludes that leadership is a major predictor of employee happiness, performance, and organisational success.

**Keywords:** Leadership Style, Employee Motivation, Employee Engagement, Organizational Behavior, Transformational Leadership, Job Satisfaction

## 1. Introduction

Leadership is becoming more and more apparent as a critical component in deciding employee behaviour, performance, and company success in today's modern workplace. Leadership is more than simply keeping workers under control; it also entails encouraging, empowering, and inspiring people to achieve both personal and organisational goals (Sharma, R., 2024). An increasing amount of research in the area of organisational behaviour has focused on successful leadership styles as a means to navigate today's complex, varied, and cutthroat workplace (Reyaz, S., 2024). Leadership is essential because it fosters employee engagement and motivation, which in turn affects performance, satisfaction, and retention (Li, X., 2023). Employee engagement is the emotional investment that workers have in their job, whereas employee motivation is the collection of internal and external elements that inspire individuals to work hard and enthusiastically (Sokolic, D., 2024). Leadership actions have a significant effect on these two concepts, which are closely connected (Dhawan, B. P., 2025).

Employees' perspectives and actions can be shaped by several leadership styles, including transformational, transactional, democratic, and authoritarian methods (Zai, P. N., 2025). Autocratic leaders, on the other hand, may restrict employee participation, which may have a detrimental effect on their general attitude and dedication, whereas transformational leaders are renowned to encourage and inspire workers, which can increase their engagement and output (Sihite, M., 2024). Traditional, top-down leadership styles have taken a back seat in recent years to more collaborative, employee-centric approaches, which have shown to be more effective in fostering a positive work environment and achieving organisational goals (Kaur, M., 2022). Furthermore, understanding the connection between leadership styles and employee engagement and motivation is crucial, especially given the growing significance of human capital management (Zhao, R., 2019). This study aims to examine the relationship between these critical success elements and different leadership styles (Ahmad, M., 2024). Managers and organisations seeking to boost performance, create a happy work environment, and achieve long-term success can benefit from the study's findings, which are based on an analysis of the correlation between leadership styles and employee performance (Hassi, A., 2019).

## 2. Literature Reviews

**Saks, A. M., (2019)** delves into how transformational leadership influences employee engagement and motivation, drawing attention to its function in enhancing performance via motivational, thought-provoking, and personalised leadership. According to the findings, transformational leadership motivates followers to put the organization's needs ahead of their own. Employees' intrinsic motivation is boosted by open communication, trust, and the promotion of creativity. Workers who work under transformative leaders seem to be happier, more invested, more engaged overall, according to the research. Sustaining participation requires leadership's acknowledgement, empowerment, and support, according to the research. Results also suggest that companies with transformative CEOs are more productive and have reduced employee turnover. To sum up, the studies show that leadership style affects employees' mental and behavioural responses, and they suggest that businesses should put money into leadership training for their employees.

**Avolio, B. J., (2006)** Examine the connection between democratic leadership and employee engagement through cooperation and participatory decision-making. Employees feel more appreciated and respected when they have a say in workplace decisions, which boosts their motivation, according to the research. Workers are more invested in their work and happier overall when their leaders adhere to democratic leadership values like open communication, mutual regard, and solidarity. Employees under democratic leadership are more invested in the company's success and are more willing to step up and take charge, according to the research. Furthermore, leaders and their workers develop a relationship through communication, which impacts employee engagement, according to the research. The authors draw the conclusion that in order to improve performance, businesses must encourage their executives to participate in participatory management. A more engaged workforce may be achieved by leader techniques that include employees, according to this literature.

**Yukl, G., (2013)** analyses how transactional leadership styles impact organisational motivation, particularly in relation to performance evaluation and incentives. According to the studies, transactional leadership is most effective when duties are well-defined. Executives may motivate employees to meet

short-term objectives by offering prizes and incentives. Being dependent on extrinsic incentive, this style of leadership may not inspire long-term dedication, nevertheless. This may lead to an unhealthy dependence on incentives and do little to foster employees' innate drive or sense of belonging to the company. According to the research, transactional leadership does increase accountability and operational efficiency, but it fails to give the emotional value that is needed to boost engagement. Therefore, for balanced outcomes, the research recommends a mix of transactional and people-oriented leadership styles. The study's authors are the first to admit that incentive programs can only go so far in inspiring enthusiastic participation from workers.

**Northouse, P. G., (2018)** find out how authoritarian leadership styles lower morale and productivity on the job. Poor morale and dissatisfaction with one's employment are common outcomes of organisations led by authoritarian leaders that act unilaterally and do not consult their staff. Employees' motivation and engagement would suffer under such leadership approaches since they make them feel irritated and devalued. Furthermore, it demonstrates that managers and staff have a weak relationship due to a lack of communication and feedback, which in turn causes low levels of trust and loyalty among employees. Furthermore, studies have shown that authoritarian leadership styles are associated with lower productivity and higher staff turnover rates. This kind of leadership works well during emergencies when quick judgements are required, but it usually performs a poor job of creating a pleasant workplace. The research shows that leaders may boost morale and productivity in the workplace by being more hands-on and encouraging.

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1 Research Design and Approach

Leadership styles and their effects on employee engagement and motivation are the focus of this descriptive and analytical study. It takes a quantitative approach since that way correlations can be measured and statistically tested. The study's overarching goal is to tease out the ways in which different leadership styles affect the mental and behavioural reactions of the workforce. In order to deliver up-to-date and efficient information on organisations, the research uses a cross-sectional design, which entails collecting data from respondents at a specified period. Due to the regulated design, biases may be reduced and data can be analysed impartially. In addition, the study uses several features of explanatory research to look at how leadership affects the mental and behavioural results of workers. The study's overarching goal is to help managers and anyone working to improve their organisations by bringing together theory and practice.

#### 3.2 Data Collection Methods

The analysis is thorough and trustworthy since it makes use of both primary and secondary sources of information. A survey asking workers about their motivation, engagement, and thoughts on different leadership styles provided the bulk of the data. Using a Likert Scale to indicate agreement or disagreement, the survey's closed-ended questions form a structured questionnaire. Minimising variances and making statistical testing easier are the goals of this technique. For the convenience of respondents, the questionnaire can be sent to them physically or online. In addition, the argument and conclusions are bolstered with secondary evidence sourced from reputable sources, books, journals, and articles. The

current corpus of research and knowledge gaps can be uncovered by consulting these sources. The study's credibility and validity are enhanced by utilising both primary and secondary data.

### 3.3 Sampling Design

For the research to be representative of the population of interest, a suitable sample design is essential. The target demographic for this study consists of workers from various businesses and industries. Given the time and financial restrictions, non-probability (convenience) sampling is the sample strategy employed. This allows the researcher to get data from respondents who are cooperative and reachable. It is determined what sample size is enough for statistical analysis and to enable the generalisation of findings. A wide range of demographic traits, such as age, gender, and experience, are sampled in an effort to obtain a variety of viewpoints. Employees who communicate with management inside the company are included in the sampling criteria, which is consistent with the study's emphasis. Convenience sampling is seen to be appropriate for descriptive exploratory research like this one, despite the possibility that it will restrict the findings' generalisability.

### 3.4 Data Analysis Tools and Techniques

Using statistical methods to extract meaning from the collected data is known as data analysis. Prior to analysis, data must be cleaned, categorised, and tallied. To characterise demographic data and significant factors like motivation, engagement, and leadership styles, frequencies, means, and standard deviations are computed. The relationships between leadership styles and employee outcomes are investigated through additional data analysis utilising inferential statistics, such as correlation analysis. Additionally, regression analysis is utilised to look at how well various leadership philosophies predict engagement and motivation. Computer programs like Microsoft Excel and the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) are used to conduct statistical studies, increasing the effectiveness of data analysis. Tables and graphs are used to display the data. These statistical methods guarantee that the findings are reliable, valid, and significant for conclusions and suggestions.

## 4. Results and Analysis

### 4.1 Demographic Profile of Respondents

The demographic profile of respondents provides information on the sample profile and aids in the interpretation of study findings. To guarantee representation and inclusion in the sample, demographic characteristics such as gender, age, education, and experience are taken into consideration. Demographic research is important because views of involvement, motivation, and leadership may differ. A variety of respondents are included in the study in order to comprehend the many facets of organisational behaviour. Men and women are almost evenly represented in the sample, and the majority are in the 20–30 age range, indicating a youthful workforce. The majority of responders had two to five years of experience, which suggests that they have had some exposure to leadership in their organisations. The majority of responders hold graduate and postgraduate degrees, indicating a highly educated workforce. This variety strengthens the analysis by improving the results' representativeness.

**Table 4.1: Demographic Distribution of Respondents**

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	55	55%
	Female	45	45%
Age Group	20–30	50	50%
	31–40	30	30%
	41–50	20	20%
Education	Graduate	60	60%
	Postgraduate	40	40%
Work Experience	< 2 years	25	25%
	2–5 years	45	45%
	> 5 years	30	30%



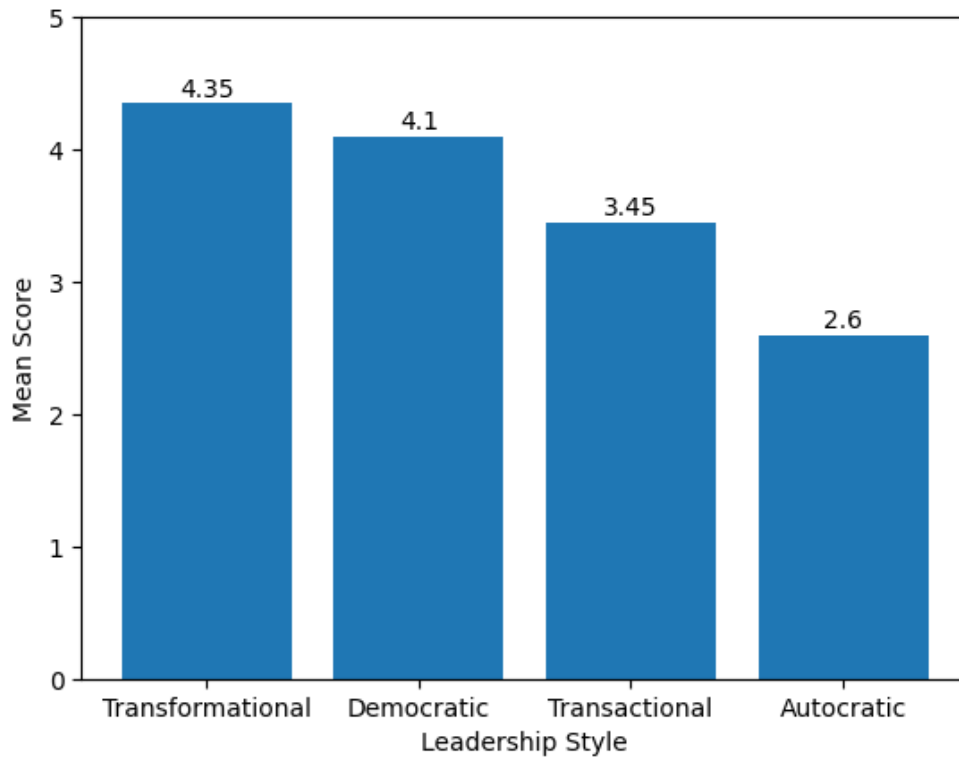
**Figure 4.1: Demographic Distribution of Respondents**

## 4.2 Leadership Style Preferences

Understanding the preferred leadership styles of employees is crucial to comprehending how leadership affects organisational effectiveness. The popularity and application of different leadership philosophies inside the organization are examined in this chapter. The findings suggest that transformational leadership, which emphasises motivating, inventing, and demonstrating concern for individuals, is the preferred leadership style among employees. Additionally, democratic leadership is strongly preferred, indicating a willingness for employee contact and engagement. Transactional leadership, which emphasises performance and incentives, is somewhat preferred, suggesting that it is appropriate in highly controlled environments. Employees reject dictatorial and authoritarian leadership, as seen by the lowest score for autocratic leadership, which is controlling and authoritarian. The findings show that when particular leadership philosophies are in place, employee perceptions are positively impacted by cooperation, acknowledgement, and empowerment. The results demonstrate that in order to enhance employee performance and happiness, leaders must be flexible and human-centered.

**Table 4.2: Perception of Leadership Styles**

<b>Leadership Style</b>	<b>Mean Score</b>	<b>Rank</b>
Transformational	4.35	1
Democratic	4.10	2
Transactional	3.45	3
Autocratic	2.60	4



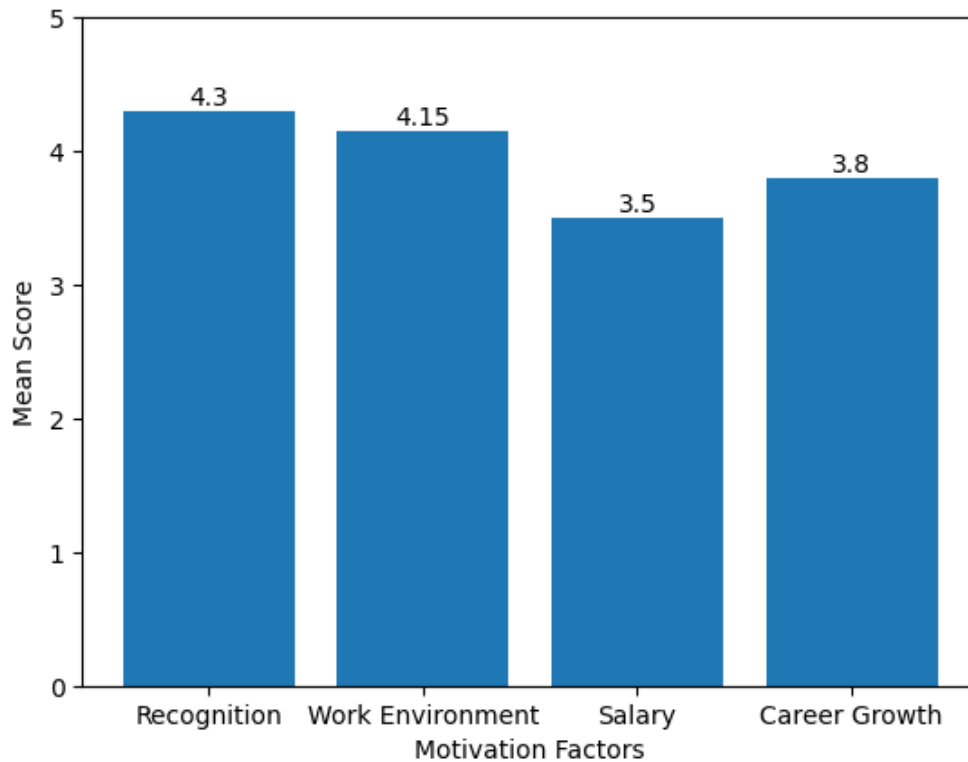
**Figure 4.2: Perception of Leadership Styles (Mean Scores)**

### 4.3 Employee Motivation Analysis

A key component of both work performance and organisational success is motivation. The various elements that influence an employee's drive to work hard and stick with the organization are examined in this chapter. It demonstrates that praise and incentives are essential for inspiring workers, as seen by their favourable reaction when their efforts are acknowledged. Improving motivation also requires cultivating a great workplace culture and environment; employees are motivated when they work in a secure and welcoming atmosphere. Offering money has a moderate effect on motivation, suggesting that intrinsic motivators are just as important as monetary rewards. Opportunities for professional development are crucial since workers want to advance in their jobs. The investigation shows that high levels of motivation are influenced by both inner and extrinsic motivational elements. Managers must thus take into account all-encompassing strategies that address both tangible and intangible motivators.

**Table 4.3: Employee Motivation Levels**

Motivation Factor	Mean Score	Interpretation
Recognition	4.30	High
Work Environment	4.15	High
Salary	3.50	Moderate
Career Growth	3.80	Moderate-High



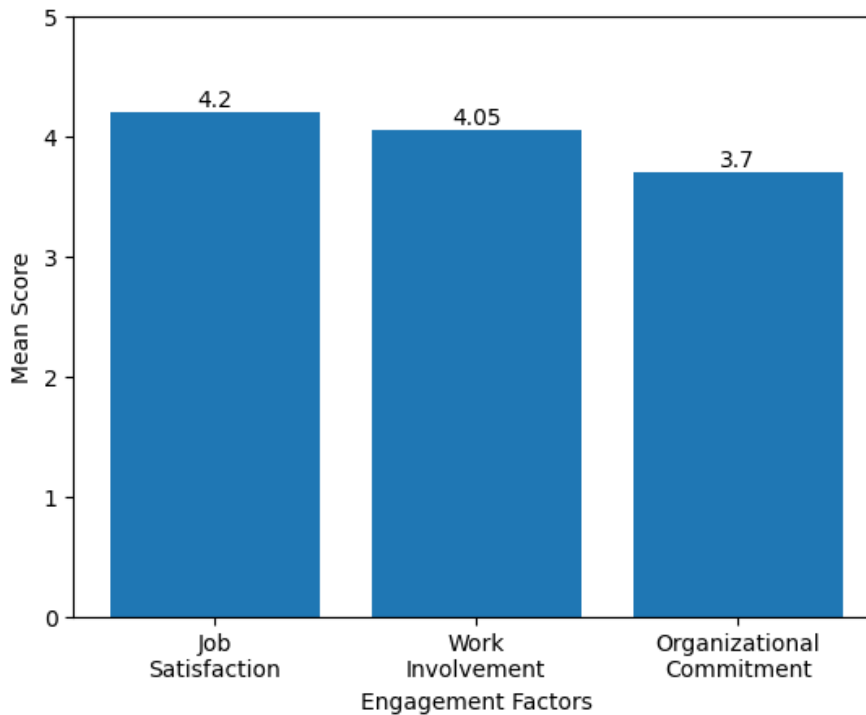
**Figure 4.3: Employee Motivation Levels (Mean Scores)**

#### 4.4 Employee Engagement Analysis

Employee engagement gauges how dedicated and involved they are in their jobs and the company. This section looks at a few engagement metrics, including work involvement, organisational commitment, and job happiness. According to our research, workers have a moderate level of job satisfaction, indicating that they are content with their duties and responsibilities. In a similar vein, a high level of work participation shows that workers are passionate about their jobs and contribute positively to the marketplace. Employee and organisational values need to be aligned, as shown by the comparatively medium level of organisational commitment. The findings show that by encouraging trust, communication, and inclusivity inside the company, leadership has a significant impact on engagement. Increased loyalty, lower attrition rates, and more productivity can all result from high employee engagement. Therefore, encouraging leadership characteristics that boost employee engagement is a top organisational responsibility.

**Table 4.4: Employee Engagement Indicators**

Engagement Factor	Mean Score	Interpretation
Job Satisfaction	4.20	High
Work Involvement	4.05	High
Organizational Commitment	3.70	Moderate



**Figure 4.4: Employee Engagement Indicators (Mean Scores)**

#### 4.5 Discussion

Through the study of the data, it is possible to determine the link between leadership style and the impacts it has on the engagement and motivation of employees. The findings unambiguously demonstrate that democratic and transformational leadership styles, which place a focus on communication, involvement, appreciation, and support, have a greater beneficial impact on the motivation and engagement of employees. According to the findings of the research, businesses that use these leadership concepts typically have employees that are more satisfied, motivated, and engaged in their job. An autocratic leadership style, on the other hand, has a relatively negative impact since it decreases the level of employee involvement as well as the opportunities for personal development and expression. In contrast to purely external factors such as monetary pay, the data demonstrates that internal factors such as recognition, the working environment, and opportunities for growth within an organization have a substantial influence on the level of motivation that an individual possesses. The findings of this study also indicate that there is a connection between employee engagement and motivation, which suggests that motivated workers are more likely to participate in events that are organised by their organization. These findings are in line with those of previous research that highlight the significance of leadership techniques that are centred on the needs and interests of individuals in contemporary enterprises. In conclusion, the discussion highlights the need of leadership methods that are both inclusive and adaptive in order to increase employee productivity and support the success of the organization.

#### 5. Conclusion

This study demonstrates that the manner in which a leader operates has a significant influence on the level of motivation and engagement within a company's workforce, which is critical to the success of the firm.

Based on the findings of this study, leadership philosophies that are employee-focused, motivating, and participative—such as transformational and democratic—are associated with increased levels of employee engagement and incentive. Such leadership, which promotes efficient communication, recognises and appreciates contributions, and offers opportunities for participation, helps to cultivate a pleasant environment at work. An authoritarian leadership style, on the other hand, can restrict flexibility and have a negative influence on the morale of staff members, which in turn is detrimental to engagement and motivation. In addition, the research reveals that when it comes to employee behaviour, extrinsic factors such as compensation and incentives are important; nevertheless, intrinsic factors such as the work environment, opportunities for advancement, and recognition have a greater influence. The findings of the study also indicate that there is a significant association between engagement and motivation, which suggests that people who are motivated are more likely to be engaged, productive, and aligned with the aims of the firm. This study concludes that in order for businesses to increase their performance, it is essential for them to have leadership styles that are flexible, adaptable, and focused on the employees. It highlights the fact that the accomplishment of goals is not the primary focus of leadership; rather, it is the development of human capacities, which in turn contribute to enhanced organisational performance and financial success.

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