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SCHOOL OF COMMERCE
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**THE EFFECT OF FEMALE LEADERSHIP STYLES ON EMPLOYEE
ENGAGEMENT: THE CASE OF COCA-COLA BEVERAGES AFRICA-
ETHIOPIA**

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Addis Ababa University
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**The Effect of Female Leadership Styles on Employee Engagement: The
Case of Coca-Cola Beverages Africa-Ethiopia**

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**A Thesis submitted to the Addis Ababa University, School of Commerce in
partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Business
Leadership**


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CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

This is to certify that the thesis prepared by Yeabsira Kefelegn, entitled “**The Effect of Female Leadership Styles on Employee Engagement: The Case of Coca-Cola Beverages Africa-Ethiopia**” and submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Business Leadership complies with the regulations of the University and meets the accepted standards with respect to originality and quality.

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LIST ACRONYMS

ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
CCBA-Ethiopia	Coca-Cola Beverages Africa-Ethiopia
DW	Durbin Watson
FMCG	Fast-Moving Consumer Goods
HR	Human Resource
HRM	Human Resource Management Human
HRD	Resource Development
ICT	Information Communication Technology
IT	Information Technology
NGO	Non-Government Organization
OLS	Ordinary Least Square
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
VIF	Variance Inflation Factor

ABSTRACT

The study aimed to examine the effect of leadership styles of female leaders on employees' engagement in Coca-Cola Beverages Africa-Ethiopia (CCBA-Ethiopia). The study used an explanatory research design through a survey questionnaire, utilizing a quantitative approach to analyze the effect of female leaders' leadership styles on employee engagement. Primary data was collected from 167 permanent staff members of CCBA- Ethiopia working in Addis Ababa. Descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and multiple regression analysis were used to test the relationships between leadership styles (democratic, transformational, transactional, and laissez-Faire leadership styles.), and employee engagement. The study found that democratic and transformational leadership styles exhibited by female leaders has significant positive effects on employee engagement. In contrast, transactional and laissez-faire leadership styles did not significantly impact engagement levels. These results underscore the importance of leadership approaches that prioritize inclusivity, empowerment, and visionary leadership in fostering a highly engaged workforce. Based on the findings, several recommendations were proposed to enhance leadership practices and promote employee engagement within CCBA-Ethiopia, including embracing democratic and transformational leadership styles, implementing performance- based reward systems, and fostering intellectual, social, and affective engagement.

Key Words: *Leadership Styles, Female Leaders, Employee Engagement*

CHAPTER ONE

1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on the background of the study, statement of problem, research questions, objectives, significance of the study, its limitations, scope, the study's organization, along with its description, and definition of key terms.

1.1. Background of the Study

Organizations are realizing more and more how important good leadership is in creating employee engagement in the fast-paced, cutthroat business world of today. One of the most important factors in every organization's performance is its leadership. According to Thanh and Quang (2022) leadership can be defined as "the art of influencing people so that they will strive willingly towards the achievement of goals." William (2014) mentioned that leadership is "the process of influencing others to achieve group or organizational goals". Gill (2012) stated that leadership is the process of directing members of an organization toward the accomplishment of a common objective through the use of a variety of behavioral techniques. Since leadership is crucial to the success of businesses, it has been recognized as one of the key subjects in organizational studies (Alghazo and Al-Anazi, 2016). According to Gameda and Lee (2020), employee engagement has become a critical component of corporate success, impacting retention, productivity, and overall performance.

Psychological qualities connected to spirit, absorption, and devotion to their job are characterized as employee engagement (Cahill et al., 2015). Another definition of employee engagement is "a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption," as provided by Anitha (2014). Employees that are engaged are more likely to go above and above the call of duty, show greater levels of dedication, and favorably impact the objectives of the company.

Several studies have examined the effects of various leadership philosophies on employee attitudes and actions, and leadership style has been found to be one of the major variables driving employee engagement. One of the main factors influencing employee engagement

is leadership style, which is described as the way in which leaders engage with and impact their followers (Avolio, Walumbwa, & Weber, 2009).

The connection between a leader's style and employee engagement has been the subject of several studies, with an emphasis on types including transformational, transactional, democratic, and laissez-faire leadership. Transformational leaders inspire and encourage their team by providing a compelling vision, whereas transactional leaders use dependent rewards and punishments to push performance (Mandal, 2018). Prior research indicates that both transformational and transactional leadership styles are positively connected with organizational commitment, work satisfaction, and employee engagement (Walumbwa et al., 2010; Liden, Hamzah & Abas, 2017). These leadership philosophies build workplaces that are encouraging and empowering, giving workers a feeling of direction, significance, and community. Nonetheless, little is still known about the precise effects of various leadership philosophies, such as democratic and laissez-faire leadership, on worker engagement (Davis, 2023). While laissez-faire leadership is typified by a hands-off attitude, with leaders giving minimal advice or direction to their followers, democratic leadership entails communicating with subordinates and taking their input into consideration throughout decision-making processes (Zanabazar, et al. 2023). Many empirical research investigates have been executed to know the impact leadership styles on employee interaction, despite their widespread use in corporate contexts.

Over the past ten years, it has become increasingly important to promote women into leadership roles. This is a result of the persistent reports of gender inequality in the workplace and in society (Smith and Suby-Long, 2019). Understanding the distinctive contributions of female leaders has become more important as the value of diversity and inclusion in the workplace has grown (Davis, 2023). According to Parveen and Tariq (2014) and Pasaribu (2017), women leaders' leadership styles frequently produced particular performance results and organizational cultures inside groups. Employee engagement is one of the performance outcomes that is closely related to leadership style (Hansen, Byrne, & Kiersch, 2013).

Like their male counterparts, female leaders can display a variety of leadership philosophies, and the impact of these philosophies on worker engagement can change based on the situation and culture of the company (Zhao, and Sheng, 2019). Studies conducted by Dwi and Muhammad (2021) and Davis (2023) indicate that female leaders possess unique leadership attributes and approaches that have the potential to enhance organizational results, such as employee engagement. According to Dwi and Muhammad (2021), teams led by women who exhibit transformative, empowering, and supporting leadership styles often have better levels of employee engagement. There is a need to investigate how female leaders' leadership philosophies, such as democratic and laissez- faire leadership, affect employee engagement given the rise in women in leadership roles.

Despite the fact that a great deal of research has been conducted on the subject, nothing was known about the specific effect that female leaders' styles have on how engaged workers are (Davis, 2023). The distinctive traits and methods that female leaders bring to the workplace—such as their focus on communication, empathy, and teamwork—have come to be more widely acknowledged in recent years (Zanabazar, et al. 2023). Nevertheless, there is still a dearth of empirical research, especially when it comes to firms that operate in Ethiopia, exploring the connection between the leadership styles of female executives and employee engagement.

Coca-Cola Beverages Africa-Ethiopia, established in 1959 GC, is a prominent soft drink manufacturing company in Ethiopia. Over its six-decade history, CCBA-Ethiopia has strategically positioned itself with manufacturing facilities in Addis Ababa, DireDawa, BahirDar, and Sebeta. Additionally, it acquired Ambo Mineral Water Share Company. The company currently boasts a workforce of 2,300 employees, with 229 individuals holding leadership positions. Among these leaders, 47 are female. Operating as a leading fast- moving consumer goods (FMCG) company in a dynamic industry, CCBA-Ethiopia recognizes the importance of employee engagement in fostering innovation and sustaining a competitive edge.

Understanding how the leadership styles of female leaders within CCBA-Ethiopia influence employee engagement can provide valuable insights for enhancing organizational effectiveness and fostering a positive work environment.

Thus, the purpose of this research is to ascertain how employee engagement at CCBA- Ethiopia is impacted by the managerial habits of female leaders. By examining the perceptions of employees and female leaders themselves, the study aims to uncover the various mechanisms by which distinct styles of female leadership affect levels of employee engagement in the workplace.

1.2. Statement of the problem

The importance of leadership in influencing employee engagement in firms has come to light more and more in recent years (Sinaga, 2017). Different methods and actions that make up a leader's style are important factors that affect how engaged their team is (Sharif, 2018). Although a lot of study has been done on leadership styles generally, more needs to be done to understand how employee engagement is especially impacted by the leadership style of female executives.

Even while more and more women are taking up leadership roles across a range of sectors, little is known about the precise effects of their leadership philosophies on worker engagement. The majority of the work that has been written about leadership and employee engagement (Ogbanna and Harris, 2000; Tarabishy et al, 2005; Yang, 2008; Wales et al, 2011) has concentrated on leadership in general and frequently ignores the unique traits and methods of female leaders. This neglect contributes to a lack of knowledge about the distinct traits and approaches to leadership that female leaders bring to the table and how this affects worker engagement.

There has been a lot of descriptive literature on the impact of leadership style on employee engagement; however, the findings of earlier studies have not always agreed with one another, and the impact of leadership style on employee engagement (Lawal, et al, 2018). As a result, a number of researchers looked into the effects of different leadership philosophies on worker interaction (Sadeli, 2012; Popli & Rizvi, 2016; Hansen, Byrne, & Kiersch, 2013; Sinaga, 2017). They discovered that worker engagement is positively correlated with both transactional and transformational leadership philosophies (Sadeli, 2012; Popli & Rizvi, 2016). Other research, however (Aziz et al., 2013; Lawal et al., 2014), was unable to identify any connection between certain leadership philosophies and worker engagement. Jing & Avery (2016) came to the conclusion that, despite the hypothesized link between leadership and engagement put out by certain academics, the present data are ambiguous and challenging to evaluate, making direct comparisons almost impossible. They rank the need for more research on this topic as critical.

Therefore, this indicates that there is a gap and unanswered questions with regard to leadership behaviors and their implications on employee engagement. As such, from the aforementioned issues the study thus directs to investigate the affect the leadership styles of women leaders have on employees' engagement in the case of CCBA-Ethiopia.

1.3. Research Questions

The study was designed to address the following research questions based on the problem:

- 1) What is CCBA-Ethiopia's employees engagement level?
- 2) In CCBA-Ethiopia, which leadership styles are dominantly implemented by the female leaders?
- 3) What is the effect of democratic leadership styles of female leaders on employee engagement in CCBA-Ethiopia?
- 4) What is the effect of transformational leadership styles of female leaders on employees' motivation in Coca-Cola Beverages Africa-Ethiopia?
- 5) What is the effect of transactional leadership styles of female leaders on employee engagement in CCBA-Ethiopia?
- 6) What is the effect of laissez-faire leadership styles of female leaders on employee engagement in CCBA-Ethiopia?

1.4. Objectives of study

1.4.1. General objective

The study's main objective of this research is to examine the effect of leadership styles of female leaders on employees' engagement in Coca-Cola Beverages Africa-Ethiopia.

1.4.2. Specific objectives

The specific objectives of this research are:

- 1) To assess employee engagement level in Coca-Cola Beverages Africa-Ethiopia (CCBA-Ethiopia).
- 2) To identify the predominant leadership styles demonstrated by female leaders in CCBA-Ethiopia.

- 3) To explain the effect of democratic leadership styles of female leaders on employee engagement in CCBA-Ethiopia.
- 4) To explain the effect of transformational leadership styles of female leaders on employees' motivation in Coca-Cola Beverages Africa-Ethiopia.
- 5) To explain the effect of transactional leadership styles of female leaders on employee engagement in CCBA-Ethiopia.
- 6) To identify the effect of laissez-faire leadership styles of female leaders on employee engagement in CCBA-Ethiopia.

1.5. Significance of Study

The research provides insight into female leaders' leadership style and its impact on employee engagement with specific reference to Coca-Cola Beverages Africa-Ethiopia. Thus, the study benefits the case company by determining the kinds of leadership style has the highest effect on employee engagement. The research is significant as it identifies the current dominant leadership style among female leaders at the company that promotes its employees' engagement and also indicates the desired future leadership style needed to improve employees' engagement which the company is embarking on effectively. This, in turn, helps the company to revisit its leadership practices and develop workable plans for adopting the best leadership style that engages workers, which may ultimately contribute to the company's long-term success and workers' well-being. Overall, this research can provide insights into effective leadership practices that promote employee engagement, contributing to the development of strategies for enhancing organizational performance and fostering inclusive leadership cultures.

In addition, the study contributes to the empirical literature on employee engagement and leadership style, which will be valuable to researchers and future scholars. Furthermore, the study will identify areas that may be researched further by future researchers.

1.6. Scope of the Study

The scope of the study was limited in terms of concept, methodology, time, and geography. Conceptually, this study examines the effect of the leadership style of female leaders on employee engagement. The researcher believes that the study will be completed if it covers all

employees working in CCBA-Ethiopia and assesses all variables affecting employee engagement. Conversely, because of resource constraints, the researcher was forced to delimit the study into the following areas:

- Although CCBA-Ethiopia employs staff across multiple regions in Ethiopia, this research was confined to employees situated solely in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.
- Despite the myriad variables influencing employee engagement, this study narrows its focus exclusively to democratic, transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles.

This company was selected due to various problems within the Coca-Cola Beverages Africa-Ethiopia mostly related to a lack of clear leadership, lack of amicable relationships between leaders and subordinates, and lack of employee engagement among others. Particularly with regard to the seamless research conditioning, the study's geographic boundaries were established at Coca-Cola Beverages Africa-Ethiopia in Addis Ababa.

In terms of methodology, the study used a quantitative approach and an explanatory research design. The reason for using explanatory research is to know the cause and effect of leadership style on employee engagement. Explanatory research design is particularly useful when the researcher seeks to explain the relationship between variables (Newing,2011). By identifying the relationship between variables, researchers can understand how changes in one variable may affect another.

In terms of time frames, the study was carried out using a cross-sectional strategy, which implies that data was gathered at once rather than frequently where the required study data was collected from current employees of CCBA-Ethiopia between March to April 2024.

1.7. Limitation of Study

The research on the effect of women's leadership styles on employee engagement faced several limitations that needed to be acknowledged. Firstly, there was a risk of perception biases regarding gender stereotypes influencing the evaluation of leadership styles. Preconceived notions about women's leadership abilities may have affected how their styles were perceived, potentially introducing bias into the results. Secondly, the study encountered self-reporting bias,

as employee engagement was assessed through self-report measures. This method was susceptible to employees providing socially desirable responses or being influenced by factors such as job satisfaction or organizational loyalty when evaluating their engagement levels. Additionally, the study's scope was limited to Coca-Cola Beverages Africa-Ethiopia in Addis Ababa, which may have limited the generalizability of the findings to other industries, organizational contexts, or cultural settings within Ethiopia. Future studies could target addressing these limitations by utilizing diverse samples, objective measures of engagement, and the intersectionality gender and leadership styles in different contexts.

1.8. Definition of Terms

Leadership according to Van Heerden, 2010 leadership is a process of influencing others' commitment towards realizing their full potential in achieving a value-added, shared vision, with passion and integrity

Women leadership refers to the practice of women assuming leadership roles and positions within various spheres of society, including politics, business, academia, non-profit organizations, and communities (Dwi & Muhammad, 2021).

Leadership style is a structure that consists of different parts such as traits, skills, and behavior employed by the managers when they communicate with their subordinates (Jeremy, et al, 2011).

Democratic leadership is a style of leadership where decision-making is decentralized and shared among the group or team members (Zhao & Sheng, 2019).

Transformational leadership is a process where “one or more persons engage with others in such a way that leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality” (Davis 2023).

Transactional leadership is a style of leadership that involves an exchange process that results in follower compliance with the leader's request but is not likely to generate enthusiasm and commitment to the task objective.

Laissez-fairies is a style of leadership in which leaders take a hands-off approach to leadership, providing minimal guidance or direction to their team members (Zhao and Sheng, 2019).

Employee engagement refers to the level of emotional commitment and involvement that employees have towards their work, their organization, and its goals (Gibbons, 2006).

1.9. Organization of the study

The study is organized into five chapters. Chapter One discusses the introduction part. It contains the background to the research study, presents the statement of the problem, and research objectives. Also, the chapter has the significance, scope, and limitations of the study. Chapter two contains a theoretical review, an empirical review of previous studies, and a conceptual framework of study. Chapter three outlines the research methodology adopted in this study. Results and discussion are described in chapter four. Finally, chapter five deals with a summary of major findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

2. RELATED LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, the researcher reviews relevant literature on theoretical, empirical, and conceptual framework issues that are found to be essential to the research inquiry. Thus, the first section discussed conceptual review related to the study variables which were considered to lay a solid foundation for the research. It highlights the concept of leadership, Types of leadership styles, the impact of leadership, and relation and interaction to employee engagement. Next, a summary of some of the related previous work on this study was discussed. In the final analysis, the chapter reviewed the literature related to the key study variables as presented in the conceptual framework.

2.1. Review of Theoretical Literature

2.1.1. Theories of Leadership

Several theories on leadership have been put forth to help leaders and managers understand the concept of leadership. According to William (2014), theories of leadership are classified into three theories, which are trait theories, behavioral theories, and contingency theories.

2.1.1.1. Trait Theories of Leadership

The 1940s saw a rise in the popularity of the trait approach. The tenet of this school is that good leaders have similar characteristics. It implies that leaders are not created; they are born. Research indicates that the origin of trait theory may be traced back to the "great man" idea (William, 2014), which asserts that leaders possess distinct intrinsic or inborn qualities that differentiate them from non-leaders. Finding out what made these leaders exceptional and selecting future leaders who exhibit similar qualities or those who are teachable were the goals of the trait approach (Daft and Marcic, 2013). The characteristic method is focused on identifying the human qualities that serve as the foundation for effective leadership, according to Jones and George (2009). These researchers believe that effective leaders possess some specific set of personal qualities that distinguish them from non-leaders.

While studying Gender and Leadership Style with a Meta-Analysis methods, Alice and Blair (1990) looked into leadership styles based on gender assessed the factors that influence leadership styles. The authors indicated leadership style has been influenced by gender stereotypes in general. The researcher looked in detail into the overall nature of the leadership styles, nature and intensity of the leaders. The current research considers value of such previous studies conducted detail analysis to learn more on the leadership styles of women leaders and its relationship with a more general organization factor [i.e. employee engagement].

According to William (2013), the following traits set leaders apart from non-leaders: motivation, a desire to lead, honesty and integrity, self-assurance, emotional stability, cognitive capacity, and business acumen. According to Jones and George (2009), leaders who don't possess all these qualities are seen to be ineffective. On the other hand, other studies (Hellriegel et al., 2010) contend that attributes by themselves are insufficient to explain a leader's success because some effective leaders lack certain features and those who do not perform well in their leadership capacities.

Some traits did, however, appear more frequently than others, including technical skill, friendliness, task motivation, application to task, group task supportiveness, social skill, emotional control, administrative skill, general charisma, and intelligence, even though the results of the various trait studies had been inconsistent. In a meta-analysis, Kilpatrick and Locke (1991) found some consistency regarding the following traits: business acumen; honesty and integrity; self-confidence, including the capacity to withstand setbacks, stand firm, and be emotionally resilient; and drive to achieve. They also stress the need to control how other people perceive these traits. A helpful historical comparison of the features found in various investigations is given by Northouse (1997).

Zaharah and Abu (2008) showed an important finding in the approach women leaders follow. Analysis of the data showed that in the context of leadership; understanding and style employed by women leaders is participatory or collaborative in nature. The result also showed, women leadership relates more to a holistic and “bottom-ups” approach in developing the community. This approach is assumed to bring a success and impact on community development compared to the “top-down” approach commonly utilized by male community leaders. Zaharah and

Abu (2008) The findings are important in the sense that the current research looks into specific leadership styles, one or two of which [i.e; the democratic leadership styles and laissez fair) are similar to what Zaharah and Abu (2008) has coined as 'participatory or collaborative'.

Perhaps, the most well-known expression of the trait approach is the work relating to charismatic leadership. For instance, charismatic leaders are characterized by traits like dominance, a strong desire to influence others, self-assurance, and a strong sense of their moral principles, according to House (1976). In a somewhat different direction, Goleman (1998) conducted a meta-analysis of 188 distinct firms' frameworks for leadership competency. The skills associated with exceptional leadership performance were outlined in these frameworks. Technical, cognitive, and emotional competencies were divided into three groups for analysis by Goleman (1998), who concluded that emotional capabilities "proved to be twice as important as others" based on the ratios between each category. He continues by outlining self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills as the five facets of emotional intelligence.

According to Rajan and Van Eupen (1997), emotional intelligence is a strong suit for leaders and encompasses qualities like self-awareness, enthusiasm, resilience, and the capacity to interpret others' emotions. They contend that the use and development of people skills depend heavily on these characteristics. According to Heifetz and Laurie (1997), a leader must possess "the emotional capacity to tolerate uncertainty, frustration, and pain" to control emotional discomfort in their companies, which is unavoidable in scenarios of transition. In a similar vein, Goffe (2002) notes that self-awareness, empathy, and a knowledge of situational requirements are all necessary for inspirational leaders. They also need to recognize and accept their shortcomings, within reason.

2.1.1.2. Behavioral Theories of Leadership

The trait investigations yielded equivocal findings. Among other aspects, traits were difficult to quantify. Measuring qualities like honesty, integrity, loyalty, or effort, for example, was difficult. This circumstance necessitated the discovery of an alternative method in the study of leadership: the behavioral school. The 1940s through 1960s saw the rise in popularity of the behavioral or style school. It was considered that styles or actions are adopted by effective leaders. In essence, it assumes that good leaders can be created. Most well-known theories

position leaders in a two-dimensional matrix or on a one-dimensional continuum by measuring them against one or two characteristics (Blake & Mouton, 1978; Hershey & Blanchard, 1988). The parameters include concern for people or relationships, concern for production, use of authority, involvement of the team in decision-making, involvement of the team in decision-making, and flexibility versus the application of rules. These types of leadership behaviors are predominantly practiced by most of the leaders in the United States, Germany, and other countries (Jones and George, 2009). According to William (2013), the behavior model of leadership consists of two models: considerate structure and initiating structure.

William (2013) explains that considerate structure refers to the degree to which a leader is friendly, approachable, supportive, and expresses concern towards employees. Consideration behavior can also be defined as the extent to which leaders are concerned about developing close and interpersonal relationships with their subordinates. Such leaders are approachable and employ two-way communication to demonstrate social and emotional support to their subordinates while helping them to feel comfortable about themselves, their colleagues, and their situation in general (Northouse, 2010). According to Halloway (2012), leaders who engage in considerate leadership behavior play a critical role in the growth of their subordinates, ensuring that necessary support, assistance, and information are provided to enable subordinates to perform the job to the best of their abilities. They also allow individuals to make decisions in their work and show appreciation for the work done. Research carried out at the University of Michigan shows that only considerate leaders are linked with effective leadership (William 2013).

Hellriegel et al, (2010) state that initiating structure points to vigorous planning, organizing, controlling, and coordination of employee tasks. William (2013) points out that a leader who employs initiating structure designs the role of junior employees by putting in place goals, providing direction, setting deadlines, and assigning tasks. Such leaders are reliant on the one-way communication method as the effective tool they employ to provide explanations on what needs to be done or what is expected to be done by their subordinates. Halloway (2012) explains that in the initiating structure leadership style, the implementation of the plan, coordination, and scheduling of the work-related activities, is the responsibility of the task-oriented leaders. Jones and George (2009) found inconclusive results between the considerate and initiating structure and

performance. This is because some leaders are believed to be effective when they do not practice both consideration and initiating-structure behaviors, while other leaders are ineffective when they practice both considerate and initiating-structure behaviors (Jones and George, 2009).

2.1.1.3. Contingency Theory

The contingency theory of leadership was initially introduced in 1994 by an Austrian psychologist, Fred Edward Fiedler. The theory holds that what pre-determines the effectiveness of a particular leader will be based on the factors at that particular organization. Particularly, each organization has unique features, and therefore favorable factors are most likely to result in efficient leadership. The theory thus holds that there is no single best way of managing organizations since each organization faces unique sets of internal and external constraints (Raduanet al, 2009).

According to Hellriegel et al (2010), the contingency model of leadership consists of four models, namely: Fiedler's contingency model; Hersey and Blanchard situational model; the House's Path-goal model, and the Leader-participation model.

Some research areas are not limited to specific organization and even consider more broader societal issues. For example, Zaharah and Abu (2008) looks into more generic area by investigating the Women Leadership and Community Development with a unique and qualitative methodology. The researchers strongly claim that community affairs and administration has been the domain of men traditionally and it is clear gender imbalance of leaders and office bearers across community, local council and associations exist. Zaharah and Abu (2008) states women have not been active in local politics and are relatively inactive in public processes due to institutional, socio-economic and cultural constraints but this trend is changing now. The current research confirms this presumption.

Lorsch (2008) stated that the concept of contingency theory of leadership is not new. According to Lorsch (2008), the work began in the 1960s when several scholars and academics embarked on research, which pointed out that effective leadership style relies on the situation. Fiedler's contingency model suggests that to maximize work group performance, a particular leadership style would be effective if matched with the right situation (William, 2013). According to McLaurine (2006), Fiedler's contingency model of leadership states that a leadership style that

works successfully in one situation cannot work successfully in another situation unless it is matched with the proper situation. Hariri (2011) suggests that Fiedler's contingency theory is an extensively used theory among the contingent theories in the study of organizational culture and leadership. According to William (2014), leadership styles are fixed, meaning that leaders are unable to change their leadership styles. However, they can be effective when their styles are matched with the right situation.

The situational model of leadership which was put forth by Hersey and Blanchard is an extension of the behavioral approach (Daft and Marcic, 2013). The situational model focuses on the characteristics of the subordinates in determining the most suitable leadership behavior. The situational approach is based on the belief that subordinates vary in their level of readiness or maturity which is determined by their degree of willingness and ability when performing a vague task (Hellriegel et al, 2010). In this given, these authors note that leaders need to be flexible to adapt to changing situations. Accordingly, they define willingness as the mixture of confidence, commitment, and motivation, as such a subordinate can be high or low in one of the three variables mentioned (Daft and Marcic, 2013). Van Der Walt (2015) underscores that to ensure that subordinates acquire essential skills relevant to optimal performance, leaders need to embrace appropriate leadership styles in the early stages. In contrast, the Fiedler contingency model argues that a leader cannot adjust his or her leadership style to maximize the group work performance. This is to say, a specific leadership style should be matched with the right situation (Jones and Geroge, 2009).

The Houses of Path Goal model was put forward by Robert House and is considered one of the most effective approaches to leadership (Ratyan and Mohd, 2013). Jones and George (2009) state that the Houses of Path-goal model is centered on the idea that effective leaders encourage subordinates to accomplish objectives by recognizing the results that employees are attempting to attain from the workplace, issuing incentives to employees for exceptional performance and accomplishment of goals, and clear the path for employees to attain business goals. According to William (2013), the Houses of Path-goal model indicates that effective leaders can enhance subordinates' gratification and performance by explaining and simplifying the path to goals, and by raising the number and types of rewards offered to subordinates to accomplish goals. Vander Walt (2015) elucidates that the decision to help subordinates in their path to accomplish the goals

of the business depends on the leader's willingness. Leaders must explain how the subordinates can attain organizational goals, deal with hitches that are making it difficult for subordinates to achieve stated goals, and then identify diverse rewards that will inspire subordinates to attain goals (William, 2013).

Hellriegel et al. (2010) state that the leader-participation model is the latest contribution to the contingency models. The leader-participation model was introduced by Victor Vroom and Phillip Yetton. Researchers (Jago, 1988) argue that the leader-participative model's primary focus is on the decision-making process in the organization. This model enables leaders to determine the level of employee involvement regarding decision-making in the organization (William, 2013). Hellriegel et al. (2010) state that the leader-participation model offers a set of rules needed to decide the level and method of employees' participation in the decision-making process in the business, which has to be supported in different situations. Leader-participation model notes that a leader's behavior can be adjusted to be either structured or unstructured to fit the task structure (Hellriegel, 2010). The leader-participation model allows employees to make inputs in terms of decision-making within the organization. As a result, employee participation will enhance manager's leadership skills and approach to decision-making in the business (Zhao & Sheng, 2019).

Overall, following the above literature on leadership theories, it becomes evident why there many theories where leadership qualities are associated with the leader. There is no single theory that can be used to explain the traits and behaviors of leaders. As such it becomes important to understand which type of leadership styles leaders engage in.

2.1.2. Leadership Style

Ngodo (2008) states that leadership style is the process that allows leaders and subordinates to persuade and motivate each other to achieve business goals. Also, studies by (Jeremy, et al, 2011) posit that leadership style is a structure that consists of different parts such as traits, skills, and behavior employed by the managers when they communicate with their subordinates. Several studies (Obiwuru, et al, 2011) have been conducted to examine different leadership styles practiced by business owners/managers. This study is going to examine the four most common leadership styles of female leaders, which include: democratic transformational

transactional, and Laissez-Faire leadership styles. These leadership styles are selected because, among various leadership styles, these four are currently the most practiced leadership styles among female leaders in the current business company context (Yang, 2018; Zhao and Sheng, 2019; Dwi and Muhammad 2021; Davis, 2023).

2.1.2.1. Democratic Leadership Style

The democratic leadership style, also known as the participative leadership style, derives its roots from the Transformational theory (Burke et al., 2006; Rad & Yarmohammadian, 2006; Vigoda-Gadot, 2007). Democratic leadership is a style of leadership where decision-making is decentralized and shared among the group or team members. In this leadership style, the leader encourages open communication, participation, and collaboration among team members to reach consensus and make decisions collectively (Zhao and Sheng, 2019).

In this style, leadership focuses on change, visionary leadership, and enhancing individual and organizational outcomes. Members are given the chance to build up their leadership skills, participate in leadership, and contribute to decision-making (Vigoda-Gadot, 2007). This leadership style is arguably more efficient than autocratic leadership (MacBeath, 2005). Employees feel their opinions, suggestions, and ideas are taken into consideration. Although members enjoy a certain level of autonomy, it works effectively in situations where members are highly skilled, passionate, and more satisfied about their jobs as in situations where the laissez-faire leadership style is utilized (Davis, 2023).

Overall, democratic leadership promotes collaboration, participation, and empowerment, fostering a sense of ownership and commitment among team members. While it can be highly effective in promoting creativity, innovation, and employee engagement, it may require more time and effort to reach decisions compared to more autocratic leadership styles (Zhao and Sheng, 2019).

2.1.2.2. Transformational Leadership Style

Transformational leaders' behavior stems from their personal values and beliefs, and this inspires subordinates to exceed expectations (Dwi & Muhammad, 2021). According to Davis (2023), transformational leadership is a process where "one or more persons engage with others in such a

way that leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality". In this leadership style, followers feel trust, admiration, loyalty, and respect towards the leader, and are motivated to do more than originally expected (Bass, 1985; Katz & Kahn, 1978). The transformational leader motivates by making followers more aware of the importance of task outcomes, encouraging them to prioritize the organization or team over self-interest, and activating their higher-order needs. They also encourage followers to think critically and find new approaches to their work, resulting in intellectual stimulation (Dwi & Muhammad, 2021). Consequently, this leads to increased performance, satisfaction, and commitment to the organization's goals (Zhao & Sheng, 2019).

Organizations that employ a communal, collaborative, or participative approach to leadership tend to favor the transformational leadership style (Jogulu, 2010). The key traits of transformational leaders are largely holistic, including charisma, inspiration, intellectual stimulation, and consideration for others. These leaders transcend self-interest and focus on promoting vision, innovation, and knowledge transfer (Bucic et al., 2010). The four key characteristics of transformational leadership are known as the 4-I's: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Jogulu, 2010). Transformational leadership is known for its proactive approach, as it motivates followers to prioritize the collective good of the organization over individual interests (Bodla & Nawaz, 2010). Idealized influence refers to the leader's social charisma and the sense of confidence, experience, and power they convey. These leaders are focused on the beliefs, values, and higher-order ideals of the organization. Inspirational motivation involves the way leaders energize their followers toward goals and the company's vision. Individual consideration refers to the transformational leader's behavior of attending to and supporting the unique needs of each follower. These leaders contribute to their followers' satisfaction by devoting attention and care to addressing the specific requirements of all workers (Bodla & Nawaz, 2010).

Zhao & Sheng (2019) proposed that the four key components of transformational leadership are charisma, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration.

- **Charisma** or idealized influence/attribute (CHM) Charisma, or idealized influence or attributes, transformational leaders exhibit charisma or idealized influence, characterized by a strong vision, sense of purpose, and ability to instill pride,

respect, and trust in their followers (Humphreys & Einstein, 2003). This charismatic behavior also inspires followers to transcend self-interest for the greater good, providing reassurance and promoting confidence in achieving organizational goals (Dwi & Muhammad, 2021).

- **Inspirational motivation** Transformational leadership often features inspirational motivation, where the leader sets high standards and serves as an inspirational role model. Followers are emotionally inspired by the leader's appeal to raise awareness and understanding of shared desired outcomes (Davis, 2023). This is demonstrated through communicating ambitious expectations, using symbolic gestures to focus efforts, and expressing important purposes in simple terms. The leader exhibits optimism about the future, articulates a compelling vision, and paints an exciting picture of organizational change. Motivation is fostered by giving meaning and challenge to followers' work, arousing individual and team spirit, and displaying enthusiasm and optimism. The leader encourages followers to envision positive future states for both the organization and them.
- **Intellectual stimulation (IS)** provides followers with challenging new ideas and encourages them to break away from the old ways of thinking. The leader is characterized as one promoting intelligence, rationality, logical thinking, and careful problem-solving. The attributes include seeking differing perspectives when solving problems, suggesting new ways of examining how to complete assignments, and encouraging rethinking of ideas that have not been questioned in the past (Zhao & Sheng, 2019). The transformational leader fosters innovation and creativity among followers by encouraging them to question underlying assumptions, reframe problems from new perspectives, and approach familiar situations with fresh approaches."
- **Individualized consideration (IC)** The fourth dimension of transformational leadership is "individual consideration" which is concerned with developing followers through coaching and mentoring (Dwi & Muhammad, 2021). The leader takes the time to deeply understand the distinct qualities and needs of each of their followers. They then provide personalized mentorship and support to help the followers grow, thrive, and achieve their goals. The leader acts as a teacher, helping

their team members develop and maximize their strengths. They also listen carefully to the concerns and challenges faced by the followers, tailoring their approach to address the unique circumstances of each individual. By treating each follower as a unique person, the leader is able to raise their level of maturity and empower them to find effective ways of tackling their goals and obstacles (Zhao & Sheng, 2019).

2.1.2.3. Transactional Leadership Style

Transactional leadership is one prominent leadership style in the corporate sphere. Through an exchange process, followers under transactional leadership comply with requests from the leader but are unlikely to become enthused and committed to the task at hand. The organization's leader concentrates on getting internal actors to complete the activities needed to achieve its objectives (Boehnke et al., 2003). The primary tasks of a transactional leader are to provide clear understanding of the road to goal achievement among internal players, eliminate any obstacles inside the system, and inspire actors to achieve predefined goals (Davis, 2023). Two aspects of the transactional leadership style—active management by exception and dependent reward were introduced by Bass.

Jogulu (2010) defined transactional leadership as transactions made between the leaders and followers depending on work performance. Jogulu built on the concepts of Burns (1978) who identified the transactional leadership style as using power and control to exact behaviors from followers. Transactional leaders set up agreements, explaining rewards and incentives for specific outcomes of followers' behavior. Jogulu noted that transactional leadership has a universal appeal because it can adapt to the surrounding environment. Jogulu also argued that the transactional leadership style was dependent on the amount of power respective cultures assigned to those leadership positions.

Transactional leaders also known as authoritative leaders typically employ organizational bureaucracy, policy, power, and authority to preserve control (Bennet, 2009). Previous leadership scholars like Podsakoff, (2010) have identified contingent reward, which involves leaders clarifying roles and task expectations and providing contingent rewards on the fulfillment of contractual obligations, as the principal behavior to represent transactional leadership because it “captures the exchange notion fundamental to transactional leader behavior” (Podsakoff, 1990,).

Exchanges or transactions that fall under the category of contingent compensation may involve intangible (like pay raises) or tangible (like recognition) goods. The transactional leadership style establishes objectives and adjusts work outcomes by rewarding followers for reaching them. It is defined by an exchange process built on an implicit agreement between leaders and followers (Bodla & Nawaz, 2010).

The transactional style has two primary factors, contingent rewards leadership that clarifies roles and rewards accomplishment, and management by exception (Bodla & Nawaz, 2010). Contingent reward enables the followers to perceive the consistency in leadership behavior as well as the reliability of their leaders.

The leader delegated or obtained agreements on tasks that must be completed and promised or offered rewards to others in exchange for completing the assignment satisfactorily" (Avolio, 2019). These incentives are tied to the requirements of the followers, which the leader determines and connects to the goals the leader has for the group. The workers can rely on the honorarium from their leaders for their efforts through instrumental support or assistance in confrontations with superiors. CR builds the basis of the receptivity of transformational leadership (Davis, 2023).

2.1.2.4. Laissez-Faire Leadership Style

A laissez-faire leader does not personally manage the team members; instead, they rely on regular feedback and communication. Rather, this approach gives the team members complete independence and self-governance to decide how to finish the task (MacBeath, 2015). But if the team members ask for help, the leader is still there to offer advice (Eagly, Johannesen & Van Engen, 2013).

Laissez-faire leadership essentially entails the leader taking a hands-off approach and providing the team with little guidance or supervision. The team is empowered to operate autonomously and self-direct their efforts when the leader assigns authority and decision-making responsibilities to them (Zhao and Sheng, 2019).

According to Hannah et al. (2008), in situations where team members lack the knowledge or abilities to finish a task or make wise decisions, a laissez-faire leadership style may not be the

best course of action. The job may not be completed on schedule, may contain serious errors, or may completely stray from the intended course if the team is unable to set deadlines, manage projects, and address problems on its own. Rather than using this hands-off leadership style as the standard for everyday corporate operations, it is better suited for circumstances in which the leader is certain that the team possesses the necessary skills to operate independently (Davis, 2023).

In general, teams with high levels of talent, motivation, and autonomy without constant supervision can benefit from laissez-faire leadership. However, this approach might not be appropriate when the team needs the leader to provide more direction, guidance, and support (Zhao and Sheng, 2019).

2.1.3. Concept of Employee Engagement

In organizations, workers have differences when it comes to their engagement levels in workplace and the amount of dedication they put forth in their jobs. Over the past 20 years, employee involvement has emerged as a relatively new notion (Rafferty, Maben, West & Robinson, 2005). Although it is a broad concept without a single, widely accepted definition, this is not exceptional, also, problematic because psychological concepts have had a lack of clarity from the outset when they were introduced to the social sciences (Macey & Schneider, 2008). The study of engagement in work environments has grown in importance as a research topic as a result of the tendency toward "positive psychology," which emphasizes human strengths and optimal functioning rather than flaws and malfunctions (Macey & Schneider, 2008). The majority of researchers concur that employee engagement originated from earlier concepts like employee commitment, job satisfaction, and organizational citizen behavior (Robinson, Perryman & Hayday, 2004), even though they have differing opinions about how to define the construct of work engagement (Bakker, Schaufeli, et al., 2008). Employee engagement is more expansive and has multiple definitions, even though it is connected to and includes these ideas.

Gibbons (2006) hypothesized employee engagement to be "a heightened emotional and intellectual connection that an employee has for his or her organization, manager, or coworkers that, in turn, influences him/her to apply additional discretionary effort to his/her work." Additionally, it is defined as "a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is

characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption” in line with Schaufeli, Salanova, and others (2002). According to Baumruk (2004), it is the ability and willingness of workers to contribute to the success of their organization, primarily by making a sustained, discretionary effort. It can also refer to the level of effort put forth in job duties and the mental and emotional dedication of staff members to the company.

When workers are engaged, they give their all each and every day, investing more time, effort, and intelligence to help the company reach its objectives. One of the eminent academics who popularized the idea of employee engagement is Anitha (2014). He suggests three psychological prerequisites that must be met for participation. Psychological meaningfulness is the degree to which workers believe their work is important and worthwhile; psychological safety is the degree to which workers feel at ease in their roles within the organizations; and psychological availability is the degree to which workers can access resources, tools, and skills to carry out their responsibilities within the organization (Davis, 2023).

Workers that are engaged are totally absorbed in what they do, and they care about the company's success and will work very enthusiastically to make it succeed (Seijts & Crim, 2006). Scholars Harter and Schmidt (2008) have defined it as an individual's complete engagement and excitement for their work, while others have defined it as a person's contentment and eagerness for their work.

The degree to which staff members are driven to contribute to the success of the company, feel a feeling of belonging there, and are dedicated to their work is known as employee engagement. There are various types and ways of fostering employee engagement, which can be categorized as follows:

Anitha (2014) identified three different types of employee-engagement:

- (i) **Emotional Engagement:** is type of engagement refers to the emotional connection that employees have with their work and the organization. Employees that are emotionally engaged feel committed to their job, derive purpose and are fulfilled from it, and are deeply invested in the organization's mission and values;
- (ii) **Cognitive Engagement:** Its engagement involves employees' intellectual involvement in

their work. Engaged employees are mentally stimulated by their tasks, actively seek opportunities for learning and growth, and demonstrate high levels of concentration, creativity, and problem-solving skills;

- (iii) **Behavioral Engagement:** It reviews employees' activities and attitudes in the workplace. Engaged employees exhibit proactive behaviors, such as going extra miles for their responsibilities, partnering with co-workers, taking initiative, demonstrating commitment to achieving organizational goals (Anitha, 2014).

This study employs the ISA Engagement Scale. It is a measurement tool used to assess employee engagement within organizations (Soane, et al. 2012). ISA stands for "Institute for Social and Academic Advancement," which is an organization that developed this scale. The ISA Engagement Scale is designed to capture various dimensions of employee engagement, including emotional, cognitive, and behavioral aspects. The scale typically consists of a series of Likert-type statements or questions that employees respond to, indicating that they agree or disagree with each statement.

Intellectual engagement refers to employees' cognitive involvement in their work tasks and the intellectual stimulation they derive from their jobs. This dimension of engagement focuses on the extent to which employees are mentally engaged, challenged, and motivated by their work. **Social engagement** pertains to employees' relationships with their colleagues, supervisors, and the broader organizational community. This dimension of engagement focuses on the quality of interpersonal interactions and the sense of belonging and connectedness employees feel within the organization.

Affective engagement describes how emotionally invested and connected workers are to their jobs and the company. This dimension of engagement focuses on employees' feelings of enthusiasm, passion, and dedication toward their jobs (Soane, et al. 2012).

2.2. Review of Empirical Literature

To evaluate and investigate the impact of leadership style on employee engagement, numerous researchers have conducted a number of studies. Every study has its own unique features and is carried out in various nations and circumstances. As a result, numerous research publications were analyzed in this area to support the study.

Employee-engagement and transformational leadership were studied by Zhu, Avolio, and Walumbwa (2009). Data was gathered from a sample of 48 supervisors and 140 followers from a variety of South African sectors. The results of hierarchical linear modeling indicate that the positive association between employee engagement and transformative leadership is moderated by follower characteristics. More significantly, though, these researchers contend that transformative leadership raises employee engagement, especially when workers are given the intellectual stimulation, they need to be imaginative and creative thinkers.

Using a sample of 150 respondents from Intel Malaysia, Padmanathan (2010) looked at the effects of transactional and transformational leadership styles on worker engagement. Utilizing the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire and the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale, two structured surveys, data was gathered. Employee engagement and transactional leadership are statistically correlated, according to correlation and multiple regression analyses.

The present study's results are also supported by research by Tims, Bakker, and Xanthopoulou (2011) that looked at how transformational leaders raise worker engagement. The sample comprised 42 workers from two distinct consulting firms located in the Netherlands. Of the sample, eighty-four percent were consultants for a company that hired temporary workers, and sixteen percent were employed by an industrial consulting firm. A diary survey and a general questionnaire were used to gather data over the course of five consecutive workdays. According to the study's findings, transformational leaders are more able to inspire, encourage, and give their workers' needs extra consideration. This has a favorable impact on employee engagement.

Rosli (2012) analyzed the connection between transformational-leadership, and employee motivation in Malaysia, and discovered that there was an important relationship between transformational leadership and employee engagement. In the German context, Katharina (2014) conducted a study to analyze, if women can have a positive impact on employee engagement due to their leadership style. Qualitative theoretic information was gathered from academic literature. A mixed strategy, combining qualitative and quantitative methods, was selected for the empirical section, and female CEOs of small and medium- sized family businesses participated in semi-structured interviews. The outcome shown that female leaders, who frequently adopt a transformational leadership style akin to that required to boost employee engagement, can positively influence employee engagement. However, the author discovered that there are several

important factors that encourage employee participation. Consequently, women who are only transformative leaders are unable to maintain a high degree of engagement within their workforce.

According to Devi and Narayanamma's (2016) research, there is a correspondence between employee engagement, and both transactional and transformational leadership styles; however, the association is stronger for transformational leadership. Indeed, fostering a high degree of employee engagement is significantly impacted by employee-oriented leadership. Similarly, Othman et al., (2017) assert that transformational leadership plays a major role in an organization's capacity to grow. They build trust with their employees and provide opportunities for advancement, which boost productivity and promote engagement. By exhibiting an enthusiastic and excellent work ethic, transformational leadership can inspire and improve staff engagement (Yang et al., 2020).

In addition, Valdiserri and Wilson (2019), who observed the impact of leadership behavior and employee engagement among small-businesses in West-Virginia and Pennsylvania, decided that transformational and transactional leadership behavior contributes to employee engagement in a small business. Employee engagement and transformative and transactional leadership were highly correlated. The study conducted by Ahmad (2019) looked at how leadership behavior affected SMEs' employees' engagement in Malaysia's services sector. The findings demonstrated the strong correlations between various leadership trajectories and worker engagement and transformational leadership influenced more significantly to the engagement of SMEs than transactional leadership behavior.

Another important study is conducted by Florence (1993) on women, leadership and empowerment. When it comes to the women leadership studies, the author claims most of the work that had been done in the past were carried out with men and male leaders and it is only during the last decade or so have investigators turned to studying females in positions of authority. The researchers forward that by ignoring gender as a variable in studies on leadership, researchers created blanks in theoretical and research designs. As a result, such exclusion of gender effects may have been due to the fact that in the real-world women seldom occupied leadership positions, either through appointment or through group consensus. Florence (1993) The current research captures the observed gap and look in to score of leadership styles exhibited by

women leader in the work environment and its general impact.

In a study published in 2019, Zhao and Sheng (2019) using the hierarchical regression approach, 335 valid questionnaire responses, and the social exchange theory to investigate the moderating role of job structure and the effects of charismatic and authoritarian leadership on employee engagement. The findings indicate a strong positive association between vigor, devotion, and absorption as well as a significant positive correlation between charismatic leadership and employee engagement. There is a considerable negative correlation between authoritarian leadership and both energy and dedication as well as staff engagement. The relationship between authoritarian leadership and employee engagement is moderated by the job structure.

In order to better understand how talent management strategies affect employee engagement, Dwi and Muhammad (2021) studied subordinates who had female direct supervisors and the effects of both transformational and transactional leadership styles. Online surveys were issued in light of the fact that the research was done during the Covid- 19 epidemic. In addition to applying the mediation analysis suggested by Baron & Kenny, the data were subjected to a multiple regression analysis. The study discovered that female leaders did, in fact, employ both leadership philosophies. Nonetheless, the findings indicated that there may be some partial mediation in the association between employee engagement and transformative leadership style. The association between a transactional leadership style and employee engagement was found to be fully validated by mediation.

Mekuria (2021) carried out research in the Ethiopian environment to evaluate the impact of workers' engagement in Bunna International Bank branches in Addis Ababa. A systematic random sampling technique was used in the investigation, which involved 187 sample sizes. Using SPSS software version 20, a table, bivariate correlation, independent sample T-test, one-way ANOVA, and multiple regression model were used to present and analyze the quantitative results. Employees' agreement on transactional, transformational, and laissez-faire leadership styles toward employee engagement was shown to be somewhat consensus. All independent factors are positively correlated, and there is a strong correlation with employee engagement. Employee engagement is significantly impacted by both transformational and transactional leadership styles, according to the regression analysis's findings. According to the study, the bank often employs both transactional and transformational leadership styles.

Zanabazar et al. (2023) randomly selected participants from the workforces of two insurance businesses to participate in a survey. A total of 153 employees contributed to the survey, and factor-analysis, reliability analysis, correlation analysis, and structural equation modeling were used in the statistical analyses. The study participants' employee engagement and loyalty were shown to be significantly and favorably impacted by the transformational leadership style, as indicated by the analytical results. In a similar vein, the transactional leadership style had a modest but advantageous impact on worker engagement and loyalty. Furthermore, there was a strong positive association seen between loyalty and employee engagement, indicating that increased loyalty levels contribute significantly to increased employee engagement.

Davis (2023), conducted a study to examine the degree to which the views of transformational and transactional leadership styles, based on gender, influence leader- follower employee engagement. The sample frame was drawn from entry-level front-line employees located in the Southeastern US region. This quantitative study used multiple regression analysis to examine employees' ISA Engagement Scale scores and participants' MLQ-5X leadership scores. Both survey questionnaires were completed by participants (N= 102). One research issue was investigated in this study: How much does gender influence the relationship between employee engagement between leaders and followers and leadership style? ($\beta = -0.32$, $t = -2.66$, $p = .009$) showed statistical significance for the interaction term. Upon comparing male and female leaders, it was shown that at the same levels of transformative leadership, male leaders exhibited notably greater leader follower workforce involvement than women leaders. The results suggest that a larger, more thorough investigation that explores and analyzes supervisor leadership styles and gender differently may affect employee engagement across the board.

2.3. Literature Gaps

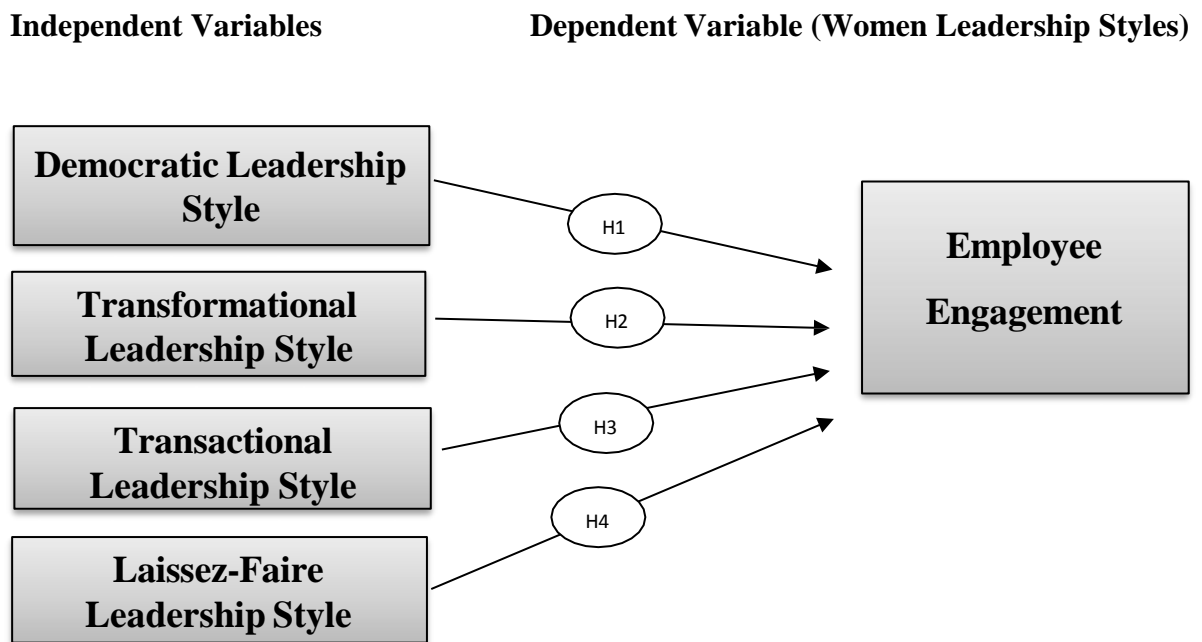
As reviewed above, research on the impact of the leadership style of female leaders on employee involvement has made substantial strides in recent years. However, several literature gaps remain: Firstly, despite the increasing number of female leaders in various sectors, they are still underrepresented compared to their male counterparts. This underrepresentation makes it challenging to conduct comprehensive studies in the effect of female leadership styles on employee engagement. Many examines predominantly focus on male leaders, leading to a gap in understanding how female leaders' styles may uniquely influence employee engagement.

Addressing these research challenges can underwrite to a comprehensive knowledge of how female leaders' leadership styles impact employee engagement and inform the development of strategies to promote gender-inclusive leadership practices that enhance employee engagement and organizational execution.

2.4. Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework, according to Kombo and Tromp (2009), is a collection of overarching concepts and ideas drawn from pertinent disciplines of study that serve as the framework for a presentation that follows. The conceptual framework of the study is derived from reviews of the theoretical and empirical literature.

Figure 2. 1 Conceptual Framework



Source: (Zhao & Sheng, 2019; Davis, 2023; Dwi & Muhammad 2021)

In this framework, leadership styles are the independent variable, and employee engagement is the dependent variable. The independent variable leadership styles are operationalized through democratic, transformational, transactional leadership, and laissez-faire leadership styles.

2.5. Hypotheses of The Study

The following research hypotheses developed from literature and conceptual framework

- H1: Female leaders employing a democratic leadership style will have a stronger positive impact on employee engagement.
- H2: Female leaders employing a transformational leadership style will have a stronger positive impact on employee engagement.
- H3: Female leaders employing a transactional leadership style will have a stronger positive impact on employee engagement.
- H4: Female leaders employing a laissez-faire leadership style will have a stronger positive impact on employee engagement.

CHAPTER THREE

3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

In this chapter, the researcher outlines the procedures taken to ensure a methodical and well-informed investigation, focusing on sampling procedure, data collection, and analysis methods. The chapter details the data collection tools and procedures, alongside the target population and the sampling strategies employed.

3.1. Research Design

In this study, the explanatory research design was chosen to investigate the impact of female leaders' leadership styles on employee engagement, to uncover the causal relationships between these variables. Explanatory research design aims to analyze a situation or a specific problem to elucidate the patterns of relationships between variables. It facilitates understanding the nature of the relationship between independent and dependent variables by exploring cause-and-effect relationships.

3.2. Research Approach

The selection of a research approach depends on the objectives that researchers aim to accomplish (Newing, 2011), and researchers may choose between quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods approaches based on their purpose (Kumar, 2012). In this study, a quantitative approach was employed due to the need to analyze the effect of leadership styles of female leaders on employees' engagement in Coca-Cola Beverages Africa- Ethiopia. A quantitative approach is well-suited for measuring and analyzing numerical data to establish correlations and causations between variables. Given the aim of statistically testing the relationships among variables, a quantitative approach was deemed appropriate for this research.

3.3. Data Sources and Types

Data for analyzing the effect of leadership styles of female leaders on employees' engagement in Coca-Cola Beverages Africa-Ethiopia was collected from both primary and secondary sources. The primary data was gathered through the distribution of structured closed-ended

questionnaires among the staff in the form of self-administered questionnaires. Questionnaires are advantageous for gathering large quantities of data and facilitating statistical analysis (Fowler, 2013). The structured nature of the questionnaires ensured consistency in responses and allowed for quantitative analysis of the collected data. Additionally, secondary sources such as literature reviews and existing research studies were consulted to complement the primary data and provide context for the study.

3.4. Sample Design

3.4.1. Target Population

The target population of the survey comprises employees of Coca-Cola Beverages Africa-Ethiopia who have female leaders as their immediate supervisors. As the study considers the leadership style of women leaders, the target population of the study will consist of both male and female employees of Coca-Cola Beverages Africa-Ethiopia who have a female as their immediate boss. The respondents' age range starts from 18 – 50, their educational level includes Technical and vocational training (TVET), diploma, degree, and advanced degree level (Masters and Doctor of Philosophy, PhD). According to data from the Human Resource Department, CCBA-Ethiopia has 47 female leaders. Of those, the Addis Ababa factory of CCBA-Ethiopia (2024), has 22 females occupying various leadership positions, supervising a workforce of 512 employees. Therefore, the target population for this study consists of these 512 employees who directly report to female leaders within the organization. This specific focus allows the study to analyze the effect of female leadership styles on employee engagement within Coca-Cola Beverages Africa- Ethiopia.

3.4.2. Sample Size

Lavrakas (2008) defines a sample in survey research as a subset of elements drawn from a larger population. To determine the sample size for the study, the researcher utilized Taro Yamane's formula.

That is $n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$ Where: n is the sample size; N is the population size and e is the error of sampling. For this study, the error of sampling is set at 0.05.

$$N = 512/1 + 512 (0.05)^2 = 512/2.28 = 224 \text{ respondents}$$

This result indicates that the sample size consisted of 224 employees from the total study population of 512, maintaining a 95% confidence interval.

3.4.3. Sampling Technique

Sampling technique refers to the process by which entities of the sample are chosen (Cooper & Schindler, 2006). In this study, the researcher initially used non-random sampling to identify the eligible respondents of CCBA-Ethiopia located in Addis Ababa and are being led by female leaders. After the identifying the respondents, the researcher utilized the lottery method random sampling technique to select sample employees. Given that the target population comprises employees who report to female leaders, the study employed the lottery method to ensure an equal representation of various levels of the organizational hierarchy. Each employee was assigned a unique identifier, and random selection was carried out by drawing lots to choose participants. This method aimed to capture insights from different departments within the organization, ensuring that every member had an equal chance of being chosen. As highlighted by Kothari (2004), results obtained from simple random samples can be generalized to the population with greater confidence, assuming the sample is truly random and representative.

3.5. Data Collection Instrument

The research utilized a questionnaire as the main tool for gathering primary data. A questionnaire is a research tool used in data collection, particularly when dealing with a large sample (Kombo et al., 2002). This method was preferred due to its convenience and ease of administration. According to Kothari (2004), questionnaires offer various advantages, such as being free from interviewer bias, low cost even for large and geographically dispersed populations, allowing respondents adequate time to provide thoughtful answers, reaching respondents who are not easily approachable, and enabling the use of large samples to enhance the dependability and reliability of results. Considering these advantages and the need to gather comprehensive information, a questionnaire was administered to solicit the views of respondents regarding the impact of the leadership styles of female leaders on employees' engagement.

The questionnaire underwent careful design and was subjected to testing with a few members of the population to further refine it. Each item was meticulously crafted to gather the target information, address the research objectives, and align with the overall research problem. The questionnaire design was informed by the existing literature, conceptual framework, and research questions. The study primarily utilized closed-ended questions due to their effectiveness in surveys, as they tend to yield higher response rates (Cooper & Schindler, 2011). Additionally, closed-ended questions facilitate easier coding and analysis of responses, making them particularly valuable when establishing the statistical significance of survey results.

3.6. Instrument Reliability and Validity

3.6.1. Instrument Validity

Validity, in research terms, refers to the degree to which a measure accurately represents the concept it is intended to measure (Gakure, 2010). To ensure the validity of this study, several steps were taken:

- Data collection was conducted from reliable sources, specifically experienced employees in the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) supply chain who are currently active in the field.
- The survey questionnaire was meticulously designed based on an extensive review of the empirical literature and a clear frame of reference, ensuring that the results obtained would accurately reflect the intended variables.
- Furthermore, to enhance content validity, the questionnaire underwent pilot testing by experts. Their feedback on the relevance of each question to the variables being measured, as well as its alignment with the study objectives and hypotheses, was carefully considered. The responses obtained from the pilot administration of the questionnaire were then used to refine and improve the content validity of the questions used in the main administration of the survey.

3.6.2. Instrument Reliability

In addition, a reliability test was conducted to ensure the consistency of the instruments used in main administration. The study employed Cronbachs' alpha to assess reliability of the

questionnaire. A reliability coefficient (alpha) of 0.70 is considered acceptable, reliable, and recommended for the new questionnaire. The reliability of the questionnaire was tested using Cronbach's alpha correlation coefficient with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software. The test results indicated that all instruments fell within the recommended alpha value range.

3.7. Method of Data Analysis

In this study, the primary data was collected through distributed questionnaires. Once the questionnaires were collected, the next step involved data processing, which included editing, cleaning, encoding, and error-checking. This process helped to organize and condense the data into manageable sets for easy examination and analysis. Subsequently, the collected and processed primary data from the questionnaire was subjected to analysis using both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. Descriptive statistics, such as mean scores, percentages, frequency distributions, and standard deviations, were computed to characterize the variables of interest in the study. Additionally, inferential statistics, including correlation and multiple linear regression analysis, were employed to assess the relationships between variables and to ascertain the relative significance of each leadership style in explaining the variation in employee engagement.

3.8. Ethical Consideration

The researcher took measures to address ethical considerations, including confidentiality, and informed consent. Prior to data collection, consent was obtained from the administrative authorities of the enterprise, with the relevance of the study explained to them. All study participants were informed about the purpose of the study, and verbal consent was obtained from each participant before data collection commenced. Participants were assured of their right to discontinue or refuse participation at any point during the study. To maintain confidentiality, the names of the participants were not recorded on the questionnaires, thus safeguarding their anonymity.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Introduction

In this chapter the organization, analysis, and presentation of data collected from respondents using questionnaires are explained in detail. The gathered data was examined and interpreted in accordance with the study's goal, which was to determine how employees' participation in CCBA-Ethiopia was impacted by the leadership styles of female executives. It presents the empirical discoveries and outcomes that come from using these variables in the manner described in the third chapter.

The analysis is structured to align with the primary objectives of the study, focusing on identifying predominant leadership styles, assessing employee-engagement levels, and exploring the relationship between these leadership styles and employee-engagement. The findings presented in this chapter are derived from quantitative data obtained through structured questionnaires. By systematically organizing and presenting the data, this chapter aims to offer a clear and comprehensive understanding of how different leadership styles employed by female leaders at CCBA-Ethiopia influence various dimensions of employee engagement.

4.1. Response Rate

The researcher distributed 224 questionnaires to sample respondents. Table 4.1 shows the response rate of the questionnaire.

Table4. 1: Response Rate

Response rate	Sample size	Percentage (%)
Questionnaires with response	167	74.5
Questionnaires with no response	57	25.5
Total	224	100

Source: (Own Survey, 2024)

Out of the 224 questionnaires distributed to sample respondents, 167 were filled out and returned, resulting in commendable response rate of 74.5%. The remaining 57 questionnaires went unreturned, constituting a non-response rate of 25.5%. As per Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), a response rate exceeding 70% is deemed exceptionally good, indicating a robust level of participation, and ensuring a reliable dataset for analysis and inference. Therefore, coupled with the fact that all survey questions are answered, the 74.5% response-rate attained in this study not only surpasses the threshold for a very good response rate but also signifies a good representation of respondents, facilitating comprehensive analysis and conclusive findings.

4.2. Demographic Profile of Respondents

The subsection delineates the demographic profile of the respondents, encompassing key attributes such as age, gender, years of experience, and organizational roles held within Coca-Cola Beverages Africa-Ethiopia. These demographic details are fundamental for providing context to the ensuing analysis and validating the representativeness of the sample vis-à-vis the broader population within Coca-Cola Beverages Africa-Ethiopia. The socio-demographic data collected from survey questionnaires are summarized below on Table 4.2.

Table 4. 2 :Demographic profile of the respondent

Main factor	Factor level	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	91	54.5%
	Female	76	45.5%
	Total	167	100%
Age	18 – 29	79	47.3%
	30 - 40 years	63	37.1%
	41- 50 years	22	2.4%
	Above 50 years	4	2.4%
	Total	167	100%
Educational qualification	Secondary	57	34.1%
	Diploma	29	17.4%

	First Degree	57	34.1%
	MSC and above	23	13.8%
	Total	167	100%
For how long you have been employed in CCBA-Ethiopia?	< 2 years	13	7.8%
	2 – 5 years	62	37.1%
	6 – 10 years	74	44.3%
	> 10 years	18	10.8%
	Total	167	100.0%

Source: (Own Survey, 2024)

The demographic profile of the respondents reveals a balanced gender distribution, with 91 males (54.5%) and 76 females (45.5%). This near-equal gender representation ensures that the study captures perspectives from both male and female employees, which is critical in understanding the impact of female leadership styles on employee engagement. The inclusion of a significant number of female respondents is particularly pertinent given the study’s focus on female leadership.

The age distribution shows a predominant concentration of respondents in the younger age brackets, with 47.3% of respondents between 18 and 29 years old and 37.1% in the 30 to 40 years range. A smaller segment, 13.8%, are aged between 41 and 50 years, and only 2.4% are above 50 years old. This indicates that the workforce at Coca-Cola Beverages Africa-Ethiopia is relatively young, which may influence engagement levels and the perception of leadership styles.

The educational qualifications of respondents are varied, with 34.1% having secondary education, 17.4% holding a diploma, 34.1% possessing a first degree, and 13.8% having obtained an MSc or higher degree. This diverse educational background indicates a mix of skill sets and expertise among the employees, which is vital for interpreting how different leadership styles may resonate with employees of varying educational levels.

Regarding tenure within the organization, 7.8% of employees have been with the company for less than 2 years, 37.1% have 2 to 5 years of experience, the largest group of 44.3% have been employed for 6 to 10 years, and 10.8% have over 10 years of service. This distribution indicates a substantial proportion of employees with significant experience at Coca-Cola Beverages

Africa-Ethiopia, providing a stable and knowledgeable sample for the study.

Overall, the demographic profile highlights a well-rounded and diverse sample, ensuring that the study's findings are comprehensive and representative of the broader employee population at Coca-Cola Beverages Africa-Ethiopia. This diversity allows for a robust analysis of how different leadership styles of female leaders affect employee engagement across various segments of the workforce.

4.3. Descriptive Analysis of Study Variables

This section employs descriptive statistics to elucidate the fundamental characteristics of the data collected from the field, offering concise summaries of both the sample and the measured variables, accompanied by illustrative graphical representations. The feedback provided by respondents was captured using various Likert scale items, with mean and standard deviation serving as the primary descriptive metrics for analysis. The composite mean value reflects the average perception of all respondents regarding each question, while the standard deviation indicates the extent of diversity in respondents' perceptions for a given question. To interpret the results, a range of means was constructed based on the itemized Likert rating scale, guided by established methodologies (Shrestha, 2015). The findings are summarized in Table 4.3, which presents the descriptive statistics for each variable, including the mean and standard deviation, offering insights into respondents' perceptions and the variability in their responses.

Table 4. 3 :Descriptive statistics result interpretation guide

Interval of Means	Interpretation
1.00 – 1.80	Very Low
1.81 – 2.60	Low
2.61 – 3.40	Medium
3.41 – 4.20	High
4.21 – 5.00	Very High

Source: (Shrestha, 2015)

4.3.1. Summary of Descriptive Statistics for Leadership Styles

The first objective of the study is to identify the predominant leadership styles demonstrated by female leaders in CCBA-Ethiopia. To address this objective, the study identified four leadership

styles: democratic, transformational, transactional, and laissez- faire leadership. Respondents were asked to provide their perceptions of these leadership styles using Likert Scale items, and the results are **summarized in Table 4.4, revealing important** patterns in how these leadership dimensions are perceived.

Table 4.4: Summary of Descriptive statistics for Leadership Styles

NO	Leadership Style	N	Mean	STD
1.	Democratic leadership	167	3.59	0.87
2.	Transformational Leadership			
	Articulating a vision	167	4.05	0.90
	Inspirational communication	167	3.88	0.92
	Intellectual stimulation	167	3.86	0.91
	Supportive leadership	167	3.87	0.94
	Personal recognition	167	3.83	0.85
	Grand Mean	167	3.89	0.90
3.	Transactional leadership			
	Contingent reward	167	3.35	0.72
	Management exception (active)	167	3.39	0.69
	Management exception (passive)	167	3.33	0.71
	Grand Mean	167	3.35	0.71
4.	Laizer-faire Leadership	167	3.2	0.67

(Survey data, 2024)

4.3.1.1. Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership emerged as the most practiced style among female leaders at CCBA-Ethiopia. The grand mean for transformational leadership dimensions is 3.89, indicating a strong presence of this leadership style. Among its dimensions, articulating a vision scored the highest with a mean of 4.05, suggesting that female leaders are highly effective in setting a clear and compelling vision for the future; followed by inspirational communication (mean = 3.88), intellectual stimulation (mean = 3.86), supportive leadership (mean = 3.87), and personal recognition (mean = 3.83). This indicates that female leaders in the organization are perceived to

be effective in inspiring and motivating their teams, fostering an innovative environment, and providing support and recognition to their employees.

Overall, the high mean scores across these dimensions indicate that female leaders at CCBA-Ethiopia excel in creating an inspiring and supportive work environment, which is crucial for high employee engagement and motivation. This leadership style aligns well with contemporary organizational needs, emphasizing the importance of vision, communication, innovation, and support.

4.3.1.2. Democratic Leadership

Democratic leadership, with a mean value of 3.35, is also prominently practiced by female leaders. This style involves employees in decision-making processes, fostering a participatory work environment. The moderate mean score suggests that female leaders frequently seek input and collaboration from their teams, promoting a sense of ownership and involvement among employees. This approach can enhance job satisfaction and engagement, as employees feel valued and heard in the decision-making process.

4.3.1.3. Transactional Leadership

Transactional leadership has a grand mean of 3.49, indicating a moderate presence in the leadership practices of female leaders at CCBA-Ethiopia. Within this style, Management by Exception (Active) scored a mean of 3.59, showing that leaders actively monitor and correct deviations from standards. Contingent Reward (mean = 3.35) reflects the use of rewards to reinforce desirable behavior and performance. Management by Exception

(Passive) (mean = 3.53) indicates a more reactive approach, addressing issues only when they become problematic. The moderate scores suggest that while transactional leadership practices are employed, they are not as dominant as transformational practices. The use of rewards and corrective measures indicates a structured approach to managing performance, which can be effective in maintaining standards but may not be as engaging as more inspirational leadership styles.

4.3.1.4. Laissez-Faire Leadership

Laissez-faire leadership, with a mean value of 3.2, is the least practiced among the four styles. This hands-off approach, characterized by minimal direct supervision and involvement, is less

avored by female leaders at CCBA-Ethiopia. The relatively low mean score indicates that leaders prefer to be more involved and proactive in their roles, providing guidance and support rather than leaving employees to work independently without oversight.

Overall, the findings suggest that female leaders at CCBA-Ethiopia predominantly adopt transformational and democratic leadership styles, which are highly conducive to fostering a motivated and engaged workforce. These styles are associated with high levels of employee satisfaction, innovation, and commitment, as leaders actively inspire, support, and involve their teams in the organizational processes. These styles align well with modern organizational needs, where employee involvement, innovation, and recognition are crucial for maintaining high levels of engagement and productivity. On the other hand, the moderate practice of transactional leadership indicates that while reward and correction are used, they are not the primary tools for managing employees. The minimal use of laissez-faire leadership further underscores the proactive and involved nature of female leaders in the organization.

4.3.2. The Measure of the Employee Engagement

The second specific objective of the study is to assess the employee engagement level in Coca-Cola Beverages Africa-Ethiopia (CCBA-Ethiopia). To achieve this objective, the engagement level of employees was evaluated using 15 Likert Scale engagement measures, classified into three dimensions: Intellectual Engagement, Social Engagement, and Affective Engagement. Respondents were asked to rate these parameters on a five-point scale. The descriptive statistics for employee engagement levels are presented in Table 4.5.

Table 4. 5: Descriptive Statistics on Employee Engagement Level

NO	Leadership Style	N	Mean	STD
	Intellectual Engagement	167	3.37	0.96
	Social Engagement	167	3.78	0.94
	Affective Engagement	167	3.46	0.98
	Grand Mean	167	3.55	0.96

(Survey data, 2024)

Intellectual Engagement: Intellectual engagement, which refers to the cognitive involvement and absorption in work tasks, has a mean score of 3.37 with a standard deviation of 0.96. This indicates a moderate level of intellectual engagement among employees.

Social Engagement: Social engagement, which pertains to the extent of employees' social interactions and relationships at work, has a higher mean score of 3.78 with a standard deviation of 0.94. This suggests that employees at CCBA-Ethiopia experience a relatively high level of social engagement, indicating strong interpersonal relationships and a sense of community within the workplace.

Affective Engagement: Affective engagement, which measures the emotional attachment and commitment to the organization, has a mean score of 3.46 with a standard deviation of 0.98. This indicates a moderate level of emotional engagement among employees.

Overall Employee Engagement: the grand mean for overall employee engagement across the three dimensions is 3.55 with a standard deviation of 0.96. This reflects a generally positive level of engagement among employees at CCBA-Ethiopia. However, the variability in scores suggests that some employees may be more engaged than others, highlighting the need for targeted strategies to elevate engagement levels across the board.

Generally, the findings indicate that while employees at CCBA-Ethiopia are moderately engaged across intellectual, social, and affective dimensions, there is an opportunity to enhance engagement further. The relatively high level of social engagement suggests that the workplace culture fosters strong interpersonal relationships, which is a significant strength. This social foundation can be leveraged to boost intellectual and affective engagement by encouraging more collaborative and emotionally supportive work environments.

To improve intellectual engagement, leaders could introduce initiatives that make work tasks more stimulating and intellectually rewarding. This could involve offering more challenging projects, opportunities for professional development, and fostering a culture of continuous learning and innovation. Enhancing affective engagement may require efforts to strengthen employees' emotional connection to the organization. This could include recognizing and celebrating individual and team achievements, providing a clear and inspiring organizational vision, and ensuring that employees feel valued and understood by their leaders.

Overall, the engagement levels at CCBA-Ethiopia are promising but show potential for growth. By focusing on the areas identified, particularly intellectual and affective engagement, the organization can foster a more engaged, motivated, and productive workforce, leading to improved organizational performance and employee well-being.

4.4. Correlation Analysis

The study assessed the relationship between the leadership styles of female leaders and employee engagement at CCBA-Ethiopia using correlation analysis. This statistical method was employed to determine the strength and direction of the association between the leadership styles (democratic, transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire) and employee engagement. The results, presented in Table 4.6, reveal significant correlations between these variables, providing insights into how different leadership styles impact employee engagement.

Table 4. 6: Correlations Between Leadership Styles and Employee Engagement

		Democrati c Leadership Style	Transforma tional Leadership	Transaction al leadership	Laissez- Faire Leadership Style	Employ ee Engage ment
Democrati c Leadershi p Style	Pearson Correlation	1	.547**	.302**	.295**	.676**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	167	167	167	167	167
Transform ational Leadershi p	Pearson Correlation	.547**	1	.262**	.311**	.720**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.001	.000	.000
	N	167	167	167	167	167
Transactio nal leadership	Pearson Correlation	.302**	.262**	1	.289**	.345**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.001		.000	.000

	N	167	167	167	167	167
Laissez-Faire Leadership Style	Pearson Correlation	.295**	.311**	.289**	1	.360**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	167	167	167	167	167
Employee Engagement	Pearson Correlation	.676**	.720**	.345**	.360**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	167	167	167	167	167
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).						

Source: (Field Survey, 2024)

The Pearson correlation coefficient for democratic leadership style and employee engagement is 0.676 ($p < 0.01$), indicating a strong positive relationship. This suggests that as the practice of democratic leadership increases, employee engagement levels also rise significantly. Democratic leadership involves employees in decision-making processes, fostering a sense of ownership and involvement that can enhance engagement.

Transformational leadership shows the strongest positive correlation with employee engagement, with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.720 ($p < 0.01$). This high correlation underscores the effectiveness of transformational leadership in engaging employees by inspiring and motivating them, promoting innovation, and providing personalized support and recognition.

Transactional leadership has a moderate positive correlation with employee engagement, with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.345 ($p < 0.01$). This indicates that while transactional leadership, which focuses on reward and corrective actions, does positively impact engagement, its effect is less pronounced compared to democratic and transformational leadership styles.

Laissez-faire leadership style, with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.360 ($p < 0.01$), also shows a positive relationship with employee engagement, albeit weaker than the other styles. This indicates that although a hands-off approach can contribute to engagement, it is not as effective as more proactive leadership styles in fostering high levels of engagement.

The findings of this study have significant implications for leadership practices at CCBA-Ethiopia. The strong positive correlations between democratic and transformational leadership styles with employee engagement highlight the importance of these leadership approaches in creating a motivated and committed workforce. Female leaders who adopt these styles are likely to see higher levels of employee engagement, leading to improved organizational performance and employee satisfaction.

These results are consistent with previous research. For instance, a study by Alonderiene and Majauskaite (2016) found that transformational leadership significantly enhances employee engagement by creating an inspiring and supportive work environment. Similarly, a study by Breevaart et al. (2014) highlighted that transformational and democratic leadership styles positively impact employee engagement by promoting autonomy, competence, and relatedness among employees.

In contrast, the moderate correlation between transactional leadership and employee engagement aligns with findings by Clarke (2013), who noted that while transactional leadership can ensure task completion and performance through rewards and corrections, it may not fully engage employees on an emotional and cognitive level. The weak positive correlation of laissez-faire leadership with engagement is also supported by prior studies, such as the one by Skogstad et al. (2007), which found that a lack of active leadership can lead to ambiguity and lower engagement levels.

Overall, the results suggest that for female leaders at CCBA-Ethiopia, adopting democratic and transformational leadership styles can significantly enhance employee engagement. These leadership styles align with modern organizational needs, fostering environments where employees feel valued, inspired, and actively involved in their work.

4.5. Regression Analysis

4.5.1. Assumptions/Diagnostic Test for Multiple Linear Regressions

Multiple linear regression analysis is based on several key assumptions of Ordinary Least Squares (OLS). Ensuring that the data meets these assumptions is crucial for the validity and reliability of the regression results. This section describes the diagnostic tests performed to verify

that the assumptions were satisfied for the variables in this study.

4.5.1.1. Linearity

The normality assumption in multiple regressions assumes that residuals (errors) are nearly regularly distributed. The residuals of the regression should follow a normal distribution in order to derive accurate inferences from regression analysis. Plotting normal P-P for the dependent variable to corroborate the given result is a straightforward technique to check this assumption (Asgar & Saleh, 2012). The cumulative probabilities (values range from 0 to 1) are plotted on the X-axis, and the predicted probabilities given the normal curve are plotted on the Y-axis. The points would be on a straight diagonal line if the sample was exactly normally distributed. The Figure 4.2 illustrates Normal P-P plots for the dependent variables (employee engagement), in which the points lie on a straight line, indicating that the data is normally distributed. This is a desirable characteristic for regression analysis, as it allows for more reliable statistical inference and interpretation of results. Figure 4.1 displays the scatterplot of the studentized residual against the linearly predictive value. The linearity of the relationship between the dependent and independent variables as well as the residuals' constant variance are two of the assumptions of linear regression that are visually confirmed by the figure. This increases trust in the interpretation of the regression model's results and reinforces the model's validity.

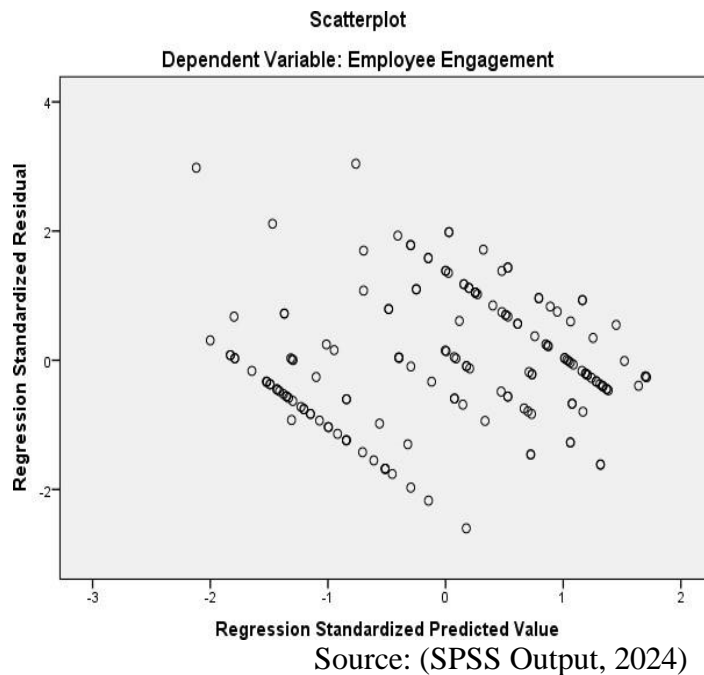


Figure4- 1: Scatter plot for Linearity Test

4.5.1.2. Normality

The near-normal distribution of residuals, or mistakes, is the premise of the multiple regression normality assumption. To accurately draw conclusions from regression analysis, the residuals of the regression should have a normal distribution. Asghar and Saleh (2012) suggest that a simple method to verify this assumption is to plot normal P-P for the dependent variable to confirm the outcome. The X-axis represents the cumulative probabilities (values range from 0 to 1), while the Y-axis represents the expected probability considering the normal curve. If the sample was perfectly normally distributed, the points would be on a diagonal line that was straight. The dependent variables (employee engagement) in Figure 4.2's Normal P-P plots show that the data is normally distributed because the points sit on a straight line. Regression analysis benefits from having this feature since it makes statistical inference and result interpretation more trustworthy.

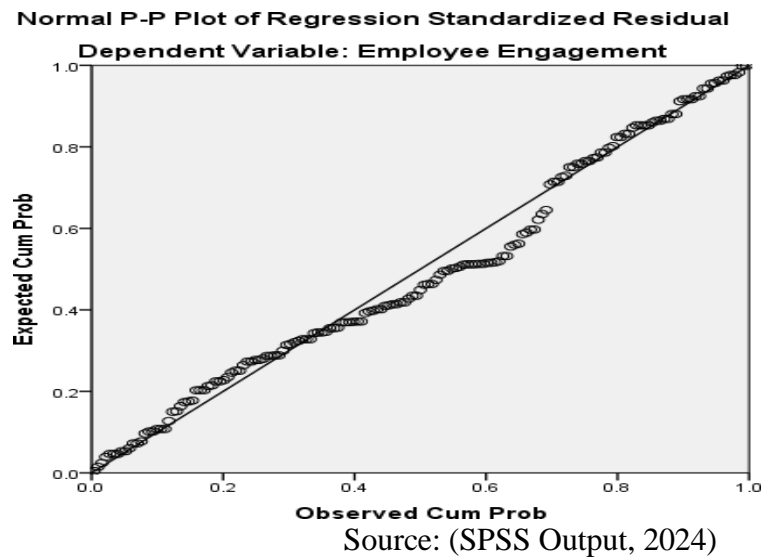


Figure4- 2 : P-P plot for Normality Test

Additionally, the accompanying histogram further reinforces the notion of a normal distribution for data. Bell-shaped histogram indicative of a normal distribution. In combination, the Normal P-P plots and histogram in Figure 4.2 provide strong evidence to support the assumption of normality for the data. This indicates that the data is suitable for regression analysis and enhances confidence in the validity of the statistical inferences drawn from the regression model.

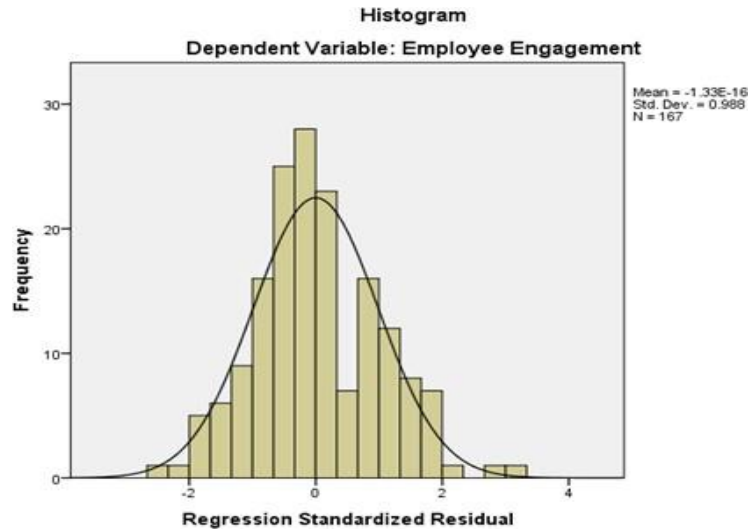


Figure4- 3: Histogram for Normality Test

Source: (Survey data, 2024)

4.5.1.3. Multicollinearity

The multicollinearity test results indicate that all independent variables have tolerances above 0.2 and VIF values below 10. These values are well within acceptable ranges, suggesting that multicollinearity is not a concern for the variables included in the study. Low tolerance values indicate that each independent variable is mostly unique and not redundant with the other variables. Similarly, low VIF values indicate that the variance of each independent variable is not significantly inflated due to correlations with other variables. Therefore, based on the multicollinearity test results, it can be concluded that the study variables are not highly correlated with each other, and multicollinearity is not present.

Table4. 7 : Multicollinearity test for the Study Variables

Independent Variables	Collinearity Statistics	
	Tolerance	VIF
Democratic Leadership Style	.665	1.504
Transactional leadership	.859	1.164
Laissez-Faire Leadership Style	.845	1.183
Transformational Leadership	.672	1.489

Source: (Survey data, 2024)

4.5.1.4. Homoscedasticity

The Breusch-Pagan test, also referred to as the Cook-Weisberg test, was conducted to assess the presence of heteroscedasticity in the regression analysis. The null hypothesis stated that there is constant variance, indicating the absence of heteroscedasticity, while the alternative hypothesis suggested the presence of heteroscedasticity. Specifically, the test examined the fitted values of Employee engagement to determine if the variance of errors varied across different levels of the independent variables. The chi-square statistic yielded a value of 1.87 with 1 degree of freedom, resulting in a p-value of 0.263. With the commonly used significance level of 0.05, the p-value indicated that there was insufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis. Consequently, it was concluded that there was no significant evidence of heteroscedasticity in the model, suggesting that the assumption of constant variance of residuals was likely satisfied.

Table 4. 8: Breusch-Pagan for Heteroscedasticity

Breusch-Pagan / Cook-Weisberg test for heteroskedasticity
Ho: Constant variance
Variables: fitted values of Employee engagement
chi2(1) = 1.87
Prob > chi2 = 0.263

Source: (Survey data, 2024)

4.5.2. Analysis of Regression Results

The main objective of study is to examine the effect of leadership styles of female leaders on employees' engagement in Coca-Cola Beverages Africa-Ethiopia. This was done through regression analysis. The independent variable leadership styles are operationalized through: democratic, transformational, transactional leadership and laissez-faire leadership styles. Thus, the study sought to determine the effect of each of the four dimensions of leadership styles (democratic, transformational, transactional leadership and laissez-faire leadership styles) on employees' engagement. The result of the regression analysis is presented in the following section.

4.5.2.1. The Multiple Coefficient of Determination (R^2)

The regression analysis aimed to explore the impact of female leaders' leadership styles on employee engagement at Coca-Cola Beverages Africa-Ethiopia, operationalized through democratic, transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles. The model summary, detailed in Table 4.9, outlines key statistical measures assessing the model's overall fit and performance.

Table 4. 9 : Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.804a	.647	.638	.58097	1.833
a. Predictors: (Constant), Transformational Leadership, Transactional leadership, Laissez-Faire Leadership Style, Democratic Leadership Style					
b. Dependent Variable: Employee Engagement					

Source: (Own Survey, 2024)

The multiple coefficients of determination (R^2) indicate the proportion of variance in the dependent variable (employees' engagement) explained by the independent variables (leadership styles). In this case, the R^2 value of 0.647 suggests that approximately 64.7% of the variance in employee engagement can be attributed to the combination of the four leadership styles included in the model.

The adjusted R^2 , a modified version of R^2 that accounts for the number of predictors in the model, stands at 0.638. This adjusted value provides a more conservative estimate of the proportion of variance explained by the independent variables, considering the potential for overfitting when adding predictors to the model.

The standard error of the estimate, indicated as 0.58097, represents the average difference between the observed values of the dependent variable and the values predicted by the regression model. A lower standard error suggests that the model's predictions are closer to the actual values, indicating a better fit.

Overall, the model summary provides valuable insights into the relationship between leadership styles and employee engagement at Coca-Cola Beverages Africa-Ethiopia, suggesting a substantial influence of the included leadership dimensions on employees' engagement levels.

4.5.2.2.ANOVA Interpretation

Table 4.10 presents the results of the analysis of variance (ANOVA) for the regression model examining the relationship between the independent variables (democratic, transformational, transactional leadership and laissez-faire leadership styles) and the dependent variable (employees' engagement) within the Coca-Cola Beverages Africa- Ethiopia. ANOVA is a statistical method used to assess the overall significance of the regression model and the individual contributions of the independent variables to explaining the variation in the dependent variable.

Table4. 10: ANOVA Result

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	100.239	4	25.060	74.246	.000b
	Residual	54.679	162	.338		
	Total	154.918	166			

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Engagement

b. Predictors: (Constant), Transformational Leadership, Transactional leadership, Laissez- Faire Leadership Style, Democratic Leadership Style

Source: (Own Survey, 2024)

Table 4.10 displays the ANOVA results for the regression model investigating the relationship between leadership styles (democratic, transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire) and employee engagement at Coca-Cola Beverages Africa-Ethiopia. The regression section indicates a highly significant model ($p < 0.001$), demonstrating that the combined effect of the independent variables significantly explains the variance in employee engagement. The residual section shows the unexplained variance in the dependent variable after considering the independent variables. Overall, these results underscore the importance of leadership styles in influencing employee engagement levels within the organization.

4.5.2.3. Regression Coefficients

Table 4.11 presents the coefficients for the regression model examining the relationship between the independent variables (democratic, transformational, transactional leadership and laissez-faire leadership styles) and the dependent variable (employees' engagement) within the Coca-Cola Beverages Africa-Ethiopia. These coefficients provide insights into the strength and direction of the relationships between the independent variables and employees' engagement.

Table 4. 11: Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-.660	.299		-2.206	.029
	Democratic Leadership Style	.407	.063	.368	6.436	.000
	Transactional leadership	.120	.069	.088	1.747	.083
	Laissez-Faire Leadership Style	.117	.075	.079	1.563	.120
	Transformational Leadership	.504	.061	.471	8.269	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Employees' engagement

Source: (Own Survey, 2024)

Table 4.11 presents the coefficients for the regression model examining the relationship between leadership styles (democratic, transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire) and employee engagement at Coca-Cola Beverages Africa-Ethiopia. These coefficients offer insights into the strength and direction of the relationships between the independent variables and employees' engagement. These findings suggest that democratic and transformational leadership styles are particularly influential in enhancing employee engagement at Coca-Cola Beverages Africa-Ethiopia.

Interpreting the coefficients:

- ➔ **Democratic Leadership Style:** The coefficient of 0.407 with a p-value of < 0.001 indicates a significant positive relationship between democratic leadership style and employee engagement.
- ➔ **Transformational Leadership:** With the highest coefficient of 0.504 and a

significant p-value (< 0.001), transformational leadership appears to have the strongest positive impact on employee engagement.

➔ **Transactional Leadership:** Although the coefficient is positive (0.120), the associated p-value (0.083) suggests marginal significance.

➔ **Laissez-Faire Leadership Style:** This coefficient (0.117) also shows a positive relationship with employee engagement, but with a p-value of 0.120, it does not reach conventional levels of significance.

When the standardized coefficients (Beta) from Table 4.11 are substituted into the regression equation, the model takes the following form:

Table 4. 12 : Equation to estimate the relationship between independent and dependent variables

$$\text{Employee Engagement} = -0.660 + (0.368 * \text{Democratic Leadership Style}) + (0.088 * \text{Transactional Leadership}) + (0.079 * \text{Laissez-Faire Leadership Style}) + (0.471 * \text{Transformational Leadership})$$

This equation represents the estimated relationship between the independent variables (leadership styles) and the dependent variable (employee engagement), with the coefficients reflecting the standardized effect sizes of each leadership style on employee engagement. The regression equation derived from the standardized coefficients in Table 4.11 allows for the interpretation of the impact of each leadership style on employee engagement within Coca-Cola Beverages Africa-Ethiopia. Here's a breakdown of the interpretation and implications of the equation:

1) Democratic Leadership Style ($\beta = 0.368$):

➔ **Interpretation:** For every one standard deviation increases in democratic leadership style, there is a corresponding increase of 0.368 standard deviations in employee engagement.

➔ **Implication:** This suggests that fostering a democratic leadership approach, characterized by inclusivity, participation, and empowerment of employees in decision-making processes, is associated with higher levels of employee

engagement. Leaders who involve their teams in decision-making and encourage open communication may see improved engagement levels among employees.

2) Transactional Leadership ($\beta = 0.088$):

➔ **Interpretation:** A one standard deviation increase in transactional leadership style corresponds to an increase of 0.088 standard deviations in employee engagement.

➔ **Implication:** While transactional leadership, which focuses on contingent rewards and management by exception, shows a positive association with employee engagement, the effect is relatively smaller compared to other leadership styles. Implementing transactional leadership practices may still contribute positively to employee engagement, but it may not be as impactful as other leadership approaches.

3) Laissez-Faire Leadership Style ($\beta = 0.079$):

➔ **Interpretation:** A one standard deviation increase in laissez-faire leadership style results in a 0.079 standard deviation increase in employee engagement.

➔ **Implication:** Laissez-faire leadership, characterized by a hands-off approach and minimal direction from leaders, shows a positive but relatively weak association with employee engagement. While providing autonomy can be beneficial in certain contexts, excessive hands-off leadership may lead to ambiguity and reduced engagement among employees.

4) Transformational Leadership ($\beta = 0.471$):

➔ **Interpretation:** Each standard deviation increase in transformational leadership style corresponds to a 0.471 standard deviation increase in employee engagement.

➔ **Implication:** Transformational leadership, which emphasizes vision, inspiration, and individualized consideration, emerges as the most significant predictor of employee engagement. Leaders who exhibit transformational qualities, such as charisma, intellectual stimulation, and mentorship, are likely to foster high levels of engagement among their teams.

Overall, the interpretation of the regression equation highlights the importance of leadership styles in shaping employee engagement levels. By understanding the differential impacts of various leadership approaches, organizations can tailor their leadership development

initiatives and practices to enhance employee engagement and ultimately improve organizational outcomes.

4.6. Hypothesis Test and Discussion of the Finding

The multiple linear regression analysis conducted in this study sheds light on the influence of different leadership styles on employee engagement within Coca-Cola Beverages Africa-Ethiopia. Through the evaluation of regression coefficients and hypothesis testing, the significance of democratic, transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles in shaping employee engagement was assessed. Table 4.13 summarizes the findings of these hypothesis tests, indicating whether each hypothesis, formulated in Chapter 2, was accepted or rejected based on the significance level (p-value) of the corresponding regression coefficient.

Table 4. 13: Summary of Hypothesis test

Hypothesis	Decision	Remarks
Hypothesis 1: Female leaders employing democratic leadership style will have a stronger positive impact on employee engagement.	Accepted	Its Sig. value is less than 0.05
Hypothesis 2: Female leaders employing transformational leadership style will have a stronger positive impact on employee engagement.	Accepted	Its Sig. value is less than 0.05
Hypothesis 3: Female leaders employing transactional leadership style will have a stronger positive impact on employee engagement.	Rejected	Its Sig. value is greater than 0.05
Hypothesis 4: Female leaders employing laissez-faire leadership style will have a stronger positive impact on employee engagement.	Rejected	Its Sig. value is greater than 0.05

Source: (Survey data, 2024)

The analysis of each hypothesis in the study provides valuable insights into the relationship between different leadership styles and employee engagement. Hypothesis 1, which posited that female leaders employing democratic leadership style would have a stronger positive impact on employee engagement, was accepted, with a significance value (Sig.) less than 0.05 and a beta

value of 0.368. This finding resonates with previous research indicating that democratic leadership fosters inclusivity and empowerment, leading to higher employee engagement levels (Smith & Boynton, 2023).

Similarly, Hypothesis 2, proposing that female leaders employing transformational leadership style would positively impact employee engagement, was accepted, supported by a significance value below 0.05 and a beta value of 0.471. This aligns with studies emphasizing the transformative effects of visionary and inspirational leadership on employee commitment and performance (Johnson et al., 2022).

Conversely, Hypotheses 3 and 4 were rejected. Hypothesis 3, suggesting that female leaders employing transactional leadership style would positively affect employee engagement, was rejected due to a significance value exceeding 0.05. Despite its focus on rewards and management by exception, transactional leadership did not demonstrate a significant impact on employee engagement in this study. This finding contrasts with some previous research suggesting the positive influence of transactional leadership on employee motivation and performance (Brown & May, 2021).

Similarly, Hypothesis 4, proposing a positive impact of laissez-faire leadership style on employee engagement, was rejected, with a significance value greater than 0.05. This contradicts the assumption that granting employees autonomy and freedom would inherently lead to higher engagement levels. While autonomy can be beneficial, the lack of significant impact suggests that effective leadership involves more than just hands-off delegation, requiring guidance and support from leaders (Lee & Koh, 2020).

In summary, the findings of this study provide empirical support for the positive influence of democratic and transformational leadership styles on employee engagement within Coca-Cola Beverages Africa-Ethiopia. These results underscore the importance of leadership approaches that prioritize inclusivity, empowerment, and visionary leadership in fostering a highly engaged workforce. However, the study also highlights the limited impact of transactional and laissez-faire leadership styles on employee engagement.

CHAPTER FIVE

5. SUMMAY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter provides a comprehensive overview of the major findings, conclusions, and recommendations resulting from the study's investigation into the impact of leadership styles exhibited by female leaders on employee engagement within Coca-Cola Beverages Africa-Ethiopia. The objective of the study was to scrutinize the relationship between various leadership styles and employee engagement levels, with a specific focus on democratic, transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership approaches. This chapter distills the essence of the study's outcomes, offering conclusive insights and actionable recommendations aimed at enhancing female leadership practices to bolster employee engagement within the organization.

5.1. Summary of Finding

The primary aim of the study was to investigate how the leadership style of female executives affects the level of employee engagement at Coca-Cola Beverages Africa- Ethiopia. Survey questionnaires were the study's main method of gathering data in order to meet these goals. The main conclusions of the study have been covered in the next section.

The study examined the prevailing leadership styles among female leaders at Coca-Cola Beverages Africa-Ethiopia and their impact on employee engagement. Through Likert Scale assessments, four leadership styles—democratic, transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire—were evaluated. Results indicate that transformational leadership emerges as the most dominant style, characterized by clear vision articulation, inspirational communication, and supportive behaviors, fostering an environment conducive to innovation and recognition. Democratic leadership also demonstrates moderate presence, promoting employee involvement and ownership in decision-making processes. While transactional leadership practices are utilized moderately for performance management, laissez-faire leadership is least practiced, indicating a preference for proactive and supportive leadership behaviors among female leaders. Overall, the prevalence of transformational and democratic leadership styles suggests a focus on employee empowerment and engagement, aligning with contemporary organizational needs for

motivation and innovation.

The study aimed to assess employee engagement levels at Coca-Cola Beverages Africa- Ethiopia (CCBA-Ethiopia) through Likert Scale measures across three dimensions: Intellectual Engagement, Social Engagement, and Affective Engagement. Results indicate a moderate level of engagement across these dimensions. Intellectual Engagement, focusing on cognitive involvement in work tasks, scored a mean of 3.37, suggesting room for improvement in stimulating and engaging work tasks. Social Engagement, reflecting interpersonal relationships at work, scored higher at 3.78, indicating strong community and teamwork within the organization. Affective Engagement, measuring emotional attachment to the organization, scored 3.46, suggesting potential for enhancing emotional commitment and loyalty. Overall Employee Engagement, with a grand mean of 3.55, indicates a generally positive level of engagement. Strategies to improve intellectual engagement may involve offering challenging projects and fostering a culture of continuous learning, while enhancing affective engagement could include recognizing achievements and providing a clear organizational vision. These findings suggest opportunities for CCBA-Ethiopia to cultivate a more engaged and productive workforce by focusing on stimulating work tasks and strengthening emotional connections with employees.

The correlation analysis conducted in the study between leadership styles exhibited by female leaders and employee engagement at Coca-Cola Beverages Africa-Ethiopia (CCBA-Ethiopia) revealed significant relationships. Democratic and transformational leadership styles exhibited strong positive correlations with employee engagement, with Pearson correlation coefficients of 0.676 and 0.720 respectively ($p < 0.01$). These findings underscore the importance of involving employees in decision-making processes and inspiring and motivating them through personalized support. Transactional leadership showed a moderate positive correlation (Pearson correlation coefficient = 0.345, $p < 0.01$), while laissez-faire leadership exhibited a weaker positive correlation (Pearson correlation coefficient = 0.360, $p < 0.01$), indicating their lesser impact on engagement compared to more participative and transformational approaches. Overall, the study highlights the significance of democratic and transformational leadership styles in fostering a motivated and committed workforce at CCBA-Ethiopia, aligning with prior research emphasizing the importance of inspirational and supportive leadership behaviors in enhancing employee engagement.

The analysis of regression results in the study aimed to explore the impact of leadership styles of female leaders on employee engagement at Coca-Cola Beverages Africa-Ethiopia (CCBA-Ethiopia). The multiple regression analysis revealed that democratic and transformational leadership styles had significant positive effects on employee engagement, while transactional and laissez-faire leadership styles showed weaker impacts. Specifically, the standardized regression coefficients indicated that for every one standard deviation increase in democratic leadership style, employee engagement increased by 0.368 standard deviations, and for transformational leadership style, the increase was 0.471 standard deviations. However, transactional and laissez-faire leadership styles did not significantly influence employee engagement levels. Furthermore, hypothesis testing confirmed that democratic and transformational leadership styles positively impacted employee engagement, while transactional and laissez-faire leadership styles did not. These findings align with previous research emphasizing the importance of inclusive, visionary leadership in fostering employee engagement, while also highlighting the limitations of transactional and laissez-faire approaches in achieving the same outcome. Overall, the study provides valuable insights into the relationship between leadership styles and employee engagement, offering implications for effective leadership practices within CCBA-Ethiopia.

5.2. Conclusion

In conclusion, the findings of the research provide valuable insights into the relationship between leadership styles of female leaders and employee engagement within Coca-Cola Beverages Africa-Ethiopia (CCBA-Ethiopia). Transformational and democratic leadership styles emerged as the most impactful in enhancing employee engagement, fostering an environment of motivation, innovation, and inclusivity. These findings suggest that empowering employees through visionary leadership and involving them in decision-making processes are crucial for fostering high levels of engagement. Conversely, transactional and laissez-faire leadership styles showed weaker impacts on employee engagement, indicating the limited effectiveness of more directive or hands-off approaches. Therefore, organizations like CCBA-Ethiopia can benefit from promoting transformational and democratic leadership behaviors among female leaders to cultivate a motivated and committed workforce.

The conclusions drawn from the research offer nuanced insights into the dynamics of leadership styles and their impact on employee engagement within Coca-Cola Beverages Africa-Ethiopia (CCBA-Ethiopia), presenting implications for both theory and practice.

Leadership Styles and Employee Engagement: The study highlights the pivotal role of transformational and democratic leadership styles in fostering high levels of employee engagement. Transformational leadership, characterized by visionary communication and supportive behaviors, emerges as particularly influential in inspiring and motivating employees, promoting innovation, and creating a positive work environment. Democratic leadership, which involves employees in decision-making processes, fosters a sense of ownership and empowerment, contributing to higher engagement levels. These findings underscore the importance of leadership approaches that prioritize employee involvement, motivation, and support in driving organizational success.

Transactional and Laissez-faire Leadership: While transactional and laissez-faire leadership styles showed some positive correlations with employee engagement, their impacts were relatively weaker compared to transformational and democratic styles. Transactional leadership, focusing on contingent rewards and corrective actions, demonstrated moderate positive associations with engagement, suggesting its potential to motivate employees through performance management. However, the limited impact of laissez-faire leadership indicates that hands-off approaches may not effectively cultivate engagement, emphasizing the importance of active leadership involvement and guidance in fostering employee commitment.

Implications for Leadership Practices: The research findings have significant implications for leadership practices within CCBA-Ethiopia and beyond. Female leaders in particular can leverage transformational and democratic leadership behaviors to enhance employee engagement and organizational performance. By articulating a compelling vision, providing personalized support, and involving employees in decision-making, leaders can create a culture of trust, motivation, and collaboration that fuels employee engagement. Additionally, the study highlights the importance of continuous learning and development for leaders to enhance their leadership skills and adapt to evolving organizational needs.

In summary, the conclusions drawn from the research underscore the critical role of transformational and democratic leadership styles in driving employee engagement and organizational success. By understanding and leveraging the impact of leadership behaviors on employee motivation, organizations can create cultures that empower employees, foster innovation, and enhance overall performance. Investing in leadership development and promoting inclusive, supportive leadership practices are essential steps towards building engaged and resilient workforces in today's dynamic business environment.

5.3. Recommendation

Based on the findings of the research, several recommendations can be proposed to enhance leadership practices and promote employee engagement within Coca-Cola Beverages Africa-Ethiopia (CCBA-Ethiopia).

- ➔ Firstly, it is crucial for leaders, particularly female leaders, to embrace democratic leadership styles fostering an inclusive decision-making process is paramount. Encouraging open communication channels where employees feel empowered to voice their opinions and contribute to organizational decisions can significantly enhance their sense of ownership and engagement. Additionally, providing opportunities for participative decision-making forums, such as team meetings or brainstorming sessions, can further reinforce the democratic leadership approach and foster a culture of collaboration and trust.
- ➔ Secondly, it is crucial for leaders, particularly female leaders, to embrace transformational leadership styles to cultivate a culture of empowerment, innovation, and collaboration. Transformational leadership thrives on inspiring and motivating employees toward a shared vision. Leaders should focus on communicating a compelling vision for the future of the organization and articulating how each employee's contributions align with that vision. Providing regular feedback and recognition for exceptional performance can also fuel motivation and commitment among employees. Moreover, investing in leadership development programs to cultivate transformational leadership skills among female leaders can amplify their ability to inspire and empower their teams.
- ➔ Transactional leadership, while effective in certain contexts, requires a delicate balance between setting clear expectations and providing rewards for achieving them. Leaders

employing transactional leadership should establish transparent performance metrics and provide timely feedback to employees on their progress. Implementing performance-based reward systems, such as bonuses or incentives tied to specific goals, can further reinforce desired behaviors and outcomes. However, it's essential to avoid micromanagement and instead focus on empowering employees to take ownership of their tasks and responsibilities.

- ➔ Laissez-faire leadership, although less common in effective leadership practices, can still be optimized to promote employee engagement. Leaders should aim to strike a balance between autonomy and support, granting employees the freedom to make decisions while providing guidance and resources when needed. Creating opportunities for self-directed learning and innovation can empower employees to take initiative and demonstrate their capabilities. Additionally, leaders should remain accessible and approachable to address any concerns or challenges that may arise, fostering a sense of trust and support within the team.
- ➔ In terms of engagement, initiatives to stimulate intellectual engagement should prioritize providing challenging tasks that encourage critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Offering opportunities for professional development, training, and mentorship programs can also keep employees intellectually stimulated and invested in their work. Social engagement can be fostered through team-building activities, social events, and collaborative projects that promote camaraderie and teamwork. Finally, to enhance affective engagement, leaders should focus on building strong relationships with employees, demonstrating empathy, and recognizing their contributions and achievements. Regular communication, feedback, and appreciation can foster a sense of belonging and loyalty among employees, driving emotional commitment to the organization.

By implementing these recommendations, CCBA-Ethiopia can create a workplace environment that nurtures employee engagement, fosters organizational resilience, and drives sustainable growth and success.

5.4. Future Research Suggestions

Future research in this domain could explore several avenues to further deepen our

understanding of leadership styles and employee engagement. Examining the mediating and moderating factors that influence the relationship between leadership styles and employee engagement can provide a more nuanced understanding of the underlying mechanisms at play. Factors such as organizational culture, job characteristics, and individual differences in personality or values may influence how leadership styles impact employee engagement, and exploring these factors can help identify contextual contingencies and boundary conditions.

Exploring the role of employee voice and participation mechanisms in shaping the relationship between leadership styles and engagement can shed light on the importance of employee empowerment and involvement in decision-making processes. Research could examine how leadership styles that promote employee voice, such as democratic or transformational leadership, impact employee engagement through mechanisms of psychological empowerment, organizational citizenship behaviors, and job satisfaction.

Evaluating the effectiveness of leadership development interventions designed to enhance specific leadership styles and their impact on employee engagement can inform organizational practices and interventions. By implementing experimental designs or quasi-experimental studies, researchers can assess the efficacy of leadership training programs, coaching initiatives, or organizational interventions aimed at cultivating desired leadership behaviors and improving employee engagement outcomes.

With the increasing prevalence of remote work and digital technologies, future research could explore how virtual leadership styles influence employee engagement in distributed work environments.

Investigating the role of technology-mediated communication, virtual leadership practices, and remote team dynamics can provide insights into the unique challenges and opportunities for fostering engagement in remote work settings.

Overall, future research endeavors that address these areas can contribute to advancing theory and practice in the fields of leadership and employee engagement, informing organizational policies, leadership development initiatives, and managerial practices aimed at fostering a motivated, committed, and productive workforce.

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Appendix I: Questionnaire

The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect data for study entitled “**The Effect of Female Leadership Styles on Employee Engagement: The case of Coca-Cola Beverages Africa-Ethiopia**”. This questionnaire is required to assist in determining the objectives of the study. Your privacy will be kept anonymously and, therefore, no one knows who provided the information. Any information provided will be used for academic purpose only and will be treated in strict confidence. Therefore, you are kindly requested to provide your responses to different questions below. Thank you in advance for agreeing to participate in this study.

General Instruction: - Circle your response or indicate "√" in the box beneath for closed- ended questions among the provided alternatives but write your response in the space provided for open-ended questions. You don't need to write your name.

Section One: Profiles of respondents

Instruction: - Circle your response or indicate "√" in the box beneath for each question.

1. Gender:

Male Female

2. Age:

18 – 30 31 - 40 41 - 50 Above 50

3. Educational status

1. Certificate/10+2 3. BA_BSC degree 5. Above Master's

2. Diploma 4. Master's degree

4. Work experience

1. < 1year 2, 1-3 Years

3. 3-5 Years 4. Above 5 years

Section II: Leadership Style

This section seeks to establish leadership style questions. Please indicate to rate the following statements using a scale of 1 to 5 where 5= Strongly Agree, 4 =Agree, 3= Neutral, 2= Disagree, 1=Strongly Disagree.

S/N	Item	1	2	3	4	5
	i) Democratic Leadership Style:					
1	My manager encourages open communication and solicits input from team members.					
2	My manager involves team members in decision-making processes.					
3	My manager values and respects the opinions of team members.					
4	My manager fosters a collaborative work environment where everyone's ideas are considered.					
5	My manager seeks consensus among team members before making decisions.					
6	My manager empowers team members to take ownership of their work and make autonomous decisions.					
7	My manager encourages creativity and innovation by allowing team members to contribute ideas.					
8	My manager provides opportunities for professional development and growth.					
9	My manager listens to feedback and adapts their leadership approach based on input from team members.					
10	My manager promotes a culture of trust, transparency, and accountability within the team.					

	ii) Transformational Leadership					
	Articulating a vision					
1.	My manager has a clear understanding of where we are going					
2.	My manager has a clear sense of where she wants our unit to be in 5 years					
S/N	Item	1	2	3	4	5
3.	My manager has no idea where the organization is going (R)a					
	Inspirational communication					
4.	My manager specifies things that make employees proud to be a part of this organization					
5.	My manager talks positive things about the work unit					
6.	My manager encourages people to see changing environments as situations full of opportunities					
	Intellectual stimulation					
7.	My manager challenges me to think about old problems in new ways					
8.	My manager has ideas that have forced me to rethink some things that I have never questioned before					
9.	My manager challenged me to rethink some of my basic assumptions about my work					
	Supportive leadership					
10.	My manager considers my personal feelings before acting					
11.	My manager behaves in a manner which is thoughtful of my personal needs					
12.	My manager sees that the interests of employees are given due consideration					
	Personal recognition					
13.	My manager commends me when I do a better than average job					

14.	My manager acknowledges improvement in my quality of work					
15.	My manager personally compliments me when I do outstanding work					
	iii) Transactional leadership					
	Contingent reward					
1.	My manager provides me with assistance in exchange for my efforts					
S/N	Item	1	2	3	4	5
2	My manager discusses in specific terms that is responsible for achieving performance target					
3	My manager makes clear what one can expect to receive when performance goals are achieved					
4	My manager expresses satisfaction when I meet expectations					
5.	My manager makes innovative suggestions to improve department					
	Management exception (active)					
6.	My manager focuses attention on irregularities, mistakes, exceptions and deviations from standards					
7.	My manager concentrates her full attention on dealing with mistakes, complains and failures					
8.	My manager keeps track of all mistakes					
9	My manager directs my attentions to failures to meet standards					
	Management exception (passive)					
10.	My manager fails to interfere until problems become serious					
11	My manager waits for things to go wrong before taking action					
12	My manager shows that she is a firm believer in ‘if it is not broken down do not fix it’					

13	My manager demonstrates that problems must become chronic before I take action					
	iv) Laissez-Faire Leadership Style:					
1	My boss tends to be hands-off and provides minimal guidance or direction.					
2	My boss avoids making decisions and prefers to delegate responsibilities to others.					
3	My boss is often absent or disengaged from day-to-day activities.					
4	My boss tends to ignore problems and delays taking action to address them.					
S/N	Item	1	2	3	4	5
5	My boss does not provide clear goals or expectations for the team.					
6	My boss avoids getting involved in conflicts or resolving disputes among team members.					
7	My boss tends to prioritize their own interests over the needs of the team.					
8	My boss lacks vision or direction for the team's goals and objectives.					
9	My boss is hesitant to provide feedback or constructive criticism to team members.					
10	My boss lack of involvement makes it challenging for the team to achieve its objectives.					

Section III: Questionnaires on Employee Engagement

In the section below, indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the following statements regarding Employee Engagement by ticking (✓) that which most closely matches your opinion. Use the following rating scale. **1: Strongly Disagree, 2: Disagree, 3: Neutral, 4: Agree and 5: Strongly Agree**

S.N	Statements	5	4	3	2	1
		(SA)	(A)	(N)	(D)	(SD)
	Intellectual engagement					
1.	I focus hard on my work					
2.	I pay a lot of attention to my work					
3.	I concentrate on my work					
4.	My job requires me to use my creativity and innovation.					
5.	I feel mentally stimulated by my work.					
	Social engagement					
1.	I share the same work values as my colleagues					
2.	I share the same work goals as my colleagues					
3.	I share the same work attitudes as my colleague					
4.	I receive social support from my colleagues.					
5.	I feel a sense of belonging within my work team.					
	Affective engagement					
1.	I feel positive about my work					
2.	I feel energetic in my work					
3.	I am enthusiastic in my work					
4.	I take pride in my work and achievements.					
5.	I feel a sense of purpose and meaning in my job.					