Research Paper

Leadership Styles and Employee Retention in Community Based Organizations in Gayaza Parish: A Case Study of Kabubbu Development Project (Kdp)

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Abstract
The study focused on leadership style and employee retention in Kabubbu Development Project. The study based on three objectives, these include: To examine how transformational leadership affect employee retention; to assess how transactional leadership affect employee retention; and to examine how servant leadership affect employee retention in Kabubbu Development Project in Gayaza Parish, Wakiso District.A sample of 52 respondents from Kabubbu Development Project was used. The study used cross sectional and descriptive survey research designs and methodology used in this study was both qualitative and quantitative. The questionnaires and interview guide were the major tools of data collection.

The study findings indicate that leadership style is a significant determinant of employee retention at KDP. Leaders who inspire, serve, and support employees beyond merely enforcing rules or rewards are more likely to retain committed and loyal staff. Combining transformational, transactional and servant leadership practices in a balanced approach may provide optimal outcomes for employee retention in development projects.The study concludes that a balanced leadership approach, combining the motivational, ethical, and supportive practices of transformational and servant leadership with the structured monitoring and reward mechanisms of transactional leadership is essential for sustaining high employee retention at KDP. Leaders who adopt such practices strengthen employee satisfaction, loyalty, and engagement, ensuring the continuity and long-term success of the project.

The study recommends that KDP should encourage leaders to combine transformational, transactional, and servant leadership practices. While transformational and servant leadership enhance motivation, loyalty, and ethical behavior, transactional leadership provides clarity, structure, and performance-based accountability.

I. Introduction

This study established the relationship between leadership styles and employee retention in community-based organizations, using Kabubbu Development Project as a case study. This chapter presents the background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, research hypotheses, conceptual framework, significance of the study, justification of the study, scope of the study and operational definitions.

II. Historical Perspective

In today's competitive global economy, people are the main resource responsible for their organization's success (Agarwal & Mehta, 2022). Companies must be willing to solicit feedback from their employees to improve productivity and employee retention (Rai & Singh, 2023). Unhappy employees can hurt their company's profitability by demonstrating withdrawal behaviors such as increased tardiness, absenteeism, and employee turnover (Shore, 2023). The dilemma of whether an employee stays or leaves a company could be due to communication barriers, a lack of confidence in the organization, or a lack of respect for management (Jones, & Enda, 2020). Cloutier at el. (2020) also noted a report by the Society for the Human Resource Management (HRM) stated that 75% of employees are actively seeking employment. There is a need for researchers to continue to investigate the topic of employee retention to find additional solutions to resolve this business issue. In Addition, key employees are workers who managers trust to get the job done and are perceived to contribute to the success of their companies (Schlosser, 2020). Managers who implement healthy workplace practices not only reduce employee turnover but also enhance workers performance and commitment to their firms (Rathi & Lee, 2022). Retention of key employees is critical to organizations and can save

companies time and money in retraining new employees (Guha & Chakrabarti, 2023). Therefore, this research may aid in gaining insight into this phenomenon.

The modern workplace is changing, and leadership style is becoming more and more important. It affects organizational dynamics, employee engagement, and, most importantly, talent retention (Cloutier, Felusiak, Hill, Pemberton, 2020). The environment at work and employee satisfaction can be greatly impacted by the way leaders engage with their teams, make decisions, and move their organizations ahead. Businesses are finding it more and more difficult to retain talented people, therefore it's critical to comprehend the effects of various leadership philosophies.

In African context, employee retention has become a crucial concern for community based organizations (CBOs) as they strive to maintain competitiveness in a challenging economic landscape in Africa. Unlike larger organizations in Africa, CBOs often lack the resources to cope with high turnover rates, making it essential to retain skilled employees who contribute to the company's growth (Mwari, 2023). Leadership styles are recognized as one of the key factors influencing employee retention. Leadership plays a critical role in shaping employee experiences, job satisfaction, and overall commitment to the organization.

Effective leadership can create an environment that promotes loyalty and long-term commitment, reducing the high costs associated with turnover and the time required to train new employees (Arasanmi and Krishna, 2019). The study focuses on how leadership styles transformational, transactional, autocratic and democratic leadershipstyles affect employee retention in CBOs. By understanding the interplay between leadership styles and employee retention, CBOs can better equip their managers to foster a supportive and engaging work environment that minimizes employee turnover.

In East African countries like Rwanda, Kenya and Tanzania, retaining and engaging qualified employees become a growing challenge for organizations (Chopra et al., 2024). Retaining employees is crucial for gaining competitive advantages and organizational success (Islam et al., 2024; Kim et al., 2020). In a knowledge-based society, organizations need to retain employees with expertise and experience who have the potential to serve in the best possible ways (Islam et al., 2024). Employee retention is a process in which the employees are encouraged to remain with the organization for the maximum period of time (Khalid and Nawab, 2022). No organization expects a high turnover rate, which negatively influences business performance and reduces the organization's reputation (Ali and Ullah, 2023). The researchers claim that employee retention is crucial, and companies need to focus on retention strategies (Chopra et al., 2024; Mukherjee et al., 2019). The literature demonstrates that East African countries have abundant young talents serving in different organizations, but there is a shortage of mobility and career sustainability (Lee et al., 2022). Prior research stated that an effective leadership approach could make the job meaningful and boost employee intention to stay (Kim et al., 2020).

Retaining employees has become a great challenge for CBOs in Uganda (Mwajje, 2023). Average employee turnover in Ugandan organization is about 9% and 27%, respectively (Lubega et al., 2022). However, this challenge is acute in the CBOs in Uganda. The job-switching rate of employees in the NGOs and CBOs is also alarming (Jalil et al., 2020). Tazin (2023) stated that retaining highly qualified and professional employees is a significant challenge for CBOs. Akot (2022) also found that CBO employees tend to quit their jobs due to inadequate compensation, lack of career growth and training opportunities, ultimately increasing the turnover rate. Moreover, high turnover decreases productivity and increases the organization's cost (Islam et al., 2024). Hence, retaining employees in CBO is a buzzword that should be investigated.

III. Conceptual Perspective

According to Alatawi, (2022), transformational leadership is characterized by aleader'sability toinspireandmotivate employees to exceed expectations by fostering a vision that employees are personally invested in. Transformational leaders emphasize development, creativity, and change, providing a sense of purpose and enthusiasm in the workplace. This leadership style is often associated with high levels ofemployee motivation and engagement, as leaders encourage employees to growwithin the organization and align personal goals with organizational objectives.Josh and Hulk (2023) argues that in CBOs, transformational leadership can enhance retention by creating a positive work environment where employees feel supported and inspired. Leaders who invest in employee development, provide regular feedback, and foster innovation tend to cultivate strong emotional ties between employees and the organization, increasing their likelihood of remaining with the company over the long term.

Transactional leadership operates on a system of rewards and penalties, focusing on clear structures, processes, and expectations (Bavik, et al., 2022). Employees are motivated to meet specific targets in exchange for tangible rewards, such as bonuses or promotions. While this leadership style can be effective in driving short-term results, it may not foster the same long-term loyalty as transformational leadership. Employees may feel that their relationship with the organization is primarily transactional, leading to a lack of emotional engagement. In CBOs, where close relationships between employees and leaders are common, transactional

leadership can risk creating a rigid and impersonal environment (Boamah, 2018). However, transactional leaders can still positively influence retention if they maintain clear communication and offer consistent recognition of employee achievements. Employees may remain loyal if they feel that their efforts are being rewarded fairly and that there is stability within the organization.

According to Canavesi and Minelli, (2021), servant leadership emphasizes the leader's role in serving and empowering employees. Leaders who adopt this style prioritize the well-being, development, and success of their team members over their own personal goals. This style of leadership builds strong relationships based on trust, empathy, and collaboration, making employees feel valued and supported. In CBOs, servant leadership can significantly enhance employee retention by creating a sense of belonging and loyalty. Employees who feel genuinely cared for and empowered by their leaders are more likely to develop a strong emotional attachment to the organization (Chan, 2020). This leadership style fosters a supportive and inclusive work environment where employees are encouraged to grow both personally and professionally, increasing their commitment to the organization.

Retention refers to the capability of the organizations to keep employees serving in the job for a more extended period (Lee et al., 2022). Mwita and Kinemo (2022) stated that organizations invest time and resources to attract, hire and train employees; therefore, retaining them is crucial as it is not easy to convert an employee into a contributor. Employee retention refers to an organization's ability to retain its employees over time, thereby reducing turnover. High retention rates are often linked to increased organizational stability, reduced recruitment and training costs, and improved morale. In CBOs, where human capital is particularly valuable, retaining skilled employees is essential to maintaining operational efficiency and promoting long-term growth. In CBOs, employees tend to have closer relationships with management, meaning that leadership behaviors and attitudes can have an outsized impact on an employee's decision to stay or leave. Given the typically flat organizational structures in CBOs, leadership styles can directly influence the work environment, job satisfaction, and employee engagement (Thurwa, 2021).

IV. Theoretical Perspective

The transformational and transactional leadership theories propounded by Burns in 1978 and later further developed by Bass (1985) were the basis for this study.

The Transformational Leadership Theory suggests that transforming leadership is a relationship of mutual stimulation and elevation that converts followers into leaders and may convert leaders into moral agents (Krishnan, 2012). The leader may transform a follower's self-interest, increase the confidence of followers, elevate followers' expectations, and heighten the value of the leader's intended outcomes for the follower (Gosling & Jones, 2012) such as retention. Transformational leadership has four components; idealised influence, individual consideration, intellectual stimulation and inspiration (Cetin & Kinik, 2020). On the other hand, the Transactional Leadership Theory emphasises the importance of the relationship between leader and followers, focusing on the mutual benefits derived from a form of "contract" through which the leader delivers such things as rewards or recognition in return for the commitment or loyalty of the followers (De Bono, Remme, & Jones, 2018).

Transactional leadership Theory emphasises the role of rewards as the motive for achieving results and punishment as a motive to ensure adherence to the goal to be achieved. Transactional leaders recognise, the actions their subordinates must take in order to achieve outcomes, and develop agreements with them, which make clear what they were received, if they do something right and what will happen if they do something wrong (Waldman, Ramirez, House, & Puranam, 2011). The Transformational Leadership Theory suggests that when the leader transforms followers' self-interest, increases their confidence, elevates their expectations, encourages behavioural change and motivates others to higher levels of personal achievement hence they are likely to stay on their jobs. On the other hand, the transactional leadership theory proposes that when a leader develops agreements with employees that make clear what they receive if they do something right and what will happen if they do something wrong, they are likely to stay. These two theories were the basis for investigating the relationship between leadership styles and retention of CBO employees.

Transactional Leadership provides a framework for leaders who focus on task completion, performance monitoring, and reward/punishment systems (Khalid and Nawab, 2022). It helps organizations differentiate between task-oriented and people-oriented leadership styles, providing a clearer understanding of how leadership behavior affects employee outcomes. By setting clear performance standards and expectations, transactional leaders reduce role ambiguity and confusion among employees. This clarity can increase employee confidence in their work, which contributes to stability and improves retention.

Transactional Leadership theory offers actionable techniques for supervision, monitoring, and performance evaluation, helping managers maintain productivity while addressing employee performance issues promptly (Islam et al., 2024). Organizations can use transactional approaches to reinforce desired behaviors, reduce errors, and retain competent employees. Transactional leadership emphasizes contingent rewards and

corrective actions, which can motivate employees to meet performance goals and stay with the organization in the short term. Employees who value structured guidance, recognition, and rewards are likely to remain committed under transactional leadership.

Drawing on the Path- Goal theory by (Evans, 1970) it is suggested that leadership behavior is associated to change implementation. The theory focuses on increasing employees' motivation, empowerment, and satisfaction so that they understand the need for change and commitment to successful change implementation. The manager's job is viewed as guiding workers to choose the best paths to reach both their goals as well as the organization's goals. The theory argues that leaders will have to engage in different types of behavior depending on the nature and the demands of the situation at hand. For instance, some situations may require the leader to either be transformational, transactional, and servant (Fiedler, 2007).

V.   Contextual Perspective

Kabubbu Development Project (KDP) is a local grassroots community based organization founded in 2002 by community leaders to transform Kabubbu village from poverty and illiteracy into a self-sustaining, healthy, educated community (Kagoda, 2025). It implements a broad range of community services including education (primary, secondary, and vocational), healthcare services (through Kabubbu Health Centre), women empowerment, community welfare, and income-generating enterprises. KDP partnered with external actors such as Quicken Trust and has diversified its funding through social enterprises like hospitality and agribusiness to support sustainability.

The Kabubbu Development Project is a community development organization dedicated to holistic transformation. Since its founding in 2002, team of proximate leaders has developed programs that address the community's most pressing needs (Babirye, 2025). Operating in the Nangabo sub county, KDP services span 153 villages, positively impacting over 160,000 people each year. KDP has a holistic approach to community development where it invests in healthcare, education and economic empowerment of the most vulnerable people mainly women, children with a particular emphasis on Orphans and Vulnerable Children, People living with HIV AIDS, Older Persons, People with Disabilities and Pregnant Mothers adolescent girls.

Nyingling (2025) asserted that within this setting, leadership and human resource stability are central to the organization's ability to deliver and sustain its programs. Mukuza (2024) added that KDP depends on a committed workforce of teachers, health professionals, agribusiness staff, community mobilizers, administrative personnel, and support staff. Organizational leaders, including the Executive Director and senior managers, shape everyday professional experiences, workloads, and workplace culture.

Kagoda (2025) emphasised that in many community-based organizations like KDP, leadership roles often involve not only administrative management but also visionary engagement with community stakeholders, resource mobilization, and relationship building with donors and partners. This multifaceted role can lead to diverse leadership styles from participatory and transformational (inspiring and inclusive) to directive or transactional (goal-focused with clear expectations). The style adopted has tangible implications on how employees feel supported, involved, and valued in their work. Given the complex environment in which KDP operates balancing donor expectations, community dynamics, financial constraints, and service delivery leadership approaches significantly influence employee motivation, clarity of roles, feedback processes, professional development opportunities, and recognition systems (Eswapu, 2020). These, in turn, affect whether staff remain committed to the organization or seek employment elsewhere. In the wider Ugandan context, research shows that leadership styles correlate with employee outcomes such as satisfaction and retention, emphasizing the relevance of leadership in organizational performance.

Thus, in the context of the KDP in Gayaza, examining leadership styles and employee retention helps to illuminate specific leadership behaviors used in frontline community service delivery and organizational management; understand how these behaviors impact workplace satisfaction, professional growth, and employee loyalty; and provide evidence-based recommendations for leadership development and HR practices that strengthen staff retention, improve service continuity, and enhance impact in the communities served.

This contextual lens acknowledges KDP's unique operational realities including donor partnerships, community expectations, organizational mission, and resource limitationswhile grounding the study in broader organizational behavior insights relevant to community-based organizations in Uganda.

VI.   Problem Statement

Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) play a critical role in delivering essential social, health, and development services at grassroots levels. These organizations rely heavily on skilled and committed employees to implement projects, mobilize communities, manage resources, and achieve development goals. However, Kabubbu Development Project (KDP) in Gayaza Parish, Wakiso District is experiencing high employee turnover, characterized by frequent resignations, low morale, and difficulty retaining competent staff. This

problem disrupts service delivery, increases recruitment and training costs, weakens institutional memory, and reduces organizational effectiveness (KDP Annual Report, 2025).

One of the major factors influencing employee retention is leadership style. In KDP, leadership is often informal, personality-driven, or influenced by donor pressure rather than guided by professional management practices. Leaders may adopt authoritarian, laissez-faire, or inconsistent leadership approaches, which can result in poor communication, lack of employee involvement, favoritism, unclear expectations, and limited staff development (KDP Annual Report, 2025). Such leadership practices create dissatisfaction, stress, and disengagement among employees, making them more likely to leave the organization.

Despite the importance of leadership in shaping employee attitudes and commitment, many CBOs give little attention to how leadership styles affect staff retention. Instead, employee turnover is often blamed on low salaries, funding shortages, or external job opportunities, without critically examining internal leadership practices. As a result, KDPcontinue to struggle with workforce instability, project delays, and reduced community impact.

There is therefore a need to systematically examine the relationship between leadership styles and employee retention in KDP. Understanding how different leadership approaches such as transformational, transactional, and servant leadership influence employees' commitment, motivation, and intention to stay will provide evidence-based guidance for improving leadership practices.

VII. General Objective Of The Study

The study intends to examine the effect of leadership styles on the employee retention in the community-basedorganization, using Kabubbu Development Projects as a case study.

Specific Objectives of the Study

The study will be guided by the following specific objectives.
1. To examine how transformational leadership affect employee retention in Kabubbu Development Project.
2. To assess how transactional leadership affect employee retention in Kabubbu Development Project in Gayaza Parish, Wakiso District
3. To examine how servant leadership affect employee retention in Kabubbu Development Project.

VIII. Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions.
1. How does transformational leadership affect employee retention in Kabubbu Development Project?
2. How does transactional leadership affect employee retention in Kabubbu Development Project?
3. How does servant leadership affect employee retention in Kabubbu Development Project?

IX. Scope Of The Study

Content Scope

The study is set to examine how leadership styles affect employee retention in community-based organizations. This study focused on transactional and servant leadership styles affect employee retention in Kabubbu Development Project, Gayaza Parish, Wakiso District. Employee retention of Kabubbu Development Project will be investigated in terms of job satisfaction, employee motivation, workplace culture, and opportunities for growth

Geographical Scope

The study was carried out at Kabubbu Development Project headquarters in Nangabo Sub County, Gayaza Parish, Wakiso District.

Time Scope

As the researcher, this study focused on the period 2022 – 2025 because it is during this period that the issues of poor leadership has been more pronounced in Kabubbu Development Project.

X. Significance Of The Study

This study is important to various stakeholders including Community-Based Organizations, employees, policymakers, development partners, and scholars in leadership and organizational management.

Kabubbu Development Project Management: The findings of this study would help KDP leaders and managers understand how different leadership styles influence employee motivation, job satisfaction, and willingness to remain in the organization. By identifying leadership practices that promote staff commitment and loyalty, KDP would be able to improve internal management, reduce staff turnover, and strengthen

institutional stability. This would enhance project implementation, accountability, and the quality of services delivered to communities.

Employees: Employees would benefit from this study because it highlights the leadership behaviours that support fair treatment, participation, professional growth, and positive working relationships. When leaders adopt effective leadership styles, employees are more likely to feel valued, respected, and supported, which leads to increased morale, job satisfaction, and long-term commitment to the organization.

Donors and Development Partners: Donors and funding agencies would gain insight into how leadership practices affect workforce stability and project sustainability. Since high staff turnover undermines project continuity and accountability, this study would guide donors in supporting leadership development and capacity-building initiatives that improve organizational performance and ensure value for money.

Policymakers and Regulatory Bodies: The study would provide evidence that can inform policies and guidelines for the management of NGOs and CBOs. Policymakers can use the findings to promote good governance, leadership training, and human resource standards that enhance staff retention and organizational effectiveness in the non-profit sector.

Academic and Future Researchers: This study would contribute to the existing body of knowledge on leadership and human resource management, particularly in the context of Community-Based Organizations, which is an area that is often under-researched. It would provide a reference for future researchers who wish to conduct similar studies or build theoretical models linking leadership styles to employee retention.

XI.   Definitions Of Key Terms

Leadership Style

A leadership style is a leader's characteristic behaviors, methods, and approach to guiding, motivating, and managing people, encompassing their attitudes, decision-making, and communication to achieve goals, with common types including autocratic, democratic, laissez-faire, transformational, and situational leadership, all influencing team dynamics and effectiveness.

Transformational leadership

Transformational leadership refers to the style of leadership that inspires positive change in people, in this case, employees or members of the organization. Transformational leaders are passionate, energetic, and enthusiastic. They help each staff or team member to succeed while being involved in every step of the process of the organization's success.

Transactional Leadership

Transactional Leadership style is based on bureaucratic authority and legitimacy within the organization. It emphasizes work standards, assignments, and task- oriented goals. It focuses on task completion and employee compliance and relies on organizational rewards and punishments to influence employee performance (Barnes, 2019).

Servant Leadership

Servant leadership is a philosophy where the leader's primary goal is to serve their team, putting the needs, growth, and well-being of others first, rather than focusing on personal power or control, fostering a collaborative, empathetic, and high-performing environment where followers develop to become leaders themselves. Coined by Robert K. Greenleaf, this people-centric approach flips traditional models by making the leader exist to support their employees, ensuring they grow healthier, wiser, and more autonomous. Key traits include listening, empathy, healing, awareness, stewardship, and a deep commitment to developing people and building community.

Employee Retention

ER is defined as worker's effort to keep the much needed staff in order to attain business goals" however, turnover is an elucidation which is used to indicate the unprompted/voluntary loss of the organization worker who intentionally leaves the organization (Frank, Finnegan et al. 2024). The expense of losing representatives is greater than holding them through pay plans (Carter, Dudley et al. 2019).

XII.   Literature Survey

Though several studies have been carried out on leadership, inadequate coverage or none has been done to deal with the leadership styles and employee retention in CBOs. Related studies that were conducted elsewhere did not address the gaps that the current study seeks to fill as established in the works of Muganga (2022), Ahmed and Shaban (2023), Khoza and Adam (2022).

Muganga (2022) conducted a study that examined the impact of transformational leadership behavior onfollower's innovation and performance of Africana Water Company and Food Supplier. The study found out that organizational behavior enhances due totransformational leadership through stimulating the behavior of organizational citizenship, whereasfollower's innovation enhances through promoting controversial issues regarding their tasks. The contribution of Muganga's study withstanding, to-date few studies have examined transformational, transactional and servant leadership styles in Kabubbu Development Project, Gayaza Parish, Wakiso District. The current study seeks to fill this gap.

Ahmed and Shaban (2023) conducted a study on the influence of university's leadership styles on governance in India, a case of University of Rajasthan. The study established that there was no precise leadership style that could suite all organizations, or even could be fit for one organization, because leadership style depended on leader, context, followers and culture. In universities at least three leadership styles could be used based on the leaders and followers whatsoever the context and culture which was shared leadership style among the governance board members, transformational leadership style for academicians and mid-level management, and finally transactional leadership style for other workers who performed routine work. The study presented a methodological gap based on the empirically established findings that did not provide statistical hypothesis testing on the leadership and thus presented inconclusive findings. The current study will address this gap by conducting a statistical hypothesis on the relationship between transformational, transactional and servant leadership styles in Kabubbu Development Project, Gayaza Parish, Wakiso District. The current study seeks to fill this gap.

Khoza and Adam (2022) conducted a study on the influence of leadership styles on governance in State-Owned Enterprises in Nigeria. The study found that leadership styles were autocratic, bureaucratic, democratic or charismatic. The study also established that leadership styles provided the motivation and impulsion to make corporate governance effective in the organizations. The findings further noted effective public sector management reforms to have always depended to some degree on leadership styles, and that leaders with transformative characteristics get their followers to perform above and beyond expectations and express high performance expectations. Leaders who exhibit transformational qualities had a positive effect on employee commitment and organizational citizenship behaviour. The study presented a contextual gap arising from the leadership styles in the state enterprises which may differ from CBOs such as Kabubbu Development Project. Therefore, the current study seeks to fill the gap.

XIII. Theoretical Review

Understanding the relationship between leadership styles and employee retention in CBOs can be grounded in several theoretical frameworks.

Transformational Leadership Theory

The Transformational Leadership Theory suggests that transforming leadership is a relationship of mutual stimulation and elevation that converts followers into leaders and may convert leaders into moral agents (Krishnan, 2012). The leader may transform a follower's self-interest, increase the confidence of followers, elevate followers' expectations, and heighten the value of the leader's intended outcomes for the follower (Gosling & Jones, 2012) such as retention. Transformational leadership has four components; idealised influence, individual consideration, intellectual stimulation and inspiration (Cetin & Kinik, 2020). On the other hand, the Transactional Leadership Theory emphasises the importance of the relationship between leader and followers, focusing on the mutual benefits derived from a form of "contract" through which the leader delivers such things as rewards or recognition in return for the commitment or loyalty of the followers (De Bono, Remme, & Jones, 2018).

Rafferty and Griffin (2022) argues that transformational leadership theory highlights the four key dimensions such as idealized influence; inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration which help explain how leadership styles impact employee attitudes and organizational outcomes. It enables organizations to differentiate between leadership approaches that merely manage tasks (transactional) and those that inspire, engage, and develop employees.

Transformational Leadership Theory is significant to this study because it links leadership behavior to employee engagement and retention, provides a blueprint for effective leadership, and enhances organizational sustainability, particularly in mission-driven and resource-constrained environments like CBOs.

Transactional Leadership Theory

Transactional Leadership Theory, primarily developed by Max Weber and later expanded by James MacGregor Burns (1978) and Bernard Bass (1985), is a leadership approach that focuses on structured tasks, clear roles, and performance-based rewards and punishments. Transactional Leadership Theory emphasises the role of rewards as the motive for achieving results and punishment as a motive to ensure adherence to the goal

to be achieved. Transactional leaders recognise, the actions their subordinates must take in order to achieve outcomes, and develop agreements with them, which make clear what they were received, if they do something right and what will happen if they do something wrong (Waldman, Ramirez, House, & Puranam, 2011). The Transformational Leadership Theory suggests that when the leader transforms followers' self-interest, increases their confidence, elevates their expectations, encourages behavioural change and motivates others to higher levels of personal achievement hence they are likely to stay on their jobs. On the other hand, the transactional leadership theory proposes that when a leader develops agreements with employees that make clear what they receive if they do something right and what will happen if they do something wrong, they are likely to stay (Yizhong and Baranchenko et al. 2019). These two theories were the basis for investigating the relationship between leadership styles and retention of CBO employees.Particularly in CBOs and structured project-based environments, transactional practices ensure discipline and accountability, while supportive leadership styles promote loyalty and engagement.

Transactional leadership theory is significant to this study because it clarifies the relationship between structured leadership practices and employee retention, provides tools for performance management and accountability, and forms a practical foundation for combining leadership approaches that maximize both organizational efficiency and staff loyalty.

Path Goal Theory

Path-Goal Theory, developed by Robert House (1971), emphasizes that leaders enhance employee performance and satisfaction by clarifying the path to goals and providing the necessary support and guidance. The study used the Path-Goal theory because it specifies leader's style or behavior that best fits the employee and work environment to achieve a goal (House (1971). The goal is to increase employees' motivation, empowerment, and satisfaction so they become productive members of the organization. The path-goal theory can best be thought of as a process in which leaders select specific behaviors that are best suited to the employees' needs and the working environment so that they may best guide the employees through their path in the obtainment of their daily work activities (goals) (Northouse, 2023).

The Path-Goal Theory of Leadership states that leadership style changes according to the situation a person is in. Leaders adopt a 'path' (style) based on the situation, intending to achieve a 'goal' (objective). Leaders are flexible and they change their styles depending on the situation they are in (House, 1971). The theory proposes two factors influencing a leader's behavior: Environmental factors (for example, workplace culture, timelines, and resources) and team characteristics (control, experience and perceived ability). The main assumption of Path-Goal Theory is that leaders are flexible in their styles. Effective leaders clarify the path for everyone to achieve their goals, making the journey easier by reducing roadblocks and pitfalls (House, 1971).

Path-Goal Theory is significant to the study because it links adaptive leadership behavior to employee satisfaction, motivation, and retention, provides a flexible framework for applying different leadership styles, and helps organizations retain skilled employees by aligning guidance, support, and goals with employee needs and environmental conditions.

XIV.   Transformational Leadership And Employee Retention In Cbos

Leadership is evenly beneficial for both representatives and enterprises, and particularly, ER is affected by TSL (Amankwaa and AnkuTsede 2020), directly as well as in-directly (Khan 2020; Nohe and Hertel 2022). Leaders possessing transformational attributes refine their dependents' work exposition by accomplishing institutional targets (Sow, Ntamon et al. 2023) and enforcing a reward mechanism to keep and sustain the workers (Adekanbi 2023). Prior investigations have underlined a strong nexus between TSL and ER (Bass and Bass Bernard 1985; Nielsen, Randall et al. 2018; Para-González, Jiménez et al. 2023).

Transformational leadership is characterized by inspirational motivation, individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation, and idealized influence. This leadership style has been consistently linked to higher levels of employee commitment and lower turnover intentions (Judge & Piccolo, 2004). Transformational leaders foster a positive work environment and enhance employees' identification with organizational goals, which in turn reduces turnover (Avolio et al., 2004). Empirical evidence from various contexts further supports these findings. For instance, Liu et al. (2023) highlighted the importance of leadership style in shaping turnover intentions through a social identity perspective, while studies by Asrar-ul-Haq and Kuchinke (2023) and Ismail et al. (2011) demonstrated that transformational leadership positively influences employee attitudes and organizational commitment, thereby contributing to retention.

Retaining employees, specifically within the context of dyad linkage between the leaders and followers, is vital for sustainable performance and competitive advantages (Tian et al., 2020). Chen and Wu (2022) stated that leadership style plays a significant predicting role in affecting employee intention to stay. The factors influencing employees' retention intention are likely to influence their turnover (Sobaih et al., 2020). TFL is an important determinant of employee retention in the organization and also contributes to employability

and stronger ties with employees over time in organizations (Thomas and Aurora, 2024). Sobaih et al. (2020) investigated how both TFL affect hotel employees' intention to stay with the organization and found that TFL had a more significant positive impact on employees' choice to stay than TSL. Additionally, they recommended emphasizing more investment in TFL to reduce the extent of employee turnover. Park and Pierce (2020) found that TFL negatively impacted the turnover intention of child welfare workers. On the other hand, Wells and Peachey (2011) revealed that TFL could reduce turnover intention and enhance employee attachment to the job and organization.

The intense competition among employment candidates, for both experienced professionals and fresh graduates, creates a more challenging workplace (Schwartz, 2020). While this can help create plenty of opportunities for growth through collaboration and partnerships, it can also lead to a toxic environment where employees hinder the growth of one another and focus only on personal gain. To prevent this from happening, it's crucial to have a leader who understands the needs of their staff and is up to the job of bringing out their potential and unifying everyone to promote the growth of the organization (Nikezić, 2012).

Studies have shown that among the most popular leadership styles, transformational leadership is the style that helps increase employee retention (Nasharudin, 2022). While there are plenty of candidates to choose from, experienced professionals are crucial in maintaining the business' level of service while maximizing its resources. After all, it's difficult to focus on business or organizational growth if leaders must keep training new employees to bring them up to speed.

Empirical evidence shows that transformational leadership is generally positively associated with higher employee retention because it fosters organizational commitment, job satisfaction, intrinsic motivation, and a supportive work environment (Tarsik and Kassim, 2022). Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) serves as a mediator between transformational leadership and retention transformational leaders encourage discretionary behaviors that strengthen teamwork and organizational loyalty, which in turn reduces turnover. In studies from nonprofit and NGO contexts, transformational leadership traits (visionary communication, encouragement of innovation) have been shown to predict volunteers' intention to remain, suggesting broader applicability to CBO staff and volunteer retention.

According to Rothfelder, et al., (2012), transformational leaders help employees and volunteers identify with the mission and feel valued parts of the organization, which strengthens emotional attachment and thus retention. Higher job satisfaction especially when leaders provide support, recognition, and opportunities for development reduces turnover intentions. Transformational leadership often correlates with satisfaction because it emphasizes appreciation and growth.

Leadership that encourages autonomy and recognizes individual contributions fosters engagement, which strongly predicts retention in mission-oriented workplaces like CBOs and NGOs (Thomas and Aurora, 2024). Studies show engagement mediates the relationship between leadership style and retention outcomes. Research indicates transformational leadership negatively correlates with turnover intentionsby increasing organizational commitment and satisfaction.

Kundu and Lata, (2022) investigated that employees and volunteers are often motivated by purpose rather than financial returns. Transformational leaders enhance meaning and alignment with organizational goals, increasing retention. Retention challenges in CBOs can be different from commercial sectors: limited budgets, high workload, and reliance on volunteer engagementcreate unique retention dynamics. Transformational leadership can mitigate these through strong vision, empowerment, and supportive communication, which substitute partially for material incentives.

Research broadly supports that transformational leadership positively influences employee retention through mechanisms such as enhanced organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and engagement. In CBOs with mission-driven staff and volunteers these effects are particularly relevant, although leadership effectiveness may depend on organizational conditions and context (Sahu, Pathardikar, Kumar, 2018). Cultivating transformational leadership capabilities in CBOs can be a strategic lever to increase retention, deepen commitment, and strengthen organizational sustainability in environments where resources are limited and mission alignment is the key.

Significant evidence exists in the extant research that transformational leaders reduce their followers' intention to quit. Transformational leaders foster employee loyalty to the organisation by encouraging employees to overcome obstacles and remain effective in their work. Support for this was found by Alatawi (2022), who noted that transformational leadership had a negative relationship with employee turnover intentions. In contrast, other leadership styles that set a narrow-minded vision experience high employee turnover with the remaining employees untalented or disengaged (Alatawi, 2022). Transformational leaders who promote a collaborative working culture create a sense of belonging and being valued among employees, which was found to reduce both turnover intention and actual turnover (Sun & Wang, 2022). This continues to hold true in more recent research by Pravichai and Ariyabuddhiphongs (2023), who found that transformational leadership significantly reduces employee turnover intention.

Several dimensions of transformational leadership play a significant role. In particular, idealised influence (i.e. charisma) creates a desire among followers to be identified with the leader, motivating followers to remain in the organisation so long as the leader is there (Shamir, House, & Arthur, 2023). Transformational leaders also "use inspirational motivation to build emotional commitment to a mission or goal" (Bass, 2006, p. 36). Followers with an emotional commitment to the leader and the organisation have lower intentions to quit.

XV. Transactional Leadership And Employee Retention In Cbos

Transactional leadership, which is based on contingent rewards and corrective actions, is primarily associated with the establishment of clear role expectations and short-term performance improvements (Podsakoff et al., 1990). Although its direct impact on long-term retention may be less pronounced compared to transformational leadership, transactional practices help create a stable work environment when integrated with supportive leadership behaviors. Empirical studies have shown that transactional leadership can indirectly foster retention by enhancing job satisfaction and clarifying performance standards (Harris & Ogbonna, 2011; Tzeng, 2002). Such findings suggest that while transactional leadership may not be the strongest predictor of retention, its contribution to organizational stability should not be underestimated.

Nikezić, et al., (2022) avers that transactional leadership, focused on clear structure, rewards, and punishments, provides stability and boosts short-term performance/satisfaction but often falls short in fostering the deep emotional engagement needed for high long-term employee retention compared to transformational styles, potentially leading to higher turnover if not balanced with other approaches. While clear goals and rewards motivate, a purely transactional approach can make work feel like just a series of transactions, reducing loyalty and innovation, though combining it with supportive behaviors can still enhance retention by improving job satisfaction and reducing stress.

TSL focuses on the transaction or exchange of interests between leaders and followers (Ali et al., 2023; Alrowwad et al., 2020). This exchange relies on the leader who communicates the goals, tasks or duties and specifies the conditions and rewards for accomplishing the goals and completing the assignments. Transactional leaders clarify what to do and how satisfactory performance will be rewarded (Bass and Avolio, 2022). The transaction can be the exchange of psychological or material rewards given by the leaders, which can be strengthened through the threat of punishment. This leadership approach conceptualizes the idea of effective leadership by promoting desired behavior by offering rewards and preventing unwanted behavior by giving physical and psychological penalties (Ali et al., 2023; Alrowwad et al., 2020; Bass and Bass, 2018). As a motivating factor, contingent reward indicates the ability and persistence of the leader in clearly postulating expectations and communicating the outcomes and benefits to the followers (Raziq et al., 2023). In this regard, a leader who specifies the rewards of task accomplishment can expect higher performance from the followers (Raziq et al., 2023).

Transactional leaders allow employees limited or no participation in decision-making (Dai et al., 2023). Transactional leaders apply compensation methods to improve employee performance, such as rewards for high performance and reprimands for low performance (Burns, 1978). TSL limits the individual development of innovative skills and deters individual and organizational performance (Dai et al., 2023). However, studies also found TSL is an influential positive leadership approach connected with employee behavioral outcomes like OCB, intention to stay, employee commitment and engagement (Ali et al., 2023; Gemeda and Lee, 2020; Ha and Moon, 2023; Sobaih et al., 2020).

Transactional leaders use contingent rewards (e.g., bonuses), which can temporarily boost satisfaction and reduce short-term turnover intentions by meeting material or extrinsic expectations. Clear structure and expectations can help employees understand roles and performance metrics, but this may not sufficiently increase emotional attachment or organizational commitment - two elements strongly associated with long-term retention. Transactional leadership's focus on compliance and task completion can enhance performance metrics but may also limit opportunities for intrinsic engagement and personal growth factors linked with turnover when absent, especially in CBOs where meaningful engagement is key.

XVI. Servant Leadership And Employee Retention In Cbos

Servant leadership is a leadership approach where the leader has a primary goal to address followers' needs. Eva et al. (2019) referred to servant leadership as a way for leaders to empower followers through relational, ethical, emotional, and spiritual aspects to guide them to becoming the best version of themselves. Servant leaders help others grow, develop, and promote employees' overall well-being while achieving organizational goals over an extended period (Dutta & Khatri, 2022). Servant leadership has many positive effects on followers.

Servant leadership is a people-centric leadership philosophy where leaders prioritize serving others especially employees before organizational or personal gains (Stillo and Furxhi, 2016). Core traits include empathy, stewardship, empowerment, listening, ethical behavior, and focus on personal growth.This contrasts

with purely task- or authority-driven styles. Servant leaders foster trust, mutual respect, and a sense of shared purpose among staff. In CBOs which often have mission-driven goals, limited resources, and high dependence on committed staff such as servant leadership aligns naturally with organizational values and humanistic objectives.

Servant leadership significantly boosts employee retention by prioritizing people, fostering trust, and promoting growth, making employees feel valued, heard, and supported, which reduces turnover and increases commitment (Sophia & Aurora, 2024). By focusing on listening, empathy, and empowering individuals to reach their potential, servant leaders create positive, low-stress environments where people are more likely to stay and thrive, leading to higher job satisfaction and stronger organizational commitment.

Canavesi, A., & Minelli, E. (2021) argues that leaders build strong relationships by prioritizing employee needs and well-being, creating a sense of community, safety, and mutual respect, which encourages loyalty. Servant leaders invest in employees' personal and professional growth, helping them develop skills and achieve potential, making them less likely to seek opportunities elsewhere. By actively listening and including employees in decision-making, leaders give them autonomy and ownership, increasing motivation and accountability. By removing obstacles and providing support, servant leaders create less stressful work environments, protecting employees' mental and physical health. Feeling valued and supported directly translates to higher job satisfaction and a stronger desire to remain with the organization.

Bao and Zhao (2018) reveal that servant leaders intentionally build trust, transparency, fairness, and ethical conduct. When employees believe their leaders genuinely care about their well-being, trust increases which is a strong predictor of retention. Employees who trust their leaders are more likely to stay rather than seek alternative employment. According to Malik, Javed and Hassan (2022), servant leadership produces a work climate where employees feel valued and heard, empowered to contribute ideas, and supported in professional growth. This intrinsic satisfaction reduces turnover intention. Studies show servant leadership is associated with higher levels of job satisfaction, work engagement, and organizational commitment, all of which are strongly linked to retention.

Malik, Javed and Hassan (2022) further reveals that a key aspect of servant leadership is empowerment leaders delegate responsibility, support skill growth, and encourage autonomous decision-making. Empowered employees feel more competent and connected to organizational goals, which fosters loyalty and motivation to stay. Servant leadership has been shown in multiple studies to lower employee stress levels and burnoutboth strong predictors of turnover.

Studies in non-profit and project-based settings indicate that servant leadership positively influences employee engagement and resilience, which correlates with retention outcomes (Sun and Wang, 2022). Research on volunteers in NPOs shows that servant leadership enhances job satisfaction, which mediates the relationship with volunteer retention. This pattern is likely extendable to paid staff in CBOs, given similar motivational dynamics. The impact of servant leadership on retention often works through mediators especially employees who are satisfied with their roles under supportive leaders have lower turnover intentions; servant leadership supplies personal and job resources (support, resilience) that boost engagement another retention predictor; and feeling supported organizationally predicts commitment and intent to stay. These pathways demonstrate that servant leadership does not automatically retain employees; it fosters conditions such as satisfaction, engagement, trust that make staying more appealing.
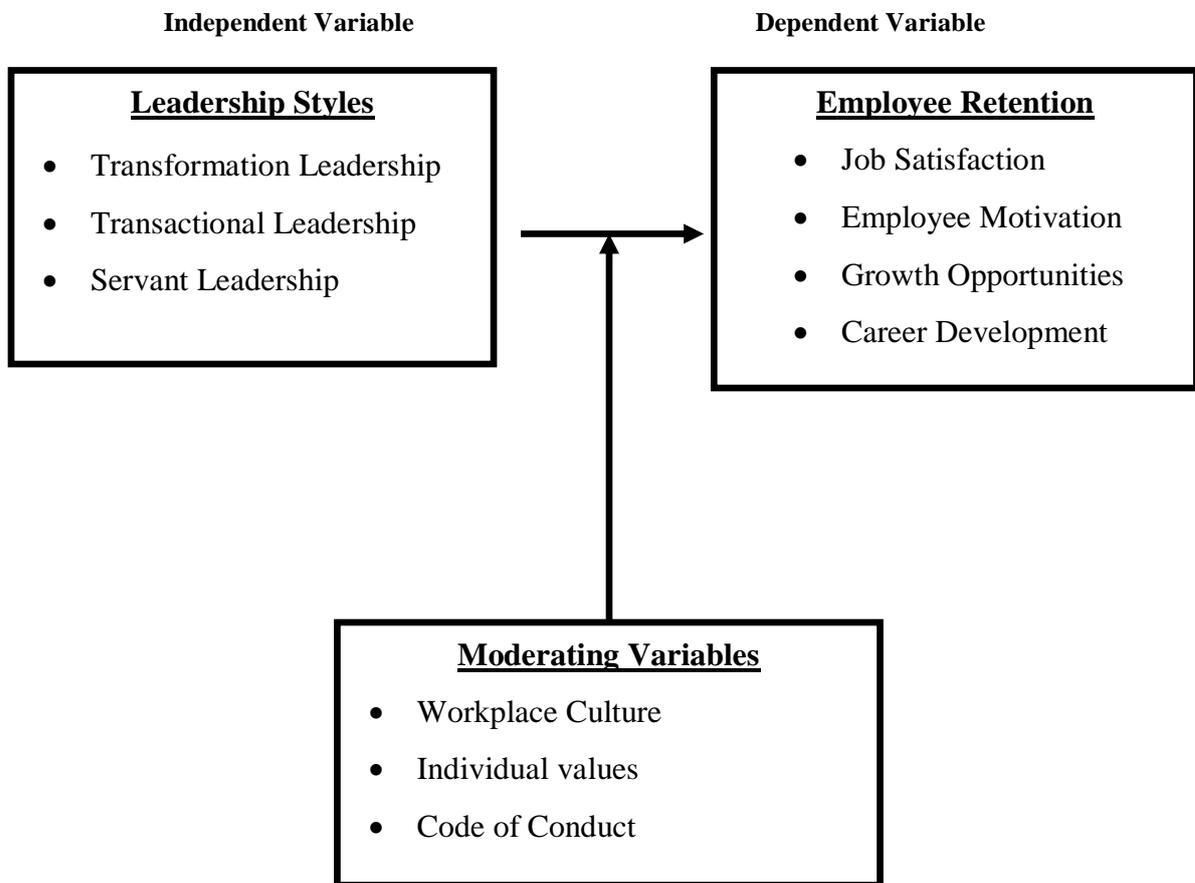
CBO employees are usually intrinsically motivated by purpose (Andersen, 2018).Servant leadership resonates with this mindset by reinforcing meaning and contribution rather than purely transactional rewards. CBOs often emphasize people and relationships, making servant leadership a natural fit that enhances organizational identity and belonging. In contexts where financial rewards cannot compete with private sector salaries, leadership quality becomes a key retention factor. Servant leadership fills that gap by boosting emotional and social rewards.

Servant leaders create positive dyadic relationships with followers. Servant leaders affect followers by encouraging positive professional behaviors and increasing job satisfaction (Turgut et al., 2022). High-quality bonds formed by the dyadic relationship are valuable to both the employee and the organization. Leaders influence followers to improve organizational behavior and increase their value to the organization by allowing the servant leader to earn their trust and respect. The trust gained by the servant leader reduces employee turnover intention (Kashyap & Rangnekar, 2023). Servant leadership significantly reduced voluntary and involuntary turnover by increasing employees' commitment and increasing positive organizational behaviors (Dutta & Khatri, 2022; Jang & Kandampully, 2023). Servant leadership can mitigate the adverse effects of turnover.

XVII.   Conceptual Framework
Conceptual framework is the foundations that represents or explains how certain variables are related to each other andwhy they are associated with each other. After defining the problem statement and hypothesis,

the study realizes the variables of leadership styles that are important in directly affecting the employee retention in CBOs. In this study, the independent variable isleadership behavior which is the variable of primary interest, and the dependent variable is change implementation. So, the researcher draws closer framework which is stated below.

Independent Variable   **Dependent Variable**

Leadership Styles • Transformation Leadership • Transactional Leadership • Servant Leadership	**Employee Retention** • Job Satisfaction • Employee Motivation • Growth Opportunities • Career Development

Moderating Variables

• Workplace Culture

• Individual values

• Code of Conduct

Figure 1.1: Conceptual Framework
Source: House (1971), modified by the Researcher, 2025

XVIII.   Key Factors Linking Leadership Styles To Employee Retention
While leadership style is a critical factor in employee retention, its influence is mediated by several key factors, including job satisfaction, workplace environment, and opportunities for professional growth. The following are some of the primary factors through which leadership styles affect retention:

Job Satisfaction
Leadership styles significantly impact job satisfaction, which is a major determinant of employee retention. Transformational leaders who inspire and engage their employees tend to increase job satisfaction by creating a positive work environment. In contrast, leadership styles that focus purely on transactional exchanges may fail to create long-term satisfaction, leading to higher turnover rates.

Employee Motivation
Leaders who invest in employee motivation, whether through personal development opportunities, recognition, or tangible rewards, tends to foster higher retention rates. Transformational and servant leadership styles are particularly effective in motivating employees by providing them with a sense of purpose and personal growth. Motivated employees are more likely to remain loyal to the organization.

Workplace Culture
Leadership styles shape the organizational culture, which can have a direct impact on retention. Leaders who cultivate a culture of collaboration, recognition, and innovation create an environment where

employees feel valued and engaged. In CBOs, where employees are more likely to interact directly with leaders, a supportive and inclusive workplace culture is essential for retention.

Opportunities for Growth

Leadership styles that emphasize personal and professional development create opportunities for employees to advance within the organization. Transformational leaders who invest in employee growth and learning help build loyalty by showing that the company values their career trajectory. Servant leaders who focus on empowering employees also create an environment where individuals feel supported in their pursuit of professional growth.

Leadership styles havea profound impact on employee retention in CBOs, with transformational, transactional, and servant leadership offering different approaches to fostering loyalty and commitment. While transformational and servant leadership styles are more likely to create long-term emotional engagement and loyalty, transactional leadership can still be effective when implemented with clear communication and consistent recognition.

The key to improving employee retention in CBOs lies in aligning leadership practices with the needs and expectations of employees. By focusing on job satisfaction, motivation, and personal growth, leaders can create a positive work environment that fosters loyalty and reduces turnover. As CBOs continue to navigate competitive markets and limited resources, effective leadership will remain a critical driver of employee retention and organizational success.

XIX.   Research Design

This study adopted a mixed method research design, where both quantitative and qualitative data wascollected and analyzed to understand the leadership styles and how such leadership styles affects employee retentions in Kabuubu Development Project in Gayaza Parish. Data was collected at a particular point in time due to time and other resource constraints.

XX.   Study Population

The study population comprised of 60 staff of Kabuubu Development Project in Gayaza Parish, this includes the managerial and non-managerial staff (Kabuubu Development Project HR Manual, 2024).

XXI.   Sample Size And Selection

A sample of 52 respondents was drawn from the study population. It was determined using Neumann's formula (2000) as follows.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where: **n** = sample size, **N** = target population
e = level of significance = e = 0.05 = e^2 = $(0.05)^2$ =0.0025

$$\frac{n}{1 + 60(0.05)^2} = 60$$

$$\frac{n}{1 + 60(0.0025)} = 60$$

$$\frac{n}{1 + 0.15} = 60$$

$$\frac{n}{1.15} = 60$$

$$\mathbf{n = 52}$$

Table 1: Sampling Framework

No	Category	Population	Sample Size	Sampling Technique
1	Managerial staff	16	14	Purposive sampling
2	Non-managerial staff	44	38	Simple Random
	Total	**60**	**52**	

Source: Kabuubu Development Project HR Manual (2024)

XXII.   Sampling Techniques

The study used both purposive and random sampling techniques to select respondents to be involved in the study.

XXIII.   Purposive Sampling

Saunders, et al., (2022) clearly defined purposive sampling as a non-probability sampling technique where the researcher relies on their discretion to choose variables for the sample population to involve or participate in the study. Managerial staff werepurposively sampled to provide precise and concise information on the leadership styles and employee retentionin Kabuubu Development Project, Gayaza Parish.

XXIV.   Random Sampling

Saunders Lewis and Thornhill (2022) defined simple random sampling is a type of probability sampling in which the researcher randomly selects a subset of participants from a population. This method offers every member of the population an equal chance of being selected for the assignment and it is required for inferential statistics since the researcher desires to make inferences about populations based on the behavior of samples.Non managerial staff in KDP, Gayaza Parishwas randomly sampled to share their perceptions and opinion on the nature of the leadership styles and employee retention in Kabuubu Development Project, Nangabo Sub County, Gayaza Parish, Wakiso District.

XXV.   Data Collection Methods

The study used the following methods to collect data from the respondents at Kabuubu Development Project, Gayaza Parish.

QuestionnaireMethod

Questionnaires were designed to demand relevant information on autocratic, democratic, laissez-faire leadership styles and employee retention from the respondents in Kabuubu Development Project, Gayaza Parish. This method helped to restrict the perceptions and sentiments of the respondents that could have consequences to the subject under study. The close-ended questionnaires were used to get information that is definite on leadership styles and employee retentionin Kabuubu Development Project, Gayaza Parish. This instrument was given to managerial staff to enable them share their perceptions and opinion on the topic under study.

Interview Method

Interview method was used to gain an insight and context into a topic under investigation, allow respondents to describe what is important to them. The method was also useful for gathering more detailed information and deemed appropriate as vital information yet less time to answer interviews (Sekaran, 2006). This method was applied to managerial staff, due to they do not have time to fill or attempt questions in the questionnaire.

XXVI.   Data Collection Instruments

Data was mainly collected through the use of self-administered questionnaires and interview guide.

Self-Administered Questionnaire

The questionnaire appended I was used to collect quantitative data from non-managerial staff Section A of the questionnaire seeks to obtain data on the respondents' profile. Section B, C, D, and E seek to obtain data on the main study variables. All items of the main study variables are measured on a five (5) point Likert-Scale (1-5). A five point Likert-Scale is employed because it produces reliable quantitative data that was analyzed with relative ease and it delivers deeper insight into what respondents are thinking and feeling. The researcher physically delivered the questionnaires to the selected respondents and picks them after a week. This enabled the respondents to have enough time to understand and fill.

Interview Guide

The interview guide appended II was used to collect qualitative data from managerial staff of Kabuubu Development Project, Gayaza Parish. Section A of the interview guide sought to obtain data on the respondents' profile. Section B seeks to obtain data on the main study variables. The researcher physically conducted interviews with the targeted respondents. Each interview is planned to take 10-15 minutes. Interview discussions were recorded.

XXVII.   Validity And Reliability Of Instruments

Validity of Instruments

Content validity test index (C.V.I) was used to test for validity of questionnaire. A five point scale of relevant, quite relevant, somehow relevant and not relevant was used by two experts to rate the relevancy of questions in the questionnaire. The content validity was above 0.5 which indicates that the instrument is valid for the study.

The formula which was used to test the validity index is as shown below:

$$CVI = \frac{\text{Number of items regarded relevant by judges}}{\text{Total number of items}} * 100$$

Interview schedules and all other data collection instruments were pre-tested in a pilot study and dully standardized before the full scale study is embarked on. The collected data was edited and cleaned before the data entry was done by use of different data collection methods in order to minimize bias by any other method.

Reliability of Instruments

To confirm reliability of instruments, the researcher used a pilot study method to administer questionnaires in order to test consistency and determine the level of reliability. Cronbach's Alpha was used to test the reliability of the data obtained from questionnaires.

The data was collected by the researcher and assistants thereby avoiding the potential of bias. Transcriptions were checked against verbatim notes. The internal consistency of data coding and analysis was enhanced as the researcher himself did all the coding and analysis. The threat of bias was reduced by the researcher's attempts to be as reflexive as possible throughout. For the data to be reliable, it should yield the same results if the data is repeated for a number of times. Usually reliability is ensured through minimizing errors in the research tools. The researcher used different tests to enable in ascertaining the data collected. Retest method was used where the same score on test one is the same as test two. Cronbach alpha method was used to split all the questions on the instrument and the closer it is to; the higher the reliability estimates of the instrument.

XXVIII.   Data Collection Procedure

This being an academic research, the researcher obtained a supportive letter explaining the objectives of the research signed by the Dean or Research Coordinator of School of Business Administration, St Peters University before distributing the questionnaires and will conduct interviews to the selected respondents at the KDP, Gayaza Parish in Wakiso District. The researcher also got clearance at KDP and acceptance of managerial and non-managerial staff to participate in the study.

XXIX.   Data Processing And Data Analysis

Data processing was done through different stages. The data collected was organized so that order can be created. Editing and cross checking was done so that errors can be detected, and corrections made. This helped to find out completeness in the data. After editing the data, coding was followed and then raw data was entered into Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26 for computation.

Data analysis takes form of both quantitative and qualitative analyses. Quantitatively, descriptive and inferential statistics run in order to describe the behaviour of the data. Qualitative data obtained from interviews and documentary reviews were analysed manually. The researcher used content analysis, narrative analysis, discourse analysis and thematic analysis to analyse qualitative data. Then, results were presented using tables.

XXX.   Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations in research are a set of principles that guide your research designs and practices. These principles include voluntary participation, informed consent, anonymity, confidentiality, potential for harm, and results communication (Shekharan and Bougie, 2010). Effort was made to confine the conduct of the study to the realms of academic research ethics. In general, ethics pertaining to identification, disclosure,

understanding, informed consent, voluntary participation, confidentiality, right to privacy and anonymity (secrecy) was taken care of by the study. The rights of individuals and institutions were respected.

XXXI.   Demographic Characteristics Of Respondents

This section comprises of gender, age, level of education and occupation of respondents.

Gender of the Respondents

According to findings in Table 2, 34(65.4%) of the respondents were male and 18(34.6%) were female. This was a good sample because almost an equal number of opposite sex was considered. This means that the study succeeded in avoiding gender bias in the data collection process. This is an important consideration given that both sexes were involved in the carrying out research on the leadership styles and employee retention in Kabubbu Development Project.

Table 2 Gender of respondents

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Male	34	65.4
	Female	18	34.6
	Total	52	100.0

Source: Primary Data, 2026

Age Group of Respondents

Table 4 shows that 16(30.8%) respondents are 20-30 years, 18(34.6%) are 31-40 years, 12(23.1%) are 41-50 years, and 6(11.5%) were above 51 years. This implies that majority of the respondents were grown-up and able to give reliable information on the leadership styles and employee retention in Kabubbu Development Project.

Table 3 Age Group of Respondents

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	20 - 30 years	16	30.8
	31 - 40 years	18	34.6
	41 - 50 years	12	23.1
	Above 51 years	6	11.5
	Total	52	100.0

Source: Primary Data, 2026

Highest Level of Education of Respondents

In Table 4 below, results reveal that15(28.8%) acquired certificates, 15(28.8%) had acquired diploma, 18(34.6%) had acquired bachelor's degree and 4(7.7%) had masters. This implies that the respondents were able to read and understand the questions in the questionnaire and give appropriate answers on the study.

Table 4 Highest Level of Education of Respondents

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Certificate	15	28.8
	Diploma	15	28.8
	Degree	18	34.6
	Masters	4	7.7
	Total	52	100.0

Source: Primary Data, 2026

Category of the Respondents

Table 6, shows the category of respondents involved in this study, it indicates that 5 (11.5%) were executives, 8(15.4%) were managers, 10(19.2%) were field officers, 5(9.6%) were project officers, 6(11.5%) were technical staff and 17(32.7%) were beneficiaries. The respondents were able to provide suitable information on how leadership styles affect employee retention in KDP.

Table 5 Category of Respondents

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Executive	6	11.5
	Manager	8	15.4
	Field officer	10	19.2
	Project Officer	5	9.6
	Technical Staff	6	11.5
	Beneficiaries	17	32.7
	Total	52	100.0

Source: Primary Data, 2026

XXXII.   Transformational Leadership And Employee Retention Of Kabubbu Development Project

This section presents findings on the first objective of the study which sought to examine how transformational leadership affects employee retention of Kabubbu Development Project. Tables with frequencies and percentages were used to analyse data collected on this objective.

Leaders demonstrate high ethical standards in decision-making

Respondents were asked whether leaders demonstrate high ethical standards in decision-making and their responses were; 8(15.4%) strongly disagreed, 8(15.4%) disagreed, 24(46.2%) agreed and 12(23%) strongly agreed. The Table 7 presents the findings.

Table 6 Leaders demonstrate high ethical standards in decision-making

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	8	15.4
	Disagree	8	15.4
	Agree	24	46.2
	Strongly Agree	12	23.0
	Total	52	100.0

Source: Primary Data, 2026

Study findings in Table 6 present that the majority 36(69.2%) of the respondents were in agreement that leaders demonstrate high ethical standards in decision-making. This means that leaders in the Kabubbu Development Project demonstrate high ethical standards in their decision-making processes, including transparency, fairness, accountability, and adherence to organizational policies and community values. However, 16(30.8%) of the respondents disagreed. Therefore, leaders avoid favoritism and corruption in project decisions, decisions are made in the best interest of the community, leaders are accountable for their actions and decisions, and ethical guidelines and policies are consistently followed.

Leaders put organizational interests above personal interests.

Respondents were asked leaders put organizational interests above personal interests and their responses were; 7(13.5%) strongly disagreed, 5(9.6%) disagreed, 26(50%) agreed and 14(26.9%) strongly agreed as summarised in Table 8.

Table 7 Leaders put organizational interests above personal interests

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	7	13.5
	Disagree	5	9.6
	Agree	26	50.0
	Strongly Agree	14	26.9
	Total	52	100.0

Source: Primary Data, 2026

Research findings in Table 7 indicate that 40(76.9%) of the respondents agreed that leaders put organizational interests above personal interests. This means that leaders avoid conflicts of interest in project activities, personal benefits do not influence project decisions, decisions are made to advance project objectives rather than individual gain, and leaders demonstrate integrity and selflessness in managing project resources.

Though, 12(23.1%) of the respondents were in disagreement.Therefore, leaders in the Kabubbu Development Project should consistently prioritize organizational interests over personal interests in their decision-making.

Some respondents in an interview narrated that "In the Kabubbu Development Project, leadership behavior is critical because the project operates within a community-oriented and resource-sensitive environment where misuse of authority or resources can undermine trust and project outcomes." They added that "in development projects like Kabubbu, where sustainability and community trust are vital, ethical leadership plays a significant role in ensuring long-term success."

Leaders communicate a clear and appealing vision for KDP.

On the question whether leaders communicate a clear and appealing vision for Kabubbu Development Project and their responses were; 11(21.2%) strongly disagreed, 8(15.4%) disagreed, 21(40.4%) agreed and 12(23%) strongly agreed. Table 9 presents the findings.

Table 8Leaders communicate a clear and appealing vision for KDP.

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	11	21.2
	Disagree	8	15.4
	Agree	21	40.4
	Strongly Agree	12	23.0
	Total	52	100.0

Source: Primary Data, 2026

Findings in Table 8 presents that the majority 33(63.4%) of the respondents agreed that leaders communicate a clear and appealing vision for Kabubbu Development Project. This means that in the Kabubbu Development Project, leaders clearly articulate the project's vision help stakeholders understand the project's purpose, long-term goals, and expected community impact. This clarity aligns the efforts of staff, volunteers, and community members toward a shared objective. On the other hand, 19(36.6%) of the respondents disagreed. Therefore, leaders' ability to communicate a clear and appealing vision should be a critical determinant of stakeholder engagement, effective implementation, and sustainable outcomes in the Kabubbu Development Project.

In an interview session, some respondents revealed that "an appealing vision motivates commitment and enthusiasm among project participants. When leaders consistently communicate the vision in simple, relevant, and culturally appropriate language, it fosters a sense of ownership and belonging among stakeholders. This is particularly important in KDP, where local participation and trust significantly influence project success."

Leaders at KDP motivate employees to perform beyond expectations.

On the question whether the leaders at Kabubbu Development Project motivate employees to perform beyond expectations and their responses were 10(19.2%) strongly disagreed, 7(13.5%) disagreed, 4(7.7%) were not sure, 17(32.7%) agreed and 14(26.9%) strongly agreed. Table 9 presents the findings.

Table 9Leaders at KDP motivate employees to perform beyond expectations.

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	10	19.2
	Disagree	7	13.5
	Not Sure	4	7.7
	Agree	17	32.7
	Strongly Agree	14	26.9
	Total	52	100.0

Source: Primary Data, 2026

Research findings in Table 9 reveal that 31(59.6%) of the respondents were in agreement that leaders at Kabubbu Development Project motivate employees to perform beyond expectations. This means that at the Kabubbu Development Project, leaders motivate employees to perform beyond expectations encourage staff to exceed minimum job requirements and contribute innovatively toward achieving project goals. This form of motivation is especially important in development projects where resources may be limited and success often depends on employee commitment and creativity. However, 4(7.7%) were not sure on the statement and

17(32.7%) of the respondents disagreed.Therefore, leaders' ability to motivate employees to perform beyond expectations should be a key driver of productivity, innovation, and overall success of the Kabubbu Development Project.

Leaders listen to employees' concerns and suggestions.

When respondents were asked whether leaders listen to employees' concerns and suggestions and their responses were; 10(19.2%) strongly disagreed, 8(15.4%) disagreed, 16(30.8%) agreed and 18(34.6%) strongly agreed. Table 10 presents findings.

Table 10Leaders listen to employees' concerns and suggestions.

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	10	19.2
	Disagree	8	15.4
	Agree	16	30.8
	Strongly Agree	18	34.6
	Total	52	100.0

Source: Primary Data, 2026

Research findings in Table 10 above indicate that 34(65.4%) of the respondents generally that leaders who actively listen to employees' concerns and suggestions promote an inclusive and supportive work environment. This leadership behavior enhances open communication, trust, and mutual respect between management and staff at Kabubbu Development Project. They further added that when employees feel heard, they are more likely to share ideas, report challenges early, and contribute constructively to organizational improvement. However, 18(34.6%) of the respondents disagreed. Therefore, leaders' willingness to listen to employee concerns and suggestions should be a critical factor in fostering employee engagement, effective leadership, and sustainable organizational success.

Some of the respondents in an interview session with the researcher added that "listening to employees' input improves decision-making quality by incorporating diverse perspectives and practical insights from those directly involved in daily operations. In Kabubbu Development Project, employee feedback help identify operational gaps, community needs, and innovative solutions, thereby improving project effectiveness and responsiveness."

Employees see opportunities for career growth within this organization.

On the question whether employees see opportunities for career growth within this organization and their responses were; 11(21.2%) strongly disagreed, 7(13.5%) disagreed, 13(25%) were not sure and 21(40.3%) agreed. The Table 11 presents the findings.

Table 11Employees see opportunities for career growth within this organization

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	11	21.2
	Disagree	7	13.5
	Not Sure	13	25.0
	Agree	21	40.3
	Total	52	100.0

Source: Primary Data, 2026

Findings in Table 11 present that the majority 34(65.3%) of the respondents were in agreement that employees see opportunities for career growth within this organization. This means that at Kabubbu Development Project, employees see clear pathways for career advancement are more likely to invest effort, develop new skills, and remain committed to the project's long-term goals. Career growth opportunities signal that the KDP values employee development and recognizes performance. Though, 18(34.7%) of the respondents were in disagreement. Furthermore, visible career growth opportunities should encourage employees to perform beyond basic requirements, engage in learning, and take initiative. This should contribute to the improved project efficiency, innovation, and sustainability. In an interview, some respondents relates that "employees who believe they have a future within the project are more likely to support organizational change and long-term planning."

XXXIII.   Transactional Leadership And Employee Retention Of Kabubbu Development Project
This section presents findings on the second objective of the study which sought to assess how transactional leadership affects employee retention of Kabubbu Development Project. Tables with frequencies and percentages were used to analyse data collected on this objective.

Leaders at KDP recognize and rewards good performance.
Respondents were asked whether leaders at KDP recognize and rewards good performance. Their responses were; 9(17.3%) strongly disagreed, 11(21.2%) disagreed, 3(5.7%) were not sure, 18(34.6%) agreed and 11(21.2%) strongly agreed as indicated in the Table 12.

Table 12Leaders at KDP recognize and rewards good performance

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	9	17.3
	Disagree	11	21.2
	Not Sure	3	5.7
	Agree	18	34.6
	Strongly Agree	11	21.2
	Total	52	100.0

Source: Primary Data, 2026

Findings in Table 12 reveal that 29(55.8%) of the respondents agreed that leaders at KDP recognize and rewards good performance. This means that at the Kabubbu Development Project (KDP), leaders acknowledge and reward good performance reinforce positive work behaviors and encourage employees to consistently deliver high-quality results. Recognition signals appreciation and fairness, which strengthens employee morale and commitment. However, 3(5.7%) were neutral and 20(38.5%) of the respondents disagreed. Therefore, recognition should be conducted to signal appreciation and fairness, which strengthens employee morale and commitment.

Leaders provide incentives when employees meet targets.
When respondents were asked whether leaders provide incentives when employees meet targets and their responses were; 8(15.4%) strongly disagreed, 7(13.5%) disagreed, 4(7.6%) were not sure, 11(21.2%) agreed and 22(42.3%) strongly agreed as indicated in Table 13

Table 13Leaders provide incentives when employees meet targets.

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	8	15.4
	Disagree	7	13.5
	Not Sure	4	7.6
	Agree	11	21.2
	Strongly Agree	22	42.3
	Total	52	100.0

Source: Primary Data, 2026

According to findings in Table 13, the majority 33(63.5%) of the respondents were in agreement that whether leaders provide incentives when employees meet targets. This means that at the Kabubbu Development Project (KDP), leaders who provide incentives when employees meet targets create a performance-driven culture where staff are encouraged to align their efforts with the project's objectives. This approach reinforces accountability and commitment while fostering a sense of achievement among employees. However, 4(7.6%) were not sure and 15(28.9%) of the respondents disagreed.Thus, leaders' provision of incentives when employees meet targets should be a vital factor in driving employee performance, motivation, and overall success at the Kabubbu Development Project.
In an interview with staff in HR department, the researcher discovered that "consistently providing incentives for achieving targets contributes to higher employee morale, improved efficiency, and timely completion of project activities. It also strengthens loyalty and reduces turnover, which is critical for long-term project sustainability." They added that "a lack of incentives or inconsistent reward systems can demotivate staff, reduce productivity, and negatively affect project outcomes."

Leaders closely monitor work to ensure standards are met.

When respondents were asked whether leaders closely monitor work to ensure standards are met and their responses were; 10(19.2%) strongly disagreed, 8(15.4%) disagreed, 27(51.9%) agreed and 7(13.5%) strongly agreed. The Table 13 presents the findings.

Table 13: Leaders closely monitor work to ensure standards are met.

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	10	19.2
	Disagree	8	15.4
	Agree	27	51.9
	Strongly Agree	7	13.5
	Total	52	100.0

Source: Primary Data, 2026

Study findings in Table 13 indicate that 34(65.4%) of the respondents agreed that leaders closely monitor work to ensure standards are met. This means that at the Kabubbu Development Project (KDP), leaders actively monitor employee activities ensure that tasks are performed according to established standards, policies, and project objectives. This practice helps to minimize errors, delays, and resource wastage, thereby enhancing overall project effectiveness. However, 18(34.6%) of the respondents were in disagreement. Therefore, in development projects such as KDP, where accountability and transparency are critical, close monitoring strengthens trust among stakeholders. They further revealed that "through regular supervision, progress reviews, and feedback mechanisms, leaders are able to identify challenges early and provide timely guidance or corrective action. This proactive approach supports continuous improvement and ensures that project outputs meet donor requirements and community expectations.

Leaders take corrective action before problems become serious.

When respondents were asked whether leaders take corrective action before problems become serious and their responses were; 11(21.2%) strongly disagreed, 9(17.3%) disagreed, 17(32.7%) agreed and 15(28.8%) strongly agreed. The Table 14 indicates the findings.

Table 14: Leaders take corrective action before problems become serious.

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	11	21.2
	Disagree	9	17.3
	Agree	17	32.7
	Strongly Agree	15	28.8
	Total	52	100.0

Source: Primary Data, 2026

Study findings in Table 14 indicate that the majority 32(61.5%) of the respondents agreed that leaders take corrective action before problems become serious. This means that Leaders at the Kabubbu Development Project take corrective action before problems escalate demonstrate proactive and effective management. The study further revealed that early identification and resolution of encounters help prevent disruptions, reduce costs, and ensure that project activities remain aligned with planned objectives and standards. Though, 20(38.5%) of the respondents disagreed. Therefore, leaders' ability to take corrective action before problems should become serious contributes significantly to effective project implementation, risk control, and the long-term success of the Kabubbu Development Project.

Some respondents in an interview revealed that "by monitoring performance and responding promptly to emerging issues, leaders are able to adjust strategies, provide guidance, and reallocate resources where necessary. This proactive approach enhances efficiency, improves service delivery, and supports timely achievement of project milestones."

Senior officials only intervene when problems become serious.

When respondents were asked whether senior officials only intervene when problems become serious and their responses were; 13(25%) strongly disagreed, 11(21.2%) disagreed, 15(28.8%) agreed and 13(25%) strongly agreed. The Table 15 indicates the findings.

Table 15: Senior officials only intervene when problems become serious.

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	13	25.0
	Disagree	11	21.2
	Agree	15	28.8
	Strongly Agree	13	25.0
	Total	52	100.0

Source: Primary Data, 2026

Table 15 present that the majority 28(53.8%) of the respondents agreed that senior officials only intervene when problems become serious. This style of intervention often allows minor issues to escalate into major challenges, increasing the likelihood of delays, cost overruns, and reduced quality of outcomes. In Kabubbu settings, late intervention undermines efficiency and effective control mechanisms.Nonetheless, 24(46.2%) of the respondents disagreed. The study further revealed that without timely guidance or corrective action, employees continue ineffective practices or struggle to resolve issues independently. This creates frustration, uncertainty, and reduced morale among staff, particularly when problems eventually attract punitive or crisis-driven responses from senior leadership.

One of the respondents in an interview argued that "delayed intervention negatively affects stakeholder trust and organizational reputation. Communities, donors, and partners may perceive leadership as inattentive or weak, which compromise confidence in project governance and sustainability."

4.3.6: Reward system influences my decision to remain at KDP

When respondents were asked whether reward system influences my decision to remain at KDPand their responses were; 8(15.4%) strongly disagreed, 12(23.1%) disagreed, 25(48.1%) agreed and 7(13.4%) strongly agreed. The Table 16 presents the findings.

Table 16: Reward system influences my decision to remain at KDP

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	8	15.4
	Disagree	12	23.1
	Agree	25	48.1
	Strongly Agree	7	13.4
	Total	52	100.0

Source: Primary Data, 2026

Study findings in Table 16 indicates that 32(61.5%) of the respondents were in agreement that reward system influences my decision to remain at KDP. This means that at the Kabubbu Development Project (KDP), a fair, transparent, and motivating reward system enhances employee satisfaction and strengthens commitment to the project. The study further found out that when employees perceive rewards as commensurate with their efforts and performance, they are more likely to develop a sense of loyalty and intention to stay. Though, 20(38.5%) of the respondents disagreed.Therefore, effective reward systems including financial incentives, recognition, promotions, and professional development opportunities accomplish both extrinsic and intrinsic motivational needs. In Kabubbu Development Project (KDP), where financial compensation may be limited, non-monetary rewards often have a strong influence on retention by providing recognition, career growth, and a sense of value.

XXXIV. Servant Leadership And Employee Retention Of Kabubbu Development Project

This section focuses on the third objective of the study which sought to establish how the servant leadership and employee retention of Kabubbu Development Project. Descriptive statistics is used as explained below.

Leaders listen carefully to employees' concerns.

Respondents were asked whether leaders listen carefully to employees' concerns and their responses were; 11(21.2%) strongly disagreed, 9(17.3%) disagreed, 5(9.6%) were not sure, 22(42.3%) agreed and 5(9.6%) strongly agreed. The Table 17 indicates the findings.

Table 17: Leaders listen carefully to employees' concerns.

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	11	21.2
	Disagree	9	17.3
	Not Sure	5	9.6
	Agree	22	42.3
	Strongly Agree	5	9.6
	Total	52	100.0

Source: Primary Data, 2026

Findings in Table 17 present that the majority 27(51.9%) of the respondents agreed that leaders listen carefully to employees' concerns. This means that attentive listening allows leaders to understand employees' challenges, needs, and perspectives, which improves the quality of decision-making and problem-solving. The study further revealed that listening to employee concerns also supports early identification of operational problems and workplace issues. When leaders are approachable and responsive, employees are encouraged to raise concerns before they escalate into serious problems. This proactive communication enhances efficiency and reduces conflict within the organization. However, 5(9.6%) were neutral and 20(38.5%) of the respondents disagreed. Therefore, failure to listen to employees' concerns can lead to disengagement, frustration, and reduced performance.

Leaders understand employees' personal and work-related challenges.

Respondents were asked whether the leaders understand employees' personal and work-related challenges and their responses were; 10(19.2%) strongly disagreed, 6(11.5%) disagreed,2(3.8%) were neutral, 27(51.9%) agreed and 7(13.4%) strongly disagreed. The Table 18 presents the findings.

Table 18: Leaders understand employees' personal and work-related challenges.

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	10	19.2
	Disagree	6	11.5
	Neutral	2	3.8
	Agree	27	51.9
	Strongly Agree	7	13.4
	Total	52	100.0

Source: Primary Data, 2026

Study findings in Table 18presents that 34(65.3%) of the respondents agreed that leaders understand employees' personal and work-related challenges. This means that leaders who understand employees' personal and work-related challenges demonstrate empathy and supportive leadership, which are essential for fostering a positive and productive work environment. Such understanding enables leaders to respond appropriately to employee needs, adjust workloads when necessary, and provide relevant support, thereby enhancing employee well-being and performance. However, 2(3.8%) were neutral and 16(30.7%) of the respondents disagreed. Therefore, leaders' ability to understand employees' personal and work-related challenges is a critical factor in promoting employee well-being, engagement, and sustained organizational performance. In an interview, some respondents argued that "in recognizing both personal and professional challenges, leaders are better positioned to create flexible and inclusive work practices. This is particularly important in development projects, where employees may face demanding workloads, limited resources, and external community pressures. Supportive leadership helps reduce stress, prevent burnout, and maintain employee motivation."

Leaders put employees' interests above personal gain

Respondents were asked whether leaders put employees' interests above personal gain and their responses were; 11(21.2%) strongly disagreed, 8(15.4%) disagreed, 5(9.6%) were not sure, 12(23.1%) agreed and 16(30.8%) strongly agreed as indicated in the Table 19.

Table 19: Leaders put employees' interests above personal gain

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	11	21.2
	Disagree	8	15.4
	Not Sure	5	9.6
	Agree	12	23.1
	Strongly Agree	16	30.8
	Total	52	100.0

Source: Primary Data, 2026

Study findings in Table 19 presents that the majority 28(53.9%) of the respondents agreed that leaders put employees' interests above personal gain. This reveals that leaders prioritize employees' interests over personal gain demonstrate ethical, people-centered leadership that strengthens trust and organizational integrity. At the Kabubbu Development Project (KDP), such leadership is particularly important because employee commitment, motivation, and morale directly influence project effectiveness and sustainability. However, 5(9.6%) were neutral and 19(36.6%) of the respondents disagreed. This means that leaders who pursue personal gain at the expense of servants' risk damaging trust, increasing dissatisfaction, and undermining project outcomes.

Some of the respondents in an interview revealed that "by placing employees' welfare, development, and fair treatment above personal benefits, leaders foster a supportive and inclusive work environment. This approach enhances employee confidence in leadership, encourages loyalty, and reduces perceptions of favoritism or self-interest. Employees are more likely to remain committed and perform effectively when they believe leaders act selflessly and in their best interests."

Leaders at KDP provide opportunities for training and development.

Provision of training and development opportunities is a critical leadership practice that enhances employee competence, motivation, and organizational performance. On the question whether leaders at KDP provide opportunities for training and development and their responses were; 9(17.3%) strongly disagreed, 10(19.2%) disagreed, 6(11.5%) were not sure, 20(38.5%) agreed and 7(13.5%) strongly agreed as indicated in the Table 20.

Table 20: Leaders at KDP provide opportunities for training and development.

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	9	17.3
	Disagree	10	19.2
	Not Sure	6	11.5
	Agree	20	38.5
	Strongly Agree	7	13.5
	Total	52	100.0

Source: Primary Data, 2026

According to findings in Table 20, the majority 27(52%) of the respondents agreed that leaders at KDP provide opportunities for training and development. This means that at the Kabubbu Development Project (KDP), leaders support training and development enable employees to acquire new skills, improve job-related knowledge, and adapt to evolving project demands. This investment in human capital strengthens the project's capacity to achieve its objectives effectively. Though, 6(11.5%) were not sure on the statement and 19(36.5%) of the respondents disagreed. This reveals that limited training opportunities may lead to skill gaps, low morale, and increased turnover. Therefore, leaders' provision of training and development opportunities should always be a key determinant of employee performance, motivation, and overall success at the Kabubbu Development Project.

One of the respondents asserts that "access to training and development promotes employee retention and succession planning by preparing staff for future responsibilities. He further states that employees who perceive growth opportunities within KDP are more likely to remain with the project and contribute to its long-term sustainability."

Leaders at KDP treat all employees with respect and fairness

Respectful and fair treatment of employees is a fundamental element of effective and ethical leadership. Respondents were asked whether leaders at KDP treat all employees with respect and fairness and their responses were; 8(15.4%) strongly disagreed, 10(19.2%) disagreed, 4(7.7%) were not sure, 20(38.5%) agreed and 10(19.2%) strongly agreed as indicated in Table 21.

Table 21: Leaders at KDP treat all employees with respect and fairness

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	8	15.4
	Disagree	10	19.2
	Not Sure	4	7.7
	Agree	20	38.5
	Strongly Agree	10	19.2
	Total	52	100.0

Source: Primary Data, 2026

Research findings in Table 21 indicate that 30(57.7%) of the respondents agreed that leaders at KDP treat all employees with respect and fairness. This means that at the Kabubbu Development Project (KDP), leaders treat all employees with respect and fairness creates a positive and inclusive work environment that promotes trust, cooperation, and high performance. Such treatment ensures that employees feel valued regardless of their position, background, or role within the project. However, 4(7.7%) were neutral and 18(34.6%) of the respondents disagreed.This indicates that lack of respect or unfair treatment can lead to low morale, conflict, and high turnover. Therefore, leaders at KDP treating all employees with respect and fairness should be a critical factor in fostering employee engagement, organizational harmony, and the overall success of the Kabubbu Development Project.

Leaders encourage cooperation rather than competition.

Encouraging cooperation rather than competition is an important leadership practice in fostering teamwork and collective performance. Respondents were asked whether leaders encourage cooperation rather than competition and their responses were; 9(17.2%) strongly disagreed, 7(13.5%) disagreed, 20(38.5%) agreed and 16(30.8) strongly agreed as indicated in Table 22.

Table 22: Leaders encourage cooperation rather than competition.

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	9	17.2
	Disagree	7	13.5
	Agree	20	38.5
	Strongly Agree	16	30.8
	Total	52	100.0

Source: Primary Data, 2026

Findings in Table 22 indicate that 36(69.3%) of the respondents generally agreed that leaders encourage cooperation rather than competition. This means that at the Kabubbu Development Project, leaders promote cooperation create a collaborative work environment where employees support one another, share knowledge, and work collectively toward common project goals. This approach is particularly relevant in development projects that rely on teamwork, community engagement, and shared responsibility. However, 16(30.7%) of the respondents disagreed. This means that excessive competition may undermine teamwork, create conflict, and reduce knowledge sharing, ultimately harming project outcomes. Therefore, leaders encouraging cooperation rather than competition should be a major key factor in promoting teamwork, harmony, and effective performance at the Kabubbu Development Project.

XXXV.   Employee Retention Of Kabubbu Development Project

This section focuses on the dependent variable of the study which sought to establish factors contributing to employee retention. Descriptive statistics is used as explained below.

Employees are satisfied with my job at Kabubbu Development Project.

Job satisfaction reflects employees' overall attitudes and feelings toward their work and work environment. When respondents were asked whether employees are satisfied with my job at Kabubbu Development Project and their responses were; 11(21.2%) strongly disagreed, 8(15.4%) disagreed, 13(25%) agreed and 20(38.5%) strongly agreed as indicated in Table 23.

Table 23: Employees are satisfied with my job at Kabubbu Development Project.

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	11	21.2
	Disagree	8	15.4
	Agree	13	25.0
	Strongly Agree	20	38.5
	Total	52	100.0

Source: Primary Data, 2026

Findings in Table 23 presents that 33(63.5%) of the respondents agreed that employees are satisfied with my job at Kabubbu Development Project. This means that at the KDP, employees' satisfaction with their jobs indicates that organizational practices, leadership behaviors, and working conditions meet or exceed employee expectations. The study further found out that high job satisfaction is essential for sustaining motivation, commitment, and productivity in development-oriented projects. Nonetheless, 19(36.6%) of the respondents disagreed. This means that low job satisfaction can lead to disengagement, poor performance, and high turnover, negatively affecting project outcomes.Therefore, employees' satisfaction with their job should be an effective indicator of organizational health, leadership effectiveness, and the overall success of the Kabubbu Development Project.

Employees intend to continue working with KDP for the next years.

Respondents were asked whether employees intend to continue working with Kabubbu Development Project for the next years and their responses were; 9(17.3%) strongly disagreed, 11(21.2%) disagreed, 7(13.5%) were not sure, 12(23.1%) agreed and 13(25%) strongly agreed as summarised in Table 24.

Table 24: Employees intend to continue working with KDP for the next years.

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	9	17.3
	Disagree	11	21.2
	Not Sure	7	13.5
	Agree	12	23.1
	Strongly Agree	13	25.0
	Total	52	100.0

Source: Primary Data, 2026

Findings in Table 24 indicates that 25(48.1%) of the respondents agreed that employees' intention to continue working with the Kabubbu Development Project reflects a strong level of organizational commitment and satisfaction. The study further indicates that when employees express an intention to remain with KDP, it suggests that they are satisfied with leadership practices, work conditions, reward systems, and opportunities for growth. Such intentions are often associated with positive work experiences, fair treatment, and a supportive organizational culture. Employees who plan to stay are more likely to invest effort, develop long-term skills, and contribute to achieving project objectives. However, 7(13.5%) were not sure on the statement and 20(38.5%) of the respondents disagreed. Therefore, weak retention intentions may signal dissatisfaction, limited growth opportunities, or ineffective leadership, which lead to high turnover and disrupt project operations.

Employees feel motivated to give my best at work

Employee motivation is a critical determinant of individual performance and overall organizational effectiveness. Respondents were asked whether employees feel motivated to give my best at work and their responses were; 10(19.2%) strongly disagreed, 7(13.5%) disagreed, 4(7.7%) were not sure, 11(21.2%) agreed and 20(38.5%) strongly agreed as presented in Table 25.

Table 25: Employees feel motivated to give my best at work.

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	10	19.2
	Disagree	7	13.5
	Not Sure	4	7.7
	Agree	11	21.2
	Strongly Agree	20	38.5
	Total	52	100.0

Source: Primary Data, 2026

Research findings in Table 25 indicates that the majority 31(59.7%) of the respondents agreed that employees feel motivated to give my best at work. This means that at the Kabubbu Development Project, employees feel motivated to give their best at work demonstrate a high level of engagement, commitment, and willingness to exert extra effort in achieving project goals. Motivation energizes employees to perform tasks efficiently and maintain high standards of service delivery. However, 4(7.7%) were neutral and 17(32.7%) of the respondents disagreed. This means that low motivation lead to minimal effort, reduced productivity, and poor service quality. Therefore, effective employees motivation should be a key indicator of effective leadership practices, positive work environment, and sustainable performance at the Kabubbu Development Project.

Employees feel loyal to Kabubbu Development Project.

Employee loyalty reflects a strong emotional attachment and commitment to an organization. When respondents were asked whether employees feel loyal to Kabubbu Development Project and their responses were; 7(13.5%) strongly disagreed, 10(19.2%) disagreed, 7(13.5%) were not sure, 15(28.8%) agreed and 13(25%) strongly agreed as indicated in Table 26.

Table 26: Employees feel loyal to Kabubbu Development Project

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	7	13.5
	Disagree	10	19.2
	Not Sure	7	13.5
	Agree	15	28.8
	Strongly Agree	13	25.0
	Total	52	100.0

Source: Primary Data, 2026

Table 26 indicates that the majority 28(53.8%) of the respondents were in agreement that employees feel loyal to Kabubbu Development Project. This means that at the Kabubbu Development Project, employees who feel loyal are more likely to identify with the project's mission, values, and long-term objectives. Such loyalty is essential for sustaining workforce stability, especially in development projects that rely heavily on committed personnel to serve communities effectively. However, 7(13.5%) were not sure and 17(32.7%) of the respondents disagreed.This means that stumpy levels of employee loyalty result in higher turnover intentions, reduced morale, and inconsistent project performance. Therefore, in community-based initiatives like KDP, loyal employees help maintain continuity, institutional memory, and strong relationships with stakeholders.

The organization supports employee professional development.

Support for employee professional development is a critical organizational practice that enhances employee skills, motivation, and long-term commitment. Respondents were asked whether the organization supports employee professional development and their responses were; 13(25%) strongly disagreed, 8(15.4%) disagreed, 3(65.8%) were not sure, 13(25%) agreed and 15(28.8%) strongly agreed as indicated in Table 27.

Table 27: The organization supports employee professional development.

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	13	25.0
	Disagree	8	15.4
	Not Sure	3	6.8
	Agree	13	25.0
	Strongly Agree	15	28.8
	Total	52	100.0

Source: Primary Data, 2026

According to research findings in Table 27, the majority 28(53.8%) of the respondents were in agreement that the organization supports employee professional development. This means that at the Kabubbu Development Project (KDP), providing opportunities for professional development such as training, workshops, mentoring, and career advancement enables employees to improve their competencies and perform their duties more effectively. Nevertheless, 3(6.8%) were neutral and 21(39.4%) of the respondents were in disagreement. This reveals thatlimited professional development opportunities can lead to skill gaps, reduced motivation, and increased turnover.

Some HR staff, in an interview session revealed that "when employees perceive that KDP supports their professional growth, they feel valued and motivated. This support strengthens job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and loyalty, which are essential for sustaining performance in development projects. Professional development also enhances employees' ability to adapt to new challenges, technologies, and community needs, thereby improves project effectiveness."

XXXVI.   Summary Of Findings
This study was about the leadership styles and employee retention in community-based organizations in Gayaza Parish focusing on Kabubbu Development Project. The study was based on the following specific objectives:

Transformational Leadership and Employee Retention of KDP
The study findings revealed that 66.6% of the respondents accepted that there is a positive relationship between transformational leadership and employee retention at KDP. The statistical findings suggest that transformational leadership practices at KDP enhance employee motivation, job satisfaction, loyalty, and intention to stay. Leaders, who articulate a clear vision, recognize employee contributions, support professional development, and address individual needs positively influence employees' decision to remain with the project. Though 33.4% of the respondents deviates that transformational leadership affect employee retention of KDP. Therefore, KDP should invest in continuous leadership development programs focused on transformational leadership competencies, including vision articulation, inspirational motivation, emotional intelligence, and coaching skills. Equipping leaders with these skills will enhance their ability to inspire and retain employees.Leaders should consistently communicate a clear, compelling vision of KDP's mission and long-term goals. Regular staff meetings, newsletters, and participatory planning sessions will help employees understand how their roles contribute to project success, thereby increasing commitment and retention

Transactional Leadership and Employee Retention of KDP
The study also found out that 60.3% of the respondents agreed that transactional leadership affect employee retention of KDP. This implies that clearer performance standards, fair rewards, and consistent supervision are associated with higher employee retention. The findings suggest that transactional leadership contributes to employee retention at KDP by providing structure, clarity, and performance-based rewards. Employees are more likely to remain with the project when expectations are clear and good performance is recognized. Though, 39.7% of the respondents disagreed. This implies that excessive focus on corrective action without adequate recognition may limit long-term commitment. Therefore, transactional leadership is most effective in promoting retention when combined with fairness, consistency, and supportive leadership behaviors.

Servant Leadership and Employee Retention of Kabubbu Development Project
The study findings on the third objective indicated that 58.4% of the respondents agreed that servant leadership affect employee retention of Kabubbu Development Project. The findings indicate that servant leadership plays a critical role in enhancing employee retention at KDP. Leaders who prioritize serving employees, supporting their development, and fostering a respectful and caring work environment significantly influence employees' decision to remain with the project. Servant leadership strengthens emotional attachment,

trust, and long-term commitment, which are essential for workforce stability in development-oriented organizations like KDP. Though, 58.4% of the respondents were disagreement. Therefore, KDP should formally integrate servant leadership principles into its leadership policies and management practices. Leaders should be guided to prioritize serving employees, promoting ethical behavior, and placing staff welfare above personal interests to strengthen long-term employee commitment.

XXXVII. Conclusions

Transformational Leadership and Employee Retention of KDP

The study concludes that transformational leadership significantly influences employee retention at the Kabubbu Development Project (KDP). Leaders who exhibit transformational behaviors such as articulating a clear and inspiring vision, motivating employees to exceed expectations, providing individualized support, and encouraging professional growth create a positive work environment that fosters commitment, loyalty, and long-term engagement.

Employees who perceive their leaders as ethical, supportive, and attentive to their personal and professional needs are more likely to remain with the project. Practices such as recognizing and rewarding performance, providing training and development opportunities, promoting fairness and cooperation, and listening to employee concerns contribute to higher job satisfaction, motivation, and organizational commitment. These factors, in turn, reduce turnover intentions and strengthen workforce stability at KDP.

The findings underscore the importance of transformational leadership in KDP, where employee retention is critical for sustaining project objectives, continuity of services, and community trust. Leaders at KDP who adopt transformational practices not only enhance individual performance but also promote a culture of engagement, collaboration, and shared responsibility, ensuring the long-term success and sustainability of the project.

Transactional Leadership and Employee Retention of KDP

The study concludes that transactional leadership plays a significant role in influencing employee retention at the Kabubbu Development Project (KDP). Transactional leadership practices such as setting clear performance expectations, closely monitoring work, providing incentives for meeting targets, and taking corrective action when standards are not met contribute to a structured and predictable work environment that supports employee stability and retention.

Employees at KDP are more likely to remain with the project when rewards are fairly linked to performance and when leaders consistently recognize and reinforce desired behaviors. Clear rules, accountability mechanisms, and timely feedback help employees understand their roles and expectations, reducing uncertainty and dissatisfaction that often lead to turnover.However, the findings also suggest that while transactional leadership effectively promotes short-term compliance and performance, it is most effective for retention when combined with fairness, transparency, and supportive leadership practices.

Servant Leadership and Employee Retention of Kabubbu Development Project

The study concludes that servant leadership has a significant positive influence on employee retention at the Kabubbu Development Project (KDP). Leaders who prioritize employees' needs, demonstrate empathy, listen attentively to concerns, and support professional and personal development foster a supportive and trust-based work environment. Such leadership practices enhance employees' sense of value and belonging within the organization.

Employees at KDP are more likely to remain with the project when they perceive leaders as selfless, fair, and genuinely concerned about their well-being. Servant leadership behaviors such as putting employees' interests above personal gain, encouraging cooperation, and treating all employees with respect contribute to higher job satisfaction, loyalty, and organizational commitment. These factors are critical in reducing turnover intentions and sustaining workforce stability.

The findings further indicate that servant leadership strengthens long-term employee retention by promoting meaningful relationships, ethical conduct, and shared responsibility. In development-oriented projects like KDP, where human commitment is central to achieving community goals, servant leadership emerges as a vital leadership approach for sustaining employee engagement and ensuring project continuity.

XXXVIII. Recommendations

Transformational Leadership and Employee Retention of KDP

The study recommends that KDP leadership should consistently communicate a clear, inspiring, and shared project vision. Regular meetings, feedback sessions, and community engagement forums should be used to align employees with the project's long-term goals, thereby enhancing commitment and retention. Leaders

should actively motivate employees by recognizing achievements, celebrating milestones, and encouraging staff to exceed performance expectations.

KDP leaders should pay closer attention to employees' individual needs, career aspirations, and personal challenges. Mentorship programs, flexible work arrangements where possible, and personalized development plans can strengthen employee loyalty and reduce turnover. Continuous training and development opportunities should be expanded to build employee skills and confidence. Leadership development workshops, technical training, and career progression pathways will enhance job satisfaction and reinforce employees' long-term commitment to KDP.

Leaders should create a safe environment for employees to share ideas, propose innovations, and participate in problem-solving. Encouraging creativity and learning increases employee engagement and strengthens retention. Leaders at KDP should consistently demonstrate integrity, fairness, and transparency. Ethical role modeling builds trust and reinforces employees' emotional attachment to the organization, which is crucial for long-term retention. KDP should incorporate transformational leadership principles into leadership appraisal systems, performance evaluations, and management training to ensure sustainability of these practices.

Transactional Leadership and Employee Retention of KDP

The study recommends that KDP leadership should clearly define roles, responsibilities, and performance targets for all employees. Well-communicated expectations reduce ambiguity, improve accountability, and enhance employees' confidence and willingness to remain with the project. Leaders should ensure that rewards and incentives are directly linked to measurable performance outcomes. Transparent criteria for bonuses, recognition, and promotions will reduce perceptions of favoritism and increase employee satisfaction and retention.Incentives for meeting targets should be provided promptly and consistently. Delayed or inconsistent rewards can weaken motivation and negatively affect employees' intention to stay at KDP.

Leaders should move beyond reactive supervision and actively monitor performance to identify issues early. Regular feedback and supportive corrective action will improve performance while maintaining employee morale.While corrective action is important, leaders should avoid overreliance on punishment or criticism. Corrective measures should be accompanied by guidance and recognition of improvement to sustain motivation and retention.KDP should institutionalize performance appraisal systems that are fair, objective, and consistently applied across departments. Standardization enhances trust in leadership and supports employee retention.Leadership training programs should be implemented to help managers apply transactional leadership appropriately, focusing on fairness, consistency, and employee support rather than control alone.

Servant Leadership and Employee Retention of Kabubbu Development Project

The study recommends that KDP leadership should intentionally promote servant leadership values that prioritize employees' well-being, dignity, and development. Leaders should consistently demonstrate humility, empathy, and selflessness in their daily interactions with staff. Leaders should create regular platforms such as staff meetings, feedback forums, and suggestion mechanisms where employees can openly express concerns and ideas. Acting on employee feedback will increase trust and strengthen employees' intention to remain with KDP.

KDP leaders should recognize employees' personal and work-related challenges and provide appropriate support, such as flexible work arrangements, counseling referrals, or workload adjustments where possible. This support enhances job satisfaction and loyalty. Leaders should treat all employees with respect and fairness, avoiding favoritism and personal gain. Ethical and transparent leadership fosters trust and emotional attachment to the organization.

KDP should promote collaboration rather than competition by encouraging teamwork, shared responsibilities, and collective problem-solving. A cooperative environment strengthens interpersonal relationships and employee commitment. Servant leaders should regularly acknowledge employees' efforts and contributions, even through non-monetary recognition. Appreciation reinforces employees' sense of value and motivates them to remain with the project.

Areas for the Further Research

The current study focused on leadership styles and employee retention in community based organizations in Gayaza Parish, taking a case study of Kabubbu Development Project. Therefore, future research should be carried on authoritative leadership style and performance of NGOs in Uganda

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