



Leadership Style Preference and Associated Factors in Local Government Organizations: Case in Yabello Town Administration

Dawit Udessa Gede¹, Jarso Dube Buta²

¹Department of Management College of Business and Economics, Bule Hora University, Bule Hora, Ethiopia.

²Abesina bank Yabelo branch, Ethiopia.

Abstract – The main purpose of this study was to assess leadership style preference and associated factors in local government organizations: the case of Yabello town administration. The study is mainly focused on the examination of the relationship between individual, organizational and environmental factors and preferred leadership styles. The sampling of this study comprised 287 respondents and included all permanent employees' town administration using simple random sampling. Data was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) and the Pearson correlation coefficient was used to test for the significance of the hypotheses. Quantitatively collected data was analyzed and presented using both descriptive and inferential statistics such as Mean, SD, correlation and regression analysis. The findings of the study reveal that all three factors individual, organizational and environmental are significantly correlated with leadership style in the study area. The result of the study also shows that environmental and organizational factors have significant and favorable effects on leadership style preferences, whereas, individual factors do not have significant effects. Based on the findings researcher concluded that particular leadership style exercised was determined by surrounding factors rather than personal inborn traits. Leaders should consider factors inside and outside of their organization for their effective leadership.

Keywords: Associated factors; autocratic leadership; democratic leadership; preferences; laissez-faire leadership; leadership style.

1. INTRODUCTION

Leadership is widely recognized as a central driver of organizational performance (Evan et al, 2015). An individual can lead, influence, motivate, and facilitate others to contribute towards the effective accomplishment of the goals and success of the organizations (Nakuya, 2019). From the perspective of employees, leadership is comprised of everything a leader does that affects the achievement of objectives and the well-being of employees and the organization (Abbasialiya, 2010). A consistent pattern of behaviors reflected in a leadership pattern can be referred to as leadership style which can be determined by several factors inside and outside the leader (Maryam, 2013). Leadership styles were found to be determined by a range of variables which are either organizational based or out of organization. Empirical evidence reveals that Leadership styles are influenced by individual, organizational and environmental factors (Aneja, 2014 Jordan et al 2017 Aydin, 2018 Nakuya, 2019).

In the emerging global community, innovative leaders and flexible leadership style that increase employee morale to remain competitive in the global market is preferred. Within a global context, leaders need to be capable enough to operate across national boundaries be sensitive to what subordinates of different cultures expect of them and be flexible in their approach. The global geopolitical situation in the twenty-first century is



changing and requiring businesses to engage in creating new organizational paradigms to meet and thrive with changing circumstances, technology, and globalization (Glaser, 2012).

World Economic Forum (2016) identified global risks of leadership as a failure of climate-change mitigation and adaptation, weapons of mass destruction, social crises, involuntary migration and severe price shocks. The challenge of leadership in this era as reported by the forum is turning these risks into opportunities, which may even pre-empt or prevent the risks. Based on Global Opportunities Report (DNV GL, 2016) 5 key risks and 15 opportunities were explored that may be key in tackling these risks. These risks and opportunities vary by region and country depending on the leadership style preferred and applied. The top risk in Latin America, the Caribbean and Sub-Saharan Africa is the failure of national governments, whereas in the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia are water crises, and in East Asia and the Pacific, it is natural catastrophes. The perceived inability of governments to respond to major global challenges is eroding confidence in authorities and Citizens' view that their voices are being ignored by political leaders.

The global trends of leadership challenges are also true in Ethiopia. Messay (2006) and Tensae (2018) have pointed out that Ethiopian leadership has been assessed in comparison with the contemporary Western leadership model and severe problems have been identified as a result. However, this comparative approach has misinterpreted the essence and consequences of Ethiopian leadership and has wrongly suggested that a greater consistency with the Western model can always provide better solutions. Western notions of good leadership are not widely applicable in Ethiopia. Thus, this study was designed to assess the leadership style preferences and associated factors in local government organizations with special emphasis on the factors that affect leadership style choice.

Survival and growth of businesses are the results of an effective leadership style that fits with the organizational context and situation in a business environment. Leadership is the key to business success and Leadership style creates a working environment where people around will work and support passionately in the process of achieving an established common goal (Lydia, 2019). Moses (2021) concludes that the success or failure of an organization depends largely on the style of leadership being adopted in the organization. As he suggested, under the right leadership style, employees are ready to go the extra mile in contributing their best to the growth and sustainability of the organization.

However, leadership style choices in government organizations are influenced by unpredictable behaviors in and out of the organization. The failure, to identify proper variables that affect leadership preferences in a particular organization; limits the ability of the leader to control policy and to shape policy agenda, this in turn, negatively affects the decision-making process (M. Mensah, 2016).

At the global level, priorities have been set for government leaders over 15 years up to 2030 to give responses for globally identified risks associated with leaders such as failure of climate-change mitigation and adaptation, mass destruction, social crises, involuntary migration and severe price shocks (Globescan & Sustainability, 2016). Empirical evidence reveals that risks vary by region and country depending on the leadership style preferred and applied (Global Opportunities Report, 2016).

Even though priorities have been set and directions were given to respond to globally identified risks, failures of leaders at national and local governments are still high in Latin America, the Caribbean and Sub-Saharan Africa. Nakuya (2019) concluded that the problem of leadership awareness about subordinates' value in leaders and organizational culture, limits the abilities of leaders to align their leadership style with what subordinates value. He concluded further that within a global context, leaders lack across national



boundaries abilities and flexibility to adopt what subordinates of different cultures expect of leaders and to be flexible in their approach

Leadership styles in Ethiopian public institutions are still under the influence of the Western leadership model and encounter contextual problems (Tensae, 2018). One of the major problems is the failure to consider contextual situations during preferences of leadership style is the domination of developed country leadership model. As far as researchers' knowledge is concerned, no empirical evidence showing factors influencing leadership preferences and impacts on organizational performance in Ethiopia, particularly in the study area. Therefore, this study was designed to fill such gaps by assessing leadership style preferences and associated factors in local government organizations among different offices under Yabelo town administration.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 The Concept of Leadership

Scholars define leadership in different ways. Books and Google search gives about 533 million entries about leadership (Andrew, 2008). Michael Armstrong defined lead and leadership as; to lead is to inspire influence and guiding; while Leadership is a process of getting people to do their best to achieve a desired result. It involves developing and communicating a vision for the future, motivating people and gaining their engagement (Armstrong, 2009). Yukl (2002) stated that —the definition of leadership is arbitrary and very subjective. Some definitions are more useful than others, but there is no correct 'definition. Cuban (1988) says that there are more than 350 definitions of leadership but no clear and unequivocal understanding as to what distinguishes leaders from non-leaders. Leadership is a process by which a person influences others to accomplish an objective and directs the organization in a way that makes it more cohesive and coherent. Another popular definition of Leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal (Northouse, 2007). According to Oyetunyi (2006), this perception of leadership signals a shift from bureaucracy (in which the leader tends to direct others and make decisions for them to implement) to non-bureaucracy where the emphasis is on motivation, inclusion and empowerment of the followers.

Basing his definition on the existing context, Dubrin in Oyetunyi (2006) defines leadership as the ability to inspire confidence and support among followers who are expected to achieve organizational goals. For this study, this definition will be applied more than others, for it has a lot to do with change, inspiration and motivation, the ingredients of which are critical for school performance. Further, Oyetunyi (2006) concludes that the leader's task is to build the follower's confidence in their jobs to be effective and that it is a leader's responsibility to communicate the picture of what the organization should be, to convince followers and to channel all activities towards accomplishing it. Along the lines of the contemporary approach, but from a more recent perspective, define leadership as the art of transforming people and organizations to improve the organization. The following are some other definitions of leadership Sashkin and Sashkin (2003).

Leadership is the behavior of an individual when that person is directing and coordinating the activities of a group toward the accomplishment of a shared goal (Rowden, 2000). Rao (2000) stated that leadership is complex and multidimensional and as such no one can afford to jump prematurely to prescriptions and generalizations from leadership research. Though researchers have attempted to study it a lot, there has been a narrow preoccupation with the tone or style of leaders and their interpersonal relations with their subordinates. The above concepts of leadership show that views of leadership have been changing through



time from directing 'the activity of the group at earlier times to inspiring confidence and support to the group at present time. Also, it shows that a leader and leadership occur in the presence of followers to achieve organizational goals.

2.1.1 Leadership Style

Leadership style is the approach of providing direction, implementing plans, and motivating people (Northouse, 2012). Based on different theories of leadership, leadership has been classified in different ways. One classification appears as autocratic, democratic and laissez-faire leadership styles (Adeyemi, 2007).

2.1.1 Authoritarian / Autocratic Style

The autocratic leadership style is also referred to as authoritarian leadership and this leader always wants to command and orders his followers to comply. He/she communicates to employees what is minimally required (Bass, 2008). Rashid and Archery (1983) also noted that a leader using an authoritarian style exercises unilateral power, thus he/she has the sole authority to decide instruct, penalize and reward. autocratic leaders tell subordinates what is expected of them, give guidance about what should be done and also show them how to do it because everything is in his/her hands.

This style is based on the assumption that the leaders derive power from the position they occupy and that people are innately lazy and unreliable. Members of the group or the system are treated as if they are machines, with no consideration for their basic human problems and needs. These leaders try to influence their subordinates through negative motivation by criticizing them and imposing penalties to hide their incompetence. This indicates that the authoritarian style of leadership gives the manager authority- he/she can decide everything without the participation (involvement) of subordinates and take any action alone, Bas (2008).

According to Ardichvili and Kuchenke (2010) and Egwunyenga (2010), an autocratic leader never allows staff decisions, and the leader is usually very far from staff. It is a leadership that is imposed on an organization and it is sometimes referred to as coercive leadership (Baughman, 2008). Decision-making is done by autocratic leaders; however, inputs from staff may be sought in the process, but hardly taken into consideration. This is because they are benevolent autocrats.

The autocratic leadership style opined by Maqsood, Bilal and Baig (2013) is known for individual control over all decisions and little input from staff. Typically autocratic leaderships make choices based on their ideas and judgments and rarely accept advice from followers. Autocratic leadership employs absolute, authoritarian control over staff. Some features of autocratic leadership as observed by Leadership Styles (2015) include little or no input from group members; leaders make the decisions; group leaders dictate all the work methods; group members are rarely trusted with decisions or important tasks.

2.1.2 Democratic / Participative Style

In this leadership style, a close relationship is observed between the leader and the followers. Therefore, the leader develops full confidence in his/her followers and the followers are also freely and actively involved in the managerial system; hence employees begin to make a vigorous effort to arrive at the expected goal (Hersey, Blanchard & Johnson, 1996). Democratic leadership was more effective for group performance than the other two styles. The study emphasized the impact of the leader's behavior, as well as the value of group participation. Lewin grew to favor the democratic style of leadership, as espoused below (Lewin, 2010: location



833). A leader with a democratic leadership style gives priority to participation in the policy-making process so that each individual of the organization feels/herself as an important member of the organization (Adeyemi, 2007).

Leaders using a democratic style share their power with subordinates by involving workers in the decision-making process. Democratic leaders use participative processes in making task-related decisions; coordinating the work and sharing rewards Rashid and Archer (1983).

Norman (1980) also stated that the democratic leadership style allows as many tasks as possible to be shared by the group. The task may include policy making, planning and execution as well as keeping group members informed on any matter of their organization. Moreover, this style allows the group to organize their methods of work and also to choose their working companions by themselves.

Democratic leadership style argues that the group is greater than the sum of its parts. The leader takes notes of the group in the decision-making process. The decision functions within the group are decentralized. The leader assumes the roles of a coordinator and an organizer of the several components of the system. In this style of leadership, everybody in the system is kept actively involved in the administrative process and allowed to function in the decision-making process. This leader also creates a work environment that promotes the desire in each member of the group to perform to the best of his/her ability, to cooperate with others, and to develop his/her skills and abilities.

In a democratic leadership style, subordinates are encouraged to use their creativity and initiative in handling their tasks. Followers can be self-directed and creative at work if they are properly motivated and policies remain open to group division and decision. Subordinates are considered socially equal and taken into consideration before making decisions Luthens (1995).

In a democratic leadership style, leaders help group members feel comfortable about themselves, their coworkers and their situations. Moreover, it involves two-way communication and responses that show social and emotional support to others. Shortly, in this approach, the leader focuses communication on both achieving goals and meeting subordinates socio-emotional needs.

2.1.3 Laissez-fair / Non-Directive Leadership Style

A leader with a laissez-faire leadership style may leave the subordinate free to make decisions and exercise powers. The laissez-faire leadership style is non-directive in that the leader refuses to make decisions for others, uses silence until someone in the group speaks out, and gradually fades out of the group when others in the group show the ability and willingness to take over. Such a leader hates crises. He/she tries to satisfy everybody in the system. The leader in this type of leadership is indifferent on certain critical issues as long as his indifference keeps the team together and keeps the boat moving. The authors further indicated that the leader who chooses a laissez-faire leadership style is too anxious about the unity of the group. Laissez-faire leaders rarely or never guide the team members and make the decisions for the team members. Although this style may be effective when the team members are excellent in their fields or expertise, it often leads to unclear roles and a lack of motivation (Belias & Koustelios, 2014).

Luthens (1995) also stated that a leader who uses this style of leadership gives complete freedom to the group; he/she essentially provides no leadership. Followers in organizations are fully responsible for the tasks they carry out. They are only to provide the outcomes of their activities to their manager.



In supporting the above idea, Nouthouse (2007) stated that the laissez-faire leadership style is the avoidance or absence of leadership and is by definition, most inactive, as well as most ineffective. According to this author, necessary decisions are not made, actions are delayed, responsibilities of leadership are ignored, authority remains unused and the leader avoids getting involved when important issues arise. On the other hand, the contemporary researcher, in the area of leadership style appreciates the use of three types of leadership style depending on what forces are involved the follower, the leader, and the situation (Nouthouse, 2007). Some examples of when to use any one of the leadership styles are cited here: It is appreciated to use the authoritarian style on a new employee who just learning the job and when the leader is competent and a good coach. Moreover, it is applicable when employees are motivated to learn a new skill and if the situation is a new environment for them. Another research finding indicates that the use of participative or democratic style sounds more when a team of workers is experienced, knows their job and wants to become part of the team if the leader knows the problem but does not have all the information (Michael 1986).

According to Nouthouse (2007), the use of laissez-fair leadership style is preferred on the occasion that workers know more about the job than the leader. The leader cannot do everything; the employees need to take ownership of his/her job. Also, the situation might call for the leader to be at the other places, doing other things.

Laissez-faire, this French phrase for let it be, when applied to leadership describes leaders who allow people to work on their own. Laissez-faire leaders abdicate responsibilities and avoid making decisions, they may give team's complete freedom to do their work and set their deadlines. This leadership style can be effective if the leader monitors performance and gives feedback to team members regularly. The main advantage of laissez-faire leadership is that allowing team members so much autonomy can lead to high job satisfaction and increased productivity. It can be damaging if team members do not manage their time well or do not have the knowledge, skills, or motivation to do their work effectively.

Lastly, the researcher pointed out that there are times to use all the 3 leadership styles. For instance, Nouthouse (2007) stated that telling employees that a procedure is not working correctly and a new one must be established (authoritarian), asking for their ideas and inputs on creating a new procedure (democratic), and delegating tasks to implement the new procedure (laissez-fair) shows a leader can employ the 3 types of leadership style.

Autocratic and democratic leadership styles are often talked about in a political context, however, they manifest themselves in everyday life as well. Political, community and business leaders found that creativity decreased under autocratic leadership. Daft and Pirola-Merlo (2006) identify the autocratic leadership style as ruler-centered. Authority is centralized and power is derived from being in strict control of situations. In an organizational context, employees are not asked for their input. In a political setting, constituents would simply be expected to follow the leader's demands. This style may be used exclusively by a leader, or it may be employed when there is little time to make decisions or consult others.

Democratic Leadership: Lewin discovered that democratic leaders are generally more effective than autocrats. Democratic leaders offer guidance to their team members and seek their input on making decisions. In Lewin's study, the children in the democratic group had less output than the authoritarian group but their work was of higher quality. Daft and Pirola Merlo's work furthers this insight, noting that democratic leaders encourage group members to participate but retain the final say-so over important matters. This



style creates balance, helps team members feel valued and aligns more with Western democratic governments.

2.1.4 Leadership Preference

Leadership preferences just like values deviate in different cultures, and so do leadership preferences and practices. Through the process of implicit comparison of the target person and the ideal prototype leader, leaders are perceived as leaders. If leaders are aware of the subordinate ideal leader prototypes, they can match the team prototype and, consequently, they are capable of leading their followers more effectively (Stephan & pace, 1991). Theoretical work leadership is a cultural phenomenon Stephan & pace (1991) wrote that culture influences the content about effective leadership attributes. Diverse prototypes with different traits exist across different countries examined by Luthens (1995) in their empirical research. Even in research, this compared European countries with similar political backgrounds, and significant differences in leadership prototypes. Due to these findings, it can be concluded that culture has a strong influence on the perception of effective leadership. In differentiating between relations-oriented and task-oriented leadership, early researchers attempted to identify the types of behavior that fit each category. In addition to the traditional terms of relations-oriented and task-oriented, these early researchers used terms such as authoritarian, autocratic, directive, and democratic to draw distinctions among the leadership behavior types.

Stogdill (1963) also investigated the types of behavior that represented consideration and initiating structure. He included the following in his descriptions: (a) consideration regards comfort, well-being, status, and contributions of followers, and (b) initiating structure (task-oriented) applies pressure for product output, clearly defines own role, and lets followers know what is expected. In a further discussion of Consideration and Initiating Structure, Stogdill (1963) offered the following comment regarding the variety of terms: "Review of the literature in this area brings to light a few facts. Firstly, 'employee-oriented', 'employee-centered', 'supportive', and 'considerate' are various terms that have been used interchangeably. Similarly, 'production-centered', 'job-centered', and 'initiating structure' have been used. Employee Perception in Leadership in Organizations, perceptions of leaders, managers and employees shape the climate and effectiveness of the working environment. Perception is the way we all interpret our experiences. It is a marvelous and difficult part of human behavior; managers must realize that all individuals have differing perceptions. People are not necessarily successful in attempting to serve their values. People do not do what serves their values. They do what they perceive will serve their values. First, this means that there is always a time gap between the brain's consideration of behavior and the behavior itself. Second, the processing that takes place in this period is what can be referred to as perception. In the workplace, when employees and employers have very strong differing perceptions about quality, quantity, schedules, etc., it becomes very difficult to accomplish meaningful objectives, Stogdill (1963).

Generally, leaders possess three major skills in many organizations i.e. vision, interpersonal skills and technical skills. We seldom forget one important skill that is vital for any leader. That skill is perception. Having the right perception is a significant skill for any effective leadership. It is important to understand that perception is often portrayed through communication in any organization be it big or small and therefore it is a pertinent tool in leadership. A leader can have the best intentions and honest concern for his or her employees but if he does not communicate in that employees can comprehend, then their perception may work contrary to the right intentions. That is the power or influence of perception in any leadership. A leader sensitive to the perception of employees must use communication as a tool to either reinforce a positive perception or change a negative one. Having the right perception is not only about becoming competent, polyvalent and



productive but also about nurturing diversity and being able to live with all employees (Berelson and Steiner, 1962).

2.1.5 Theoretical foundation of leadership and preferences

Several theories were developed about leadership and style preferences. Among the leadership theories situational and contingency theories were taken as foundational theories for the concepts of current research.

Situational theories propose that leaders choose the best course of action based on situational variables. Different styles of leadership may be more appropriate for certain types of decision-making. For example, in a situation where the leader is the most knowledgeable and experienced; member of a group, an authoritarian style might be most appropriate. In other instances where group members are skilled experts, a democratic style would be more effective (Cherry, 2013; Covey, 2007; Bolden, R., Gosling, J., Marturano, A. and Dennison, P., 2003).

The concept of leadership has continued to be debatable and needs further research. The previous approaches were proved to be insufficient to give complete information regarding the concept of leadership. These theories have tried to construct a theory based on the controversial questionnaire method. There is no attempt on the part of eminent researchers to link leadership with important performance indicators such as production, efficiency and satisfaction. As a result, another theory that considers many aspects of leadership flourished. This more recognized approach to leadership is the situational theory of Rao (2000).

Hersey and Blanchard (1988) also stated that effective leaders expressed a virtual consensus that, based on their experience, each situation they handle demands a different leadership style. No single style could under the day-to-day, even minute by minute. Varying conditions of different personalities and moods among their followers, routine process versus changing or sudden deadlines, new and ever-changing government regulations and paperwork, ambitious roles of workers, wide ranges in job complexity from simple to innovation demanding, changes in organizational structure can interfere in the preference of leadership style.

The second theory used is the contingency approach that emerged as a reaction to the limitations of the behavioral approach. It gives priority to situational factors. Contingency theories of leadership focus on particular variables related to the environment that might determine which particular style of leadership is best suited for the situation. According to this theory, no leadership style is best in all situations. Success depends upon several variables, including leadership style, qualities of followers and situational features (Cherry, 2013). Contingency theories assume that the effect of one variable on leadership is contingent on other variables. The new theorists exemplify a more thorough understanding of the complex nature of leadership and base their findings on quantitative data, rather than simply on empirical observations (Yukl, 2002).

These theorists identified a significant concept in leadership theory by acknowledging the importance of the interaction between leaders and followers. Catell as cited in Emebet (2011) recommended that the two main goals of leadership are to help a group select a common goal and then to guide the group to achieve the goal. This suggested a shift in focus from an analysis of the characteristics of the individual in leadership to a study of the overall leadership situation.

2.2 Empirical literature and hypothesis

2.2.1 Individual factors and leadership style



Several personal factors have been reported to influence the leadership style preference among leaders. For instance, Kabeer et al (2012) investigated the effect of demographic factors on the preference for leadership styles. Among the factors investigated were Gender, Race, marital status, and educational qualification.

Gender and marital status were found to have a minimal effect on preference of leadership styles, differences in preferred leadership styles according to race will be identified. Gender and leadership- Eagly and Johnson (1990) found significant gender differences in the reported use of democratic or participatory styles of leadership. Men were more likely than women to use autocratic, or direct, controlling styles.

Although women were found to have a more interpersonal style in experimental and assessment studies, they did not differ from men in formal organizational settings (Eagly & Johnson, 1990).

This finding contrasts with gender-stereotypic expectations that women embrace more interpersonal leadership styles, whereas men are more task-oriented (Eagly & Karau, 1991). However, women emerged slightly more often than men in the role of a —social leader or facilitator, who contributes to morale and good interpersonal relations. Men's leadership tended to emerge in the more task-oriented aspects of interaction. Thus, men often are viewed as better leaders, and women often adopt masculine behaviors to fit into male-dominated hierarchical structures and systems (Hersey and Blanchard, 1985). An additional complication is that women are expected simultaneously to behave like leaders (authoritative, confident) and to be feminine (friendly, kind, and considerate toward others).

Oshagbemi (2004) studied the effect of age on preferred leadership styles of managers. The findings of the study indicate that younger and older managers preferred different leadership styles. Older managers consulted more widely and favored more participation in comparison with younger managers. However, the two groups of managers both practice directive and delegative leadership styles to about the same degree. Leadership is widely recognized as a central driver of organizational performance (Evans et al, 2015). The implication of this study is the need to harmonize the positive contributions of both the younger and the older workers and give respect to the contributions of both groups. Younger employees often have less confidence than older managers mainly because experience comes with age. Therefore, there is a likelihood that younger leaders are inclined toward a democratic leadership style while older managers are likely to be autocratic given their greater experience and confidence levels.

Patel (2013) suggested some differences in leadership styles arising from gender differences. Women are oftentimes more risk averse, greater risk takers, have higher social sensitivity and react by feeling whereas men are more overconfident, optimistic and react by action. As a result, men move towards the autocratic side of the leadership continuum while women lean towards the democratic end. A potential limitation of this opinion on gender is the advent of the concept of "doing gender" in organizations. According to this school of thought, when women assume managerial positions in organizations, they behave in a masculine manner and when men are in subordinate positions or in traditionally feminine positions, they behave in a feminine manner because their job requires this kind of behavior. However, when they leave the workplace they behave in a manner that the social situation demands- therefore doing a different gender at home than they do at the workplace. Therefore, gender differences may have a significant effect on preference in leadership styles.

Jordan et al (2017) assessed the personal characteristics that predict preference for leadership styles. They found that authentic leaders were rated most competent and more likable than alpha male leaders, but just as likable as Daoist leaders. Followers appear to find authentic leadership and Daoist leadership, both communal styles, more preferable than alpha male leadership. We argue that followers with a general desire



for inequality between social groups will tend to have more negative attitudes toward authentic and Daoist leadership.

Kotur and Anbazhagan (2014) also researched the influence of age and gender on leadership styles. This study aims to investigate the different leadership styles of the workers and the influence of age and gender on the leadership styles of the workers of a sugar factory in India. The study concentrated on three leadership styles; the autocratic, democratic and laissez-faire leadership styles. The study reveals that the democratic leadership style is the dominant one and age and gender have their influence on the worker's leadership styles. The study established that individuals start with more of the autocratic leadership style and then move towards democratic in their middle ages and then at the later stages turn towards the laissez-faire leadership style. The study also revealed that with an increase in age relatively lesser authority is exhibited by the workers. Gender was found to influence the leadership styles of the workers with females being more autocratic than their male counterparts.

HI: Individual factors have statistically significant effects on leadership style preferences in local government organizations.

2.2.2 Organizational factors and leadership style

Aydin (2018) explored the relationship between Culture and leadership styles. The leadership styles used in this study were Paternalistic, Democratic, Autocratic and laissez-faire leadership style. The cultural aspects were clans, adhocracy, markets, and hierarchies. Clan culture represented very friendly workplaces and attracted paternalistic and servant leadership styles among leaders who act as mentors to their employees. Adhocracy was found to create an environment for creativity and entrepreneurship thereby attracting a transformational leadership style. Hierarchies on the other hand were found to emphasize power distance and status between leaders and their followers attracting a transactional leadership style. This study concluded that the type of organizational culture will determine the leadership style adopted by the leader. A major weakness of this study is that it neglects individual differences.

Also, Aneja (2014) explored the effect of culture on preferred leadership style. Hofstadter's model of organizational culture was adopted which includes the dimensions of power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism/collectivism, and masculinity/feminism.

The styles examined were transformational leadership, transactional leadership and laissez-faire leadership. This study confirmed that culture influences the leadership styles of leaders and also concluded that the country's Social-cultural factors affect the behavior and preferences of the followers.

Northouse (2012) indicates that both subordinates and leaders are influenced by the organizations they work for and the situations in the workplace. The amount of influence exerted on a leader depends on the situation. Accordingly, Tucker and Russell (2004) state that an organizational culture can/may stimulate the ability of the leader to influence his/her followers positively. While transformational leaders try to change such organizational cultures; transactional leaders work within them.

Minkov and Hofstede (2011) have expressed the opinion that culture is the collective Indoctrination of the mind and that this collective indoctrination distinguishes the members of one human group from the other. They have observed that culture includes systems of values among its building blocks. Adding to this, Bass (1997) states that culture is a learned pattern of behavior within an organization that is passed on over time. Similarly, Bolman and Deal (2003) point out that culture is a pattern of shared assumptions that a group has



acquired through solving its problems by using certain methods or solutions that have worked and therefore should be viewed as legitimate to teach new members to solve related problems. These conceptions of culture have important implications for leaders who have to work within the culture of an organization and also need to shape it.

H2: Organizational factors have statistically significant effects on leadership style preferences in local government organizations.

2.2.3 Environmental factors and leadership style

The environmental management literature has argued that firms undertake environmental actions to answer stakeholders' pressures. Valentine (2010) described five broad categories that emerged from the coding process as dominant forces that influence how a company approaches the development of environmental management initiatives – macro elements, secondary stakeholder elements, industry-specific elements, firm-specific elements and functional elements. In strategic management theory, macro forces are referred to as PEST forces: Political, Economic, Social and Technological.

The relevant tenet is that the PEST forces in each country influence the extent to which firms within industries approach environmental governance (Kolk 2005). Political Factors: tax policy, labor law, environmental law, trade restrictions, tariffs, and political stability. Political factors may also include goods and services that the government wants to provide or be provided and those that the government does not want to be provided. Economic Factors: growth rate, interest rates, taxation changes, economic growth, inflation, energy prices, exchange rates, unemployment. These factors have major impacts on how businesses operate and make decisions. Social and Cultural Factors: Demographic changes, age distribution, patterns of work, career attitudes and emphasis on safety, household structure, patterns of consumption, gender roles cultural aspects health consciousness etc. Trends in social factors affect the demand for a company's products and how that company operates.

H3: Environmental factors have statistically significant effects on leadership style preferences in local government organizations

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Approach and Design

Depending on the nature of the research problem and the research perspective, the researcher is guided by a mixed research design that is qualitative and quantitative approaches. A qualitative approach is concerned with the subjective assessment of the opinions, attitudes and behavior of the employees in Borena zone town administration and quantitative approaches were used to analyze the data collected by questionnaires. According to Creswell (2003) described qualitative approach uses the philosophical assumption of social constructivism worldview that provides an understanding of social reality based on subjective interpretation. Besides, this mixed research approach seeks a pragmatic knowledge claim philosophy that consists of both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Thus, to achieve the objectives stated in the previous section, bearing in mind the nature of the research problem, this study employed a mixed research approach. Both descriptive and explanatory designs were employed with the cross-sectional survey.



3.2. Population of study and sampling design

The study was conducted in Yabello town; Yabello town administration has 27 sectors and a total population of 1020 (585) males and (435) females permanent employees, source Yabello town administration civil service (2020). All permanent employees targeted for the study will be interviewed.

This study was conducted by drawing representative samples from the study population. The researchers used both probability and non-probability sampling design. Form probability sampling (simple random) and no-probability sample (purposive) sampling methods. It is important to minimize bias and to give equal chances to the respondents, so the researchers were taken from a sample of 287 respondents drawn from the total population of 1020 permanent employees in the Borena zone Yabello town administration. From this, the researchers selected 287 respondents, 165 males and 223 females as a sample from permanent employees. For our study, a simple random sampling technique was adopted to select employees from included offices.

Purposive sampling was employed to select informed respondents for the interview. The determination of the sample size was made through Yamane's (1967) formula.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2} \quad \text{Where } n = \text{sample size}$$

N = Population of the study

e = Significance level (tolerable margin of error)

$$n = \frac{1020}{1 + 1020(0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{1020}{1 + 1020(0.0025)}$$

$$n = \frac{1020}{1 + 2.55}$$

$$n = \frac{1020}{3.55} = 287$$

The data for the study were collected using close-ended written and interview questions and analyzed through descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. To summarize and describe the data, descriptive statistical tools such as mean, and standard deviation were computed to see the general pattern of the dominant leadership styles preference, practice and associated factors among leaders in the organization. Independent-sample t-test and one-way ANOVA were computed to see the difference between means. Pearson correlation coefficient was computed to provide information on whether the independent variables and dependent variables correlate with each other and to measure the degree of relationship between variables. A regression model was employed to examine influences and test the hypothesis.

3.3 Validity and Reliability of the Instrument

The study adopted scales that had been validated elsewhere. In measuring leadership styles the study adopted the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire. (MLQ) developed by Avolio and Bass (1995), modified to fit the context of the study. For reliability, the study used a scale test to produce Cronbach's alphas which further compared to the conventional cut-off point of 0.7. According to Field (2005), and Pallant (2013) a Cronbach's alpha higher than 0.7 indicates internal. From validity, the triangulation methods will be adopted.

Reliability Statistics



Cronbach's AlphaN of Items

.875 37

As it has been seen from the reliability test statistics here above; the total reliability of items used to collect data is high. Cronbach's Alpha value is .875 which indicates that the total reliability of data collected for the study is highly reliable.

Validity

All items used to collect data were valid since the calculated value of Pearson correlation coefficients of each item are greater than the critical table values of the Pearson correlation coefficient at 260 degrees of freedom and 5% significance level, which is 0.123607.

A pilot study was conducted to test and improve the adapted instrument and to make sure that the questions were understood by the respondents. The pilot test is also required to ensure the clarity, appropriateness and reliability of the study, 30 participants (12 female and 18 male) were included in the pilot study. Ambiguous words were modified based on the information obtained from respondents at the time of piloting. Based on the response of the pilot group, the internal reliability was assessed by Cronbach alpha. The obtained result for the employee's questionnaire was 0.86. According to Robers and Wortzel (1979) coefficient of Cronbach's alpha lying in 0.79 to 0.96 means high reliability. The results of the analysis of each measurement tool were closely lying in 0.79 and 0.96 which indicates that items were quite reliable as to most research authorities. The linear regression assumption diagnosis test was applied, which showed contains linear relationship, multivariate normality, No or little multicollinearity, No or auto-correction, and homoscedasticity.

3.3 Ethical Considerations

In this study, the researchers respected all ethical considerations. Ethical considerations were critical when researching people. Leaders of selected organizations were requested for permission and expressed willingness and allowed to survey their respective offices. All the necessary information regarding the research was provided to the organization. The consent of participants to participate in the study was obtained before the questionnaires were distributed. The participants were told that their answers would remain anonymous and confidential.

4. DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

4.1 Introduction

The chapter deals with the analysis and presentation of data. The data collected from respondents through questionnaire and interviews were analyzed in this chapter as below. A sample size of 287 was proposed and questionnaires were distributed, out of the 287 questionnaires distributed 262 were able to be collected, where 25 questionnaires were not returned. Accordingly, the response rate of the distributed questionnaires was about 91%, which is sufficient for further data analysis.

4.2 Descriptive analysis

From the literature review, several variables have been identified as challenging (hindrance) factors for leadership preference. Among the various variables, the following are selected based on their relevance to the objectives of this study and investigated. The results of the investigation are as indicated below table with the average mean of respondents' responses.

Table -1: Summary of descriptive statistics

| Variables | N | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|------------------------|-----|--------|----------------|
| Individual factors | 262 | 3.0144 | .44049 |
| Organizational factors | 262 | 2.9219 | .43573 |
| Environmental factors | 262 | 3.3570 | .45352 |
| Valid N (listwise) | 262 | | |

Source: own survey (2014)

As presented in Table 1 above, the mean average of environmental factors is higher than other variables with a mean value of 3.35. This figure implies that environmental factors are more influential in determining leadership style in the study area than other factors followed by individual factors with an average mean value of 3. Organizational factors have a lower average mean value compared to the other two factors with an average mean value of 2.9

The general variables described above were represented by their indicators as it analyzed in Table 3 below. Individual factors are represented by age, gender, education and experience, organization factors used are organizational size, structure and culture, whereas, social, political and technological factors are used for environmental

Table 2: Summary of descriptive statistical indicators

| Variables | N | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|--------------------------|-----|--------|----------------|
| age | 262 | 3.7300 | .59196 |
| gender | 262 | 2.5855 | .56046 |
| education | 262 | 3.3893 | 1.14184 |
| experience | 262 | 3.0770 | .81474 |
| organizational size | 262 | 3.6578 | .59829 |
| organizational culture | 262 | 3.5466 | .57072 |
| organizational structure | 262 | 3.2462 | .93233 |
| social factor | 262 | 3.8740 | .80906 |
| political factor | 262 | 3.87 | .594 |
| technological factors | 262 | 3.3908 | .55162 |
| Valid N (listwise) | 262 | | |

Source: own survey (2014)



From the above table, it can be seen that political and social factors are more highly influential than environmental factors than any other variables with a mean average value of 3.87 and 3.87, and 0.80 and 0.59 Std. Deviation respectively. Next to them age from individual factors and organizational size from organizational factors are more influential with average mean values of 3.7 and 3.66 and 0.59 and 0,59 Std. Deviation is respectively followed by organizational culture, education, technological factor, and organizational structure, which has average mean values. Experience with an average mean response rate of 3.07 and 0.81 Std. Deviation than gender has a mean average rate of responses of 2.58 with Std. Deviation of 0.56 respectively. This result implies that leadership style preference is highly sensitive to environmental factors specifically political and social factors in the study area. This means the political situation is a matter of choosing specific leadership styles.

4.3 Inferential Statistics

Inferential statistics was used to infer from the sample data what the population might look and a conclusion was researched. Hypothesis were tested to check whether the null hypothesis was accepted or rejected. The main reason for testing significance is to calculate the probability that an observed outcome has merely happened by chance.

4.3.1 Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis is a statistical tool used to describe the strength and direction of the linear relationship between independent and dependent variables. Pearson correlation coefficients (r) was used to see the relation between variable in two dimensions that range from -1 to +1. The sign indicates whether there is a positive correlation or a negative correlation, whereas, the size of the absolute value (ignoring the sign) indicates the strength of the relationship between variables. A perfect correlation of 1 or -1 indicates that the value of one variable can be determined exactly by knowing the value of the other variable. The values approaching 1 or -1 indicate strong relation, while values close to zero indicate weak relationships. This part contained the relationship between individual factors, organizational factors, environmental factors and leadership style.

Table 3: Correlations

| Variables | Leadership Style | Mean of individual factors | Mean of organizational factors | Mean of environmental factors | |
|--------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------|
| Leadership Style | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .694** | .719** | .751** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .000 | .000 | .000 |
| | N | 262 | 262 | 262 | 262 |
| individual factors | Pearson Correlation | .694** | 1 | .861** | .753** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | | .000 | .000 |

| | | | | | |
|------------------------|---------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| | N | 262 | 262 | 262 | 262 |
| organizational factors | Pearson Correlation | .719** | .861** | 1 | .732** |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | .000 | | .000 |
| | N | 262 | 262 | 262 | 262 |
| environmental factors | Pearson Correlation | .751** | .753** | .732** | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | .000 | .000 | |
| | N | 262 | 262 | 262 | 262 |

Sources: Researcher survey result (2023)

As shown in Table 3 above all variables are significantly and positively correlated with the dependent variable, even though the degree of correlations varies among variables. Akoglu (2018) Suggested that the interpretation of Pearson correlation coefficients as the absolute value of 1 is perfect correlation, correlation coefficient values range between 0.7 and 0.9 represent strong correlation, Values ranges between 0.4 and 0.6 represent moderate correlation, Values ranges between 0.1 and 0.3 represent weak correlation and 0 value represent no correlation between variables. Accordingly, two variables of the study lie within the ranges of strong correlation with dependent variable with Pearson correlation coefficients ranging from 0.7 to 0.751, while one variable is within moderate value of 0.694. Independent variables such as organizational factors and environmental factors have a strong correlation while individual factors have a moderate correlation.

4.3.2 Multiple regression analysis and hypothesis testing

Table 4: Model Summary

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate | Change Statistics | | | | |
|---|-------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|----------|-----|-----|---------------|
| | | | | | R Square Change | F Change | df1 | df2 | Sig. F Change |
| 1 | .792a | .627 | .622 | .36440 | .627 | 144.389 | 3 | 258 | .000 |
| a. Predictors: (Constant), Mean of environmental factors, Mean of organizational factors and Mean of individual factors | | | | | | | | | |
| b. Dependent Variable: Leadership Style | | | | | | | | | |

The model used is fit for the data, as can be seen from the model summary table above. The F-statistic is significant at a p-value of .000 which indicates good model fitness. The R-square and Adjusted R-square values sufficiently explain the predicted variable. From the Adjusted R-square value we can see that predictor variables used for this study have the ability to explain the response variable at 62.2% which indicates relatively good predictive power that it has to explain the variation in the dependent variable. For the predicted variable of this study about, 37.8 % of the variation can be caused by any other variables that have not been used for this study.

Table 5: Summary of ANOVA

| Model | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|---|------------|----------------|-----|-------------|---------|-------|
| 1 | Regression | 57.519 | 3 | 19.173 | 144.389 | .000b |
| | Residual | 34.259 | 258 | .133 | | |
| | Total | 91.779 | 261 | | | |
| a. Dependent Variable: Leadership Style | | | | | | |
| b. Predictors: (Constant), Mean of environmental factors, Mean of organizational factors, Mean of individual factors. | | | | | | |

Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to determine whether the model works in explaining the relationship among variables and to test variance among the groups in the study. The result indicates that the null hypothesis which states no mean differences among the groups was rejected alternate hypothesis was accepted for the fact that the p-value is much lower than 0.05 which is 0.000. It implies that there is a significant difference among the mean of the group which can be seen from the result of the ANOVA table. F-statistics are significant at $F(3,258) = 144$ p-value of 0.000. Therefore, the model used is a significant fit for the data and the variability in the dependent variable which is leadership style preference is caused by variations in predictors such as individual factors, organizational, factors and environmental factors.

Table 6: Summary of regression coefficients

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | T | Sig. |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|--------|------|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | -.794 | .175 | | -4.539 | .000 |
| | individual factors | .093 | .108 | .069 | .865 | .388 |
| | organizational factors | .435 | .105 | .320 | 4.146 | .000 |
| | environmental factors | .608 | .078 | .465 | 7.780 | .000 |
| Dependent Variable: Leadership Style | | | | | | |

From the regression table above, it can be seen that organizational factors and environmental factors are significantly affecting leadership preference in the study area while individual factors are insignificant at the "t" and p-values of 0.865 and 0.388 All null hypotheses for independent were rejected except null hypothesis



for individual factors that have no significant effect on leadership style preference as it has seen in regression table with p-value of greater than 0.05.

5. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Summary of findings

Individual factors and leadership styles

The findings of the study show that individual factors do not significantly influence leadership styles. This means that personal factors such as age, gender and level of education do not have an impact on leadership styles in the organizations where this study was conducted. This finding opposes the conclusion of Spector (1997) who elaborated that if managers adopt their subordinates' preferred style giving employees the respect and fair treatment they deserve, then this is seen to lead to job satisfaction, which will affect the functioning of the organization. Satisfied employees are absent less, show less job stress, stay at work longer, and make positive contributions to their organizations. The findings of this study also contradict with findings of Silverthorne and Wang (2001) who consider the situational dimension as the independent variable for determining the situational; most management theorists agree that leadership efficiency is a function of leadership, subordinates and a current situational variable. Authoritative styles are usually described in the relationship between leaders and subordinates. The findings of this study disagree with other researchers' suggestions that the personal background of leaders such as personality, knowledge, values, and experiences shapes their feelings about appropriate leadership that determine their specific leadership styles, employees also have different personalities, backgrounds, expectations and experiences, for example, employees who are more knowledgeable and experienced may work well under a democratic leadership style, while employees with different experiences and expectations require an autocratic leadership style. Organizational factors and leadership styles.

The findings of the study show that organizational factors have a significant influence on leadership style preferences. This means that factors such as organizational size, organizational structure and organizational culture influence leadership style preferences. This finding conforms with the results of Kotter (1996) explained that leadership seeks to foster an atmosphere conducive to implementing organizational goals and strategies (Kotter, 1996).

Organizational cultures emerge both from the bottom-up choices made by members as well as the top-down decisions of management. It seems reasonable to assume that managing culture relies on effective leadership coupled with the commitment and capacity of members who occupy the culture. Managing corporate culture may entail members discarding old values and embracing new ones, learning new behaviors. The findings of the study are similar to other researchers who discussed that behavioral norms and expectations are the either through which management sends its strategies, plans, hopes, and dreams to its members. By helping us understand why members in certain organizations behave as they do, culture is a valuable tool for aligning behavior with customer-focused and quality-focused norms. As the pressure to attain higher quality standards continues to increase, the challenge of developing effective levels of collaboration, creativity, and innovation will fall to the keepers of the cultural flame.

Environmental Factors and Leadership Style

The findings of the study show that environmental factors have a significant influence on leadership style preferences. This means that factors such as political factors, social factors and technological factors



influence leadership style preferences, among them political factors and social factors have a major influence.

5.2 Conclusion and implications

This study attempted to examine leadership style preferences and associated factors that influence the choice of a particular leadership style in local public organizations. The researchers concluded from the findings of the research that the factors affecting leadership preferences vary with areal situation and time. The study findings show that organizational and environmental factors have a significant influence whereas, individual factors do not have a significant influence. Empirical evidence shows that individual factors significantly affect leadership style preferences in other organizations and locations, but it was insignificant for this study. Hence, the researcher concluded that factors are situational dependent to affect leadership preferences.

The findings of this research have managerial implications as they help leaders to be aware of what their subordinates 'value in leaders and also help them to be aware of the organization's culture that enables them to work towards aligning their leadership with what subordinates value.

In addition, within a global context, leaders need to be prepared to operate across national boundaries be sensitive to what subordinates of different cultures expect of leaders and be flexible in their approach. Hence, the study results show them to act accordingly. An autocratic style is embedded in leaders who have full organizational power and authority for decision-making without sharing it with their subordinates, while a democratic style implies that leaders share their authority of decision-making with employees and delegate, and finally a laissez-faire opposite. The findings of the result show managers the situation where a particular leadership style is important. This study also has scholarly implications by enriching empirical evidence on leadership style preferences and associate factors in local government organizations

5.3 Limitations of the Study and suggestion for Further Study

The current study was limited to local government organizations in Borena zone Yabelo Town administration. Therefore, further research can proceed with the same title including other public sectors. As this study only focused on public institutions, others can include private institutions in the country. Methodologically it is limited to cross-sectional design. But others should include longitudinal design. Conceptually this research is limited to the leadership style preferences and associated factors Therefore, future researchers should include other concepts related to leadership.

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ANNEXURE

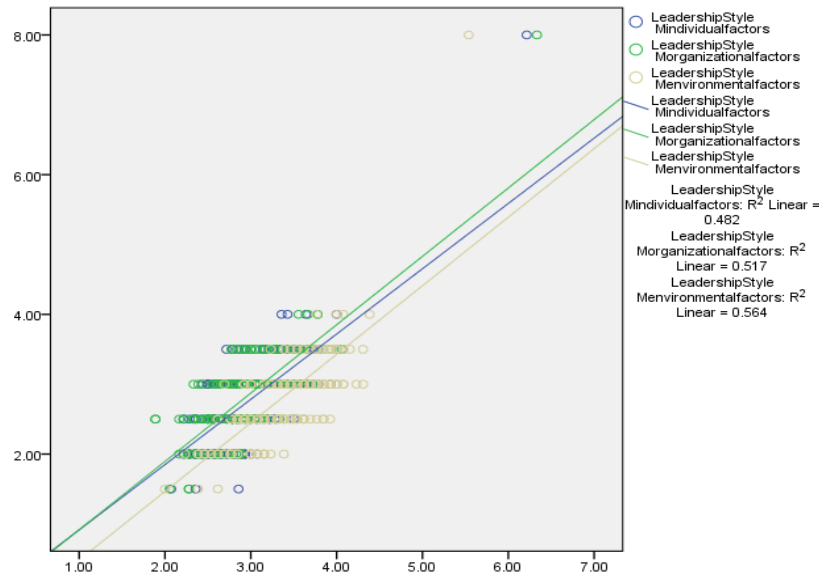


Fig -1:

As it can be seen from scatter plot above, all independent variables have linear relation with dependent variable. Therefore, there is no outlier effect in data.

Test for Normality of Residuals

Normality residual distribution is one of the OLS assumption need to be checked. If residuals are not normally distributed, parametric test and linear regression cannot be used. Therefore, the result of the test of the normality of residual is given below by histogram and P-P normality plot.

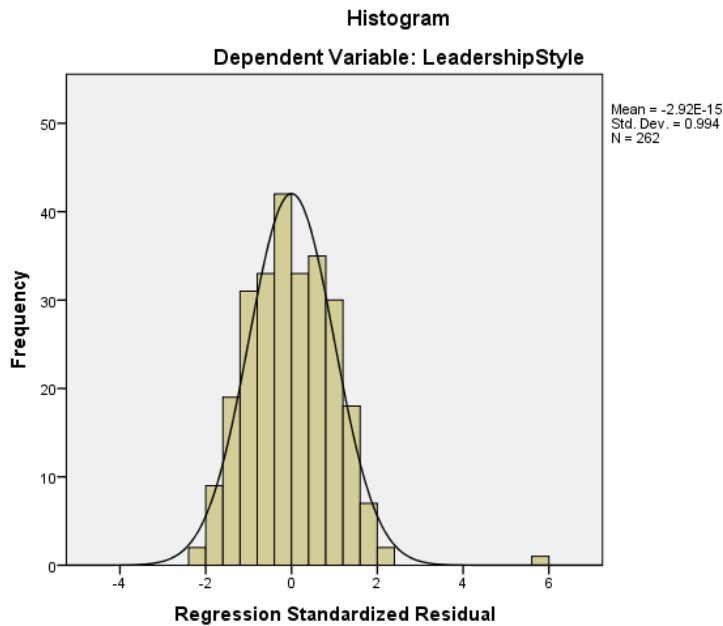


Fig -2:

As it has been seen from histogram and normal probability plot above, the residual of the data are normally distributed. Normal graph in histogram is symmetric to the center and the values on probability plot almost all are on the normal line which is indicator of normality in residual.

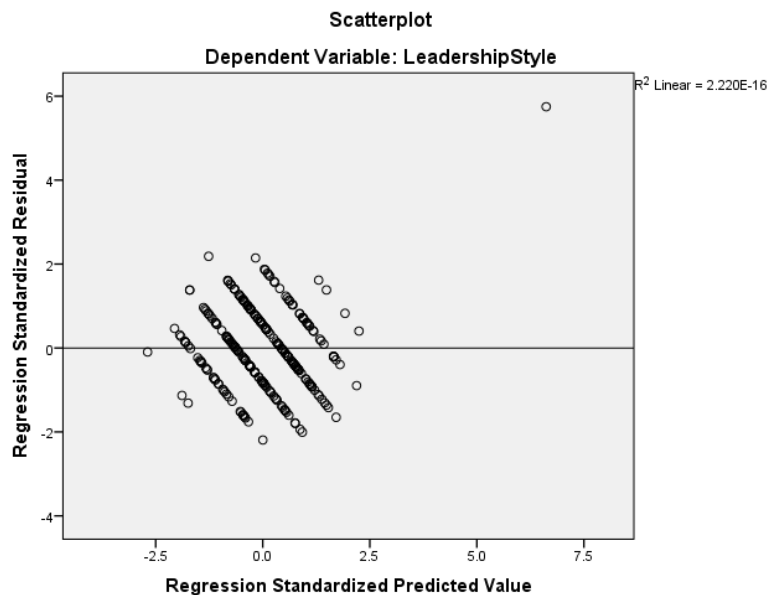


Fig -3:

In addition to normal line in histogram and data on probability plot line, scatter plot also show us equal distribution of residuals above and below line from zero. Therefore, there is no Heteroskadacity problem in the data



Multi-Collinearity test

Table 7: Multi-Collinearity test

| Tolerance | VIF |
|-----------|-------|
| | |
| .227 | 4.414 |
| .243 | 4.109 |
| .406 | 2.465 |

Source: own survey (2014)

Assumption of Multi-Collinearity can be tested by tolerance and VIF statistics. If tolerance value is less than 0.1 and VIF value is greater than 10 is indication of serious Collinearity problem. It is test of Collinearity between predictors' variables. No multicollinearity effects between any variables since VIF of all variables are less than 10 and Tolerance value of all variables are greater than 0.1. From the all diagnosis test above, there is no violation of OLS assumption to use linear regression analysis. Therefore, the following multiple linear regression results are computed and analyzed.