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**INFLUENCE OF LEADERSHIP STYLES ON STRATEGIC CHANGE IN EQUITY
BANK LIMITED, KIKUYU BRANCH**

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ABSTRACT

Leadership styles have direct influence on organizational values, productivity, efficiency in performance and the organization achieving its objectives. The objective of this study will be to establish the influence of leadership styles on strategic change at Equity Bank Limited, Kenya. The specific objectives of the study are to establish how autocratic, transformational, transactional and democratic leadership styles influence strategic change in banking sector. (Equity Kikuyu Branch). This study is anchored on theories of change and leadership styles which include the following; transformational theory, social network theory and Kart Lewin Model of change. The study will adopt the descriptive research design. The target population will be drawn from the top and middle level management of the bank and general staff members whose total population will be 80. Sample size of 40 respondents will be drawn using stratified random sampling where a sample of 50% will be drawn from each stratum in the target population to provide the required information. Primary data will be collected using questionnaires. Data will be analyzed descriptively using distribution (frequency), central tendency (Mean and Median) and dispersion (Range, variance and standard deviation). This will be test relationship of variables with each other. Pearson correlation was used to determine the relationship between the dependent and independent variable. The study findings of correlation analysis showed that autocratic, transformational, transactional and democratic leadership styles were all critical on strategic change of an organizational since the analysis indicated a positive correlation ($r = 0.387$, $\alpha = 0.01$, $r = 0.230$, $\alpha = 0.01$, $r = 0.257$, $\alpha = 0.01$ and $r = 0.453$, $\alpha = 0.01$) respectively. Therefore, the finding of this research supports the research question thus any Commercial Bank Manager aiming to achieve strategic change should pay close attention to all these leadership styles.

Keywords: Customer Focus, Customer Satisfaction, Leadership, Strategic change.

Background of the study

Leaders help organizations achieve set objectives by directing the operations through influencing their followers (Puccio, Mance & Murdock, 2010). They determine how well the resources of an organization are utilized towards realization of organizational objectives. However, in normal organizational setting, there are no situations requiring similar styles of leadership. Different organizational settings demand different leadership styles enhance the need to adopt a suitable leadership style for optimal organizational performance. Peter (2010) notes that leadership influences organizational productivity through their influence on activities happening in an organization on a day to day basis. According to Andreescu and Vito (2010), the type of leadership style employed by leaders in an organization has a direct influence on organizational value which later determines the outcomes in terms of employee turnover, punctuality, absenteeism, customer service, and overall organizational efficiency. Leadership styles shape the manner in which

activities are conducted towards the realization of organizational objectives for increased operational efficiency in an organization.

Leadership is conceived as a process where one or more persons influence a group of persons to move in a certain direction. Messick & Krammer (2004) argued that the degree of which the individual exhibits leadership traits depends not only on his characteristics and personal abilities, but also on the characteristics of the situation and environment in which he finds himself. Daft (2005) linked leadership theories to strategic implementation by investigating traits or behavior that could improve performance and satisfaction to any or all situations. The extent to which members of the organization contribute in harnessing the resources of an organization equally depends on how well the managers or leaders of the organization understand and adopt appropriate leadership style in performing their roles as managers and leaders. Thus, efficiency in resource mobilization, allocation, utilization and enhancement of organizational productivity depends to a large extent on leadership styles and on other factors.

Globally, leadership has become the most widely studied aspect of organizational behavior and a number of theories have emerged focusing on the strategies, traits, styles and the situational approach to leadership. As a result of ever growing interest in the field of leadership, behavioral scientists and sociologists began to analyze the possible consequences of leadership behaviors and the variables that are used to predict the leader's behaviors. Since it is the duty of leaders to get things done through the coordinated efforts of others, it is assumed therefore that leadership skills and strategies will translate into the subordinate's performance, (Rollinson et.al.2010).

Whereas many different theories have emerged from the last century, early theories on leadership concentrated on identifying qualities that differ between leaders and followers. Subsequent theories looked at other variables such as situational issues and levels of skills. However, it is not always easy to classify any of the theories as one or the other exclusively. A bank is an institution that provides financial services, including issuing money in various forms, receiving deposits of money, lending money and processing transactions and creating of credit. Commercial banks, where Equity Bank falls under, are financial intermediaries that serve as financial resource mobilization points in the global economy. The role of banks in an economy is paramount because they execute monetary policy and provide means for facilitating payment for goods and services in the domestic and international trade.

Equity Bank Limited

Equity Bank Limited is one of the biggest banking industry players currently in Kenya with subsidiaries in Kenya, Uganda, South Sudan, Rwanda and Tanzania. Its shares are also listed in the Nairobi Stock Exchange and Uganda Securities Exchange (EBG, 2010). Equity Bank was

founded as Equity Building Society (EBS) in October 1984 and was originally a provider of mortgage financing for the majority of customers who fell into the low-income population. Around the early 1990s, Equity was facing serious financial challenges and had been declared technically insolvent. It was around this time that the bank implemented a series of changes in its management as well as changes in its strategic direction. Within no time, Equity Bank had rapidly transformed into a fast-growing microfinance institution and later a leading commercial bank in Kenya. By 2012, Equity Bank had more than 8 million customers making it the largest bank in terms of customer base in Africa and having nearly half of bank accounts in Kenya. The bank did this by adopting competitive strategies that would see it tap markets that had previously been ignored by their competitors.

Equity Bank's business model is anchored on access, convenience and flexibility that has enabled the Bank to evolve and become an all-inclusive financial services provider with a growing pan African footprint (EBG, 2010). Equity Bank's business model and its visionary leadership has continued to earn local, regional and global accolades and recognitions. The model is also studied in some of the leading business schools in the world, as other developing countries in Africa and Asia seek to learn Equity's low margin, high volume model.

Equity Bank Limited offers inclusive, customer focused financial services that socially and economically empower their clients and other stakeholders. The bank continues to receive recognitions and top awards for its exemplary services. In April 2013, Equity Bank was voted best bank in Kenya at the Think Business Banking Awards 2013. The bank emerged top ahead of 42 other banks for the second year running. The top award came on the strength of regional reach, strong brand pulls and innovation. At around the same time, the Bank was named best bank in Kenya in terms of customer deposits amongst banks with a deposit base of over Kshs.75 billion and consulting firm RSM Ashvir. In June 2012, Equity Bank CEO and Managing Director, Dr. James Mwangi was named 2012 Ernst & Young World Entrepreneur of the year at a ceremony held in Monte Carlo, Monaco. Dr. Mwangi was picked from among 59 country finalists shortlisted for the title across 51 countries, becoming the first business leader from Sub Saharan Africa to win this prestigious award.

In 2012, Equity Bank was awarded best managed company in Africa award by Euro Money magazine based on a strong brand pull, regional footprint and corporate governance, based on a survey of market analysis at leading banks and research institutions in Africa. Equity Bank was also awarded the most innovative bank in Africa award at the Africa Bankers Awards held in Arusha, Tanzania. The annual awards rewards outstanding and achievements in Africa's financial sector.

Equity Bank offers an interesting study as it is recognized as the only financial service provider in the emerging markets which meets the threshold of sustainability based on a criterion covering innovation, growth and corporate sustainability. The bank's leadership has also created a conducive environment for the bank to excel leading to this continuous growth for the bank. The bank's leadership has also shaped the economic performance of the bank in the respective regions in which they operate leading to the transformation of lives of the bank's customers.

Problem statement

Effective leadership in an organization is very important for prosperity, Equity Bank notwithstanding. The banking industry in Kenya has witnessed tremendous changes brought about by globalization, liberalization, intense competition among rivals, changing regulatory guidelines, technology and more demanding customers. These changes and dynamic business environment requires leadership that can enable both the people and the organization to adapt and be more successful. Empirical studies into the direct link between leadership styles and strategic change management have been lacking, inconclusive or empirically suspect. Although a number of studies have been conducted on leadership and strategic change management in Kenyan banks, no detailed study has been conducted on influence of leadership styles on strategic change management or generally on commercial banks. The limited nature of research findings in this area suggests the need to investigate further the nature of relationship between leadership styles and strategic change management in commercial banks and specifically, Equity Bank. This study was a step in this direction. The study sought to identify the leadership styles adopted by the managers at Equity Bank and examine their influence on strategic change management which invariably translates to organization development. To achieve success, leaders have to ensure that messages are communicated openly and honestly, keep employees informed, solicit feedback from those impacted and commit to meeting expectations set by the leadership. Ultimately, the responsibility of managing development is with the leaders and failure to address these behaviors will derail the company's workforce and ultimately its ability to perform and accept the changes in the organization's strategy.

Several studies have been conducted on the issue of strategic management in Kenya. Kisavu 2012) in her study "strategic change management at the Kenya society for the blind" focused only on leadership as small contributing in strategic change management. A study conducted by Gitonga (2011) titled "emotional intelligence and leadership effectiveness" offered some insight into leadership as a practice. However, it failed to focus on the particular leadership styles required by leaders to achieve a successful strategic change management. This study sought to fill the knowledge gap by establishing the answer to the question: what the influence of leadership styles in strategic change management in commercial banks is, a case study of Equity Bank Limited, Kikuyu Branch. This was done by looking at the different leadership styles and how they influence

the strategic change management in commercial banks and specifically, Equity Bank Limited, Kenya.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Jan, Anna and Andrea (2015), conducted a study on Leadership as a tool of Strategic Change and highlighted several global and worldwide trends that bring new challenges from the corporate life. Along with the changing economic paradigm, the political and economic uncertainties bring about an increased demand for corporate leaders with visions and authority. To succeed now and in the future, leaders will have to design organizational with the ability to do both with an increasingly diverse workforce operating in a complex global environment. Leading this boundary fewer organizations require individuals who recognize that people and communicates are not just a means to an organizational outcome, but are also an end in and of, themselves. There is no shortage on how to lead, but unfortunately, the validity of this advice varies widely, and it is not clear how much of this advice might best be applied to address the current issues given the numerous compounding variables. The modern workforce continues to increase in diversity (on many dimensions), complicating the leadership task in an increasing global and delivering products to diverse and global customer segments while operating in a wide variety of situations, increasingly unstable and thus unpredictable, raising risk and anxiety among leaders everywhere.

Siva (2014) says that there are important differences within the academic world and between academia and the outside world regarding basic concepts of leadership. Avolio, Walumba, and Weber (2009), and Nohria and Khurana (2010) presented very good recent reviews of the research on leadership. Those reviews honestly pointed out the existence of opposing viewpoints about almost anything related to leadership. Latham (2014), also found an inability for researchers to converge on a universal answer to leadership. The conclusion to be drawn from all this by Silva (2014) is that we have learned a lot about leadership, to the point that we have different approaches and perspectives on this phenomenon. The different opinions that exists about leadership may be due to wrong perceptions, lack of effective research methods, a combination of both causes, or simply to the fact that all those perspectives are right. May be the lack of consensus cannot be interpreted as a failure to discover the truth but as the realization that leadership is a complex notion, which even supports opposing viewpoints.

Latham (2014) comes to consistent conclusion that a universal answer on leadership does not exist. The answer could be found only if this phenomenon operates independently of its context, includes measurable variables and predictable relationships. One might begin by working on a meta-analysis of the existing theories. The main limitations of transformational and transactional leadership styles could be at least partially, remedied by integrating key constructs and concepts from value-based leadership theories such as servant leadership and spiritual leadership. Once this

initial step, along with the integration of key concepts from other relevant leadership aspects. This “call to action” is for leadership scholars and scholar-practitioners to rise to the challenge, collaborate with practitioners and conduct grand comprehensive research studies that include both the actual contexts, along with a comprehensive definition

Politis (2001) studied the relationship of different types of leadership to knowledge management. The objective of his study was to find the relationship between different types of leadership and knowledge management initiatives. Findings of his research showed that leadership styles that involve human interaction and encourage participative decision-making process were positively related to the knowledge management initiatives. His study did not mention direction the effect of leadership style on strategic change management but acknowledge the dynamics of leadership in fostering knowledge management initiatives, which centers on the creation of knowledge-sharing culture.

METHODOLOGY

The researcher adopted descriptive survey design. For the purpose of this study, the target population comprised of 80 respondents who are top managers, middle level managers and bank support staff members. The researcher used a questionnaire which contained both open ended and close ended questions to collect primary data.

The data collected was analyzed using both descriptive statistics methods like percentage and frequencies for quantitative data and content analysis for in-depth qualitative data.

DATA ANALYSIS

Inferential Statistics

To evaluate the relationships between the dependent and independent variables, correlation and multiple regression analysis was done and the findings presented in the following subsections.

Correlation Analysis

In this subsection a summary of the correlation and regression analyses is presented. It seeks to first determine the degree of interdependence of the independent variables and also show the degree of their association with the dependent variable separately. These results are summarized in Table 4.9

Table 4.9: Summary of Correlations

		Autocratic leadership	Transformational leadership	Transactional leadership	Democratic leadership	Strategic change
Autocratic leadership	Pearson Correlation	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)					
Transformational leadership	Pearson Correlation	.162*	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.017				
Transactional leadership	Pearson Correlation	.257**	0.255**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0	0			
Democratic leadership	Pearson Correlation	.273**	.194*	.327**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0	0.034	0		
Strategic change	Pearson Correlation	.387**	.230**	.257**	.453**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0	0.033	0.004	0	

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Source: Field Data, 2017

A correlation analysis to determine whether the autocratic leadership style (independent variable) in Equity bank had an influence on strategic change (dependent variable) shows a relationship exists ($r = 0.387$, $\alpha = 0.01$). This suggests that since autocratic leadership style in Equity bank was important in influencing the strategic change, it still needed to be enhanced through setting examples of behavior.

The correlation analysis to determine whether transformational leadership style (independent variable) had a significant influence on strategic change (dependent variable) in Equity bank shows a relationship exists ($r = 0.230$, $\alpha = 0.01$). This implies that a lot needs to be done on the transformational leadership by listening to the employees with an open mind and implement an open-door policy so as to better enhance strategic change.

The study also sought to determine whether there existed a significant relationship between transactional leadership style and strategic change in Equity bank. The correlation analysis shows that a relationship exists ($r = 0.257, \alpha = 0.01$).

Finally, the correlation analysis to determine whether there was a significant association between democratic leadership style (independent variable) and strategic change (dependent variable) in Equity bank shows that a relationship exists ($r = 0.453, \alpha = 0.01$). These findings imply that more emphasis needed to be put on the democratic leadership in Equity bank in order to improve on the strategic change.

It can therefore be concluded that all the variables were significant to the study problem although the degrees of influence varied.

Regression Analysis

Multiple regression analysis was used to determine the significance of the relationship between the dependent variable and all the independent variables pooled together. The coefficient of determination r^2 adjusted = 0.367 hence showing that 36.7% of the total variations in strategic change (dependent variable) can be explained by autocratic, transformational, transactional and democratic leadership styles (independent variables). This means that other factors not in the study accounted for 63.3%.

Table 4.10: Multiple Linear Regression Analysis Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.663 ^a	0.518	0.367	1.4350195

a. Predictors: (Constant),autocratic leadership,transformational leadership, transactional leadership, democratic leadership

Source: Author, 2017

Table 4.11: Multiple linear regression results

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	292.764	4	76.238	18.941	.0001 ^a
Residual	652.708	36	6.653		
Total	945.472	40			

Regression results

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	2.335	1.026		2.908	0.005
	Autocratic leadership	0.126	0.095	0.075	1.332	0.115
	Transformational leadership	0.225	0.061	0.349	3.274	0
	Transactional leadership	0.037	0.086	0.024	0.239	0.772
	Democratic leadership	0.189	0.058	0.032	1.654	0.001

a. Predictors: (Constant),autocratic leadership,transformational leadership, transactional leadership, democratic leadership

b. Dependent Variable: strategic change in Equity bank

Source: Author 2017

A regression analysis was conducted with all the four components of leadership styles being taken as independent variables and strategic change as the dependent variable. P value is the probability of rejection, the decision criteria is reject H0 if the P value is less than 5%, otherwise accept and the results tabulated below.

The ANOVA results of Table 4.11 indicate that there is a significant difference between means of factors influencing strategic change in Equity bank, Kikuyu branch ($F_o' = 18.941 > F_c = 2.73; \alpha < 0.05; df = 4, 40; p = 0.000$). The study therefore establishes that autocratic, transformational, transactional and democratic leadership style were influencing the strategic change in Equity bank in the area of study. This means that these leadership styles made a notable difference in the strategic changes of the equity bank in the area and could not be ignored.

From table 4.11 it can be deduced that Autocratic leadership ($\beta = 0.075$), Transformational leadership ($\beta = 0.349$), Transactional leadership ($\beta = 0.024$) and Democratic leadership ($\beta = 0.032$) are significant. This indicates that the dependent variable, strategic change in Equity bank in the area of study, would change by a corresponding number of standard deviations when all the independent variables change by one standard deviation.

These findings imply that if autocratic leadership in the bank changed by 1-unit, strategic change would change by 0.075 units if other factors remain fixed and similarly transformational, transactional and democratic leaderships would change by 0.349, 0.024 and 0.032 units respectively. This shows how important the four independent variables are in influencing the strategic change in Equity bank.

When tested together the model is specified as:

The regression model is presented as follows:

$$Y = a + b_1x_1 + b_2x_2 + b_3x_3 + b_4x_4 + \epsilon$$

Where

Y: Dependent variable (Strategic change)

a: Independent variables

x₁: Autocratic Leadership Style

x₂: Transactional Leadership Style

x₃: Transformational Leadership Style

x₄: Democratic Leadership Style

b₁, b₂, b₃, b₄, Gradient of equation

ε: Error term

Tables 4.11 show the results of multiple regression analysis. The table reports a significant F statistic, indicating that the model has strong prediction strength ($F = 18.941$, $p < 0.01$). As further shown in Table 4.11, the regression does an excellent job of modelling Organizational strategic change as greater than 50% of the variation in determination of leadership as explained by the model (R Square = 51.8%).

The model derives the following equation:

$$Y = 2.335 + 0.126x_1 + 0.225x_2 + 0.037x_3 + 0.189x_4 + \epsilon$$

Observing the value of regression coefficient from the highest to the lowest, this model confirms that Transformational leadership style (X₂) as the most dominant variable in determining the organizational strategic change followed by Democratic leadership style (X₄), Autocratic leadership style (X₁) and Transactional leadership style (X₃).

Hypotheses testing

Test of hypothesis H01: Autocratic leadership style has no influence on strategic change in Equity bank. The multiple regression analysis shows a significant relationship exists ($\beta = 0.075$, $\alpha = 0.05$; $p = 0.001$). This led to the rejection of the null hypothesis and implies that the management insists in autocratic leadership of personnel in Equity bank.

Test of hypothesis H02: Transformational leadership style has no significant influence on strategic change in Equity bank. Multiple regression analysis shows a significant relationship between transformational leadership with strategic change. The beta value is $\beta = 0.349$. This led to the rejection of the null hypothesis.

Test of hypothesis H03: Transactional leadership style has no significant influence on strategic change in Equity bank. The result of the multiple regression analysis shows that is significant relationship. Testing the model coefficients gave $\beta = 0.024$. This led to the rejection of the null hypothesis

Test of hypothesis H04: Democratic leadership has no significant influence on strategic change in Equity bank. The regression analysis shows a significant relationship exists between democratic leadership and strategic change in Equity bank. Testing the model coefficient gave, $\beta = 0.032$, and

was found to be significant and thus led to the rejection of the null hypothesis. These findings imply that democratic leadership needed to be upheld in the bank in order to enhance strategic change.

Summary of the Findings

The objective of the study was to analyze the influence of leadership styles on strategic change in Kikuyu branch, Equity bank limited. Primary Data was collected from Equity bank, Kikuyu top and middle level managers as well as other staff members. The response rate was a 100% with nil missing values noted for the questionnaires. The dependent variable was strategic change in Kikuyu branch, Equity bank limited measured by autocratic, transformational, transactional and democratic leadership styles. The independent variables were measured by various specific questions on the self-administered questionnaire. The data analysis revealed there is a strong correlation between the strategic change in Kikuyu branch, Equity bank and four of the independent variable measured. A Pearson correlation coefficient was computed and tested for significance. From the findings of p-value, which is the proxy measure of the level of significance, the study found that there was a strong positive relationship between the four independent variables and the strategic change in Equity bank. This therefore means that these leadership styles can be used as predictor variables to predict future strategic change in Equity bank. The major finding of the study depicts the main objective of the study was met i.e. there exist a strong relationship between strategic change and the leadership styles adopted by the Equity bank, Kikuyu branch.

Conclusions

The findings reveal that there is a positive and significant direct influence between the autocratic, transformational, transactional and democratic leadership styles and strategic change in Equity bank. Based on the initial design of the constellation between variables, the results showed that the contribution of the four leadership styles play a vital role in influencing strategic change in Equity bank. When combined, contribution of the four independent variables of autocratic, transformational, transactional and democratic leadership styles reaches 36.7% indicating the contribution of other variables not included in the model to predict on the strategic change in Equity bank are 63.3% confirming this model is of moderate goodness.

In studying the role of leadership in the strategic change management, we note the importance for Equity bank managers to be: agents of change by articulating a powerful strategic vision to be translated into a realistic and competitive strategy, strategists by showing creativity, flexibility and by acquiring strong strategic skills, communication agents by transmitting to subordinates the necessity to adopt a new strategy, and promoting opportunities for dialogue and discussion, agents of influence by motivating subordinates, convincing them of the need for change and by directing them towards a better management of strategic change.

Endowed with these skills, the leaders acting at various levels of the bank cannot be limited to one style of leadership. A thorough analysis of the literature allowed us to identify different models of leadership for the conduct of strategic change. The manner of managing and leading strategic change will not be identical in all circumstances and in all organizations. We assume therefore, that depending on the situation they are facing, the managers must arbitrate between different leadership styles.

It's important to note that the good leadership styles and right adoptions are necessary for provision of teamwork and ensuring everyone understands their roles within the bank. It means therefore that staff who are properly motivated and guided by the management to work to achieve the desired results leads to increased efficiency, reduction of costs and improved performance.

Other researchers wishing to conduct similar studies may include other leadership variables such as; Team Leadership, Cross-Cultural Leadership, Facilitative Leadership, Laissez-faire Leadership, Paternalistic leadership, Servant leadership, Bureaucratic leadership, Charismatic leadership, Situational leadership and so forth. Finally, we note that this theoretical study should be completed later by an empirical research that would focus on a comparison of these different leadership models on the basis of their contribution to the success of strategic change. This research would also permit to verify the various skills of the leader facing this type of transformation.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were drawn with regard to the study findings.

I contend that effective leadership begins with a correct mindset. That mind-set is founded upon an individual's willingness to lead, to serve others. An effective leader desires the opportunity to step up to be involved in controlling not only his or her personal actions, but the actions of those being led. This leadership attitude flows from a reasoned choice; it is a conscious decision to take on the role with all its rights and responsibilities. Amid the natural chaos and interpersonal interactions, effective leaders are able to demonstrate a fixed purpose. Such leadership is determined to ensure not only that personal goals are reached, but more important, that the group achieves its objectives and fulfills its mission. Those who seek to lead in place must be compelled to lead no matter the personal cost.

Roger D'Aprix stated that leaders must be "loving in [their] organizational relationships" (cited in Goldhaber, 1993, p. 217). "Loving" in this context means that we acknowledge the value of our co-workers and respect them with the dignity they deserve. We let them know that we care for them whether we like them or not. The bottom line is that individuals must value people and relationships with them if they are to claim their "authority" to lead.

Communication plays a vital role in the achievement of interpersonal and organizational goals. Communication is a two-way process. Effective communication requires leaders capable of effective listening. Covey's (1989) Habit #5, Seek First to Understand, Then Seek to Be

Understood, reflects the epitome of effective listening. Ineffective listening undermines people's self-esteem, self-confidence, and creativity. Remember, hearing and listening are not synonymous terms.

To some degree conflicts occur because people are not able to differentiate between task-related conflict issues and their personal investment in a given situation. Bracey, Rosenblum, Sanford, and Trueblood (1990) point out the importance of truthfulness in leadership. Yet at the same time the leader must compassionately tell the truth (e.g., about a faculty member's job performance, etc.).

Any person who assumes a leadership role needs to be committed to the group. The group's vision and mission must be internalized by the leader. An effective leader is a person who can commit to using his or her ability to lead others, perform technical skills, and conceptualize situations, thus helping to ensure goal achievement.

Sometimes it is necessary for leaders to step outside the box, to be innovative. Leaders must be flexible enough to know when it is time to try a new procedure or implement a new policy. For many taking a risk is frightening, but such behavior can be invaluable, benefiting the entire group. Effective leaders are essentially good followers. They understand that they are accountable to those in authority. They know it is not a good idea to behave as a lone wolf, but that they must instead keep their work priorities aligned with the organization's goal and have an appropriate sense of self-importance. People who lead in place value the necessity of following procedures and adhering to established policies.

Leadership style behaviors that have a strong positive relationship with organizational strategic change should be put into practice. It is therefore recommended that managers should: help others develop themselves; guiding their staff on how to do their work in order to be rewarded; be satisfied when others meet agreed-upon standards; provide recognition or rewards; tell others the standards they have to know to carry out their work and ask no more of others than what is absolutely essential. Managers should consider formulating and implementing effective reward & recognition systems. Managerial policies formulated should call for greater involvement in guiding subordinates to achieve organizational goals.

There were a number of limitations noted during the study. The major one was the reluctance by some respondents to give information. Because of the sensitive nature of information handled by Equity bank, respondents approached were reluctant in giving information fearing that the information sought would be used to intimidate them or print a negative image about the Equity branch, Kikuyu branch. The researcher handled the problem by carrying an introduction letter from the university and assured them that the information they gave would be treated confidentially and it was to be used purely for academic purposes. It was not possible to include more managers from different Equity bank branches in order to attain a broader understanding of the relationship between leadership and strategic change of Equity bank due to inadequate resources. The study

however, constructed an effective research instrument that sought to elicit general and specific information on the leadership styles adopted by Equity bank in the adoption of strategic change.

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