

## Exploring the Contribution of Emotional Intelligence to Leadership Success, From Employee Perceptions, In a Higher Institution of Open and Distance Learning (ODL)

Dr. Caxton Shonhiwa

Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Commerce and Law, Zimbabwe Open University, Zimbabwe

**\*Corresponding author**

*Dr. Caxton Shonhiwa*

**Article History**

*Received: 23.08.2017*

*Accepted: 03.08.2017*

*Published: 30.09.2017*

DOI:

10.36347/sjahss.2017.v05i09.001



**Abstract:** Open and Distance Learning (ODL) institutions normally experience low retention rates compared to their conventional counterparts. This is a characteristic of the open and distance nature of learning, which may result from a number of reasons that explain why students opt out of programmes; studies done indicated that students were generally dissatisfied with the student support services they accessed from institutions. This paper sought to establish the contribution of emotional intelligence of leadership to institutional success at Open University, which was premised on the principle that leadership established the tone and culture of their institutions; the success of institutions was directly related to the relationship leadership established between it and the workforce. Bradberry (2014) contends that emotional intelligence is the cement that holds all the mechanisms that determine a workforce's capabilities, commitment and performance together. The researcher adopted a qualitative research paradigm and used it to access the deep-seated perceptions of institutional workers, through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. The interpretivist approach was used to interpret the perceptions accessed and render them meaningful in answering the research questions and achieve research objectives. The data that was analysed was coded and consolidated into themes, from which findings were derived. The major finding was that employees perceived a distinct lack of emotional intelligence in leadership. The study's other finding was that the rules and regulations at the workplace were observed in a rigid manner that was not tempered by human consideration. In an institution of higher learning employees felt that leadership could listen and try to empathise with people, instead of rigidly adhering to regulatory stipulations. This sapped worker commitment. The study concluded that leadership needed to apply rules and regulations with a human face. The researcher recommended that other researchers should carry out similar studies to authenticate or disprove the findings of the current study.

**Keywords:** Emotional intelligence, perceptions

### INTRODUCTION

People who are emotionally intelligent are those who have a sharp sense of self-awareness, self-regulation, self-motivation, those who are socially aware of the emotions of other people and those who possess social skills to deal with current situations. People who are aware of their emotions are able to recognize their own emotions and their effects on other people. For instance, they know the emotions they are feeling at any given time and are able to explain why they have those emotions; they are able to link their feelings to their thoughts, their actions and to what they say. They also enjoy an accurate self-assessment of their strengths and limitations. The people with a sense of self-regulation are able to control themselves through a management of disruptive feelings and distressing

emotions. These people have a high level of trustworthiness in that they act ethically and are irreproachable. They enjoy a high level of conscientiousness, adaptability and innovativeness. In whatever they build trust through their reliability and authenticity; they take responsibility for whatever they do, like they meet their commitments and keep their promises. They are open to new ideas, new ways of thinking and new information. Their sense of self-motivation means they strive to meet a standard of excellence, they are results-oriented and they pursue information to reduce uncertainty and always strive to find ways of improving their performance. They are driven by the commitment to accomplish their goals and objectives. Their sense of initiative means they are ready to act on opportunities and pursue their goals

beyond the expected or required level of performance. This happens because they are endowed with a sense of sharp optimism, which energises them to pursue goals despite impediments and setbacks they may be strewn in their path. These people's sense of social awareness is one of empathy, service orientation, developing others, leveraging diversity and political awareness. They sense other people's feelings and perspectives and take an active part in their concerns. They are also able to read the emotional currents and power relationships of any group. Last but not least, emotionally intelligent people possess social skills to be able to influence other people; they possess effective tactics to be able to persuade others and appeal to their listeners. They communicate clear and convincing messages, are able to deal with pending issues in a straightforward manner, are able to listen attentively, seek mutual understanding of any situation and foster open candid communication.

This paper sought to explore the contribution of emotional intelligence to a leader's success. The success could be achieved through how the leader, who possessed emotional intelligence, as described above, could inspire and guide followers, how the leader could be a change catalyst, could manage conflict in an organization and be able to nurture relationships within and among members of the organization or institution. Such a leader would lead on the basis of collaboration and co-operation and be a team builder.

### **Background to the problem**

Bradberry [1] contends that emotional intelligence is the cement that holds all the mechanisms that determines a person's capabilities; emotional intelligence over-rides all the other performance improvement explanations in the area of business management. Emotional intelligence relates to how people manage their behavior by navigating social complexities and enabling them to make personal decisions. This is possible because emotional intelligence is divided into two core competencies and two subsidiary competencies. The two core skills are personal competencies and social competencies; personal skills or competencies are one's self-awareness and self-management skills. Personal competence relates to one's ability to manage personal emotions and the behavior that emanates from those personal emotions. In other words, the skill of self-awareness relates to the ability to accurately perceive one's feelings and be continuously aware of the feelings with the passage of time. The skill to self-manage relates to the awareness of one to the personal emotions and the ability to stay flexible and to be able to direct one's behaviour. The social competence skill relates to a person's sensitivity to other people's feelings and the ability to relate to other people's feelings; one should be sensitive to other people's moods, behaviour and their motivation so that they could improve their own

relationship with others. Relationship management relates to a person's awareness of their emotions and the emotions of other people which leads to a successful management of interactions with other people.

The two core skills, evidenced above, are personal competence and the social competence. The four core skills that emerge from the two core competencies are: the self-awareness competence, which is the ability to perceive personal feelings; self-management competence, which is the ability to be aware of one's feelings; social awareness, the ability to detect other people's feelings and understand their import; and, relationship management competence, which is the ability of an individual to discern personal feelings and the feelings of others and be able to manage interactions in an institution. These are the core emotional intelligence competencies which can explain the success or failure of a leader in managing an organisation or an institution of higher learning.

The contention posited by Bradberry [1] is that emotional intelligence is capable to explain the success of a leader. The researcher would like to explore the contribution of emotional intelligence to the success of a leader in an organisation.

### **Statement of the problem**

Emotional intelligence is a performance improvement mechanism that endeavours to explain the success of a leader in an institution. The study sought to explore the contribution of emotional intelligence to the success of a leader in an Open and Distance Learning (ODL) institution of higher learning.

### **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

#### **The primary research question**

- How does emotional intelligence contribute to the success of a leader?

#### **The sub-questions were:**

- What are the characteristics of a successful leader?
- Why would emotional intelligence be considered ahead of other leadership performance mechanisms?
- How does emotional intelligence influence the performance of institutional leadership?

#### **Purpose of the study**

The purpose of the study was to ascertain how emotional intelligence contribute to the success of an ODL leadership.

#### **Significance of the study**

There are many stakeholders who benefit from the study.

The researcher benefits through the creation of new insights in the understanding of leadership performance, which reflects institutional performance. The performance of leadership is a function of the performance of an institution.

An understanding of the role played by emotional intelligence in enhancing leadership success would impact positively on the performance of leaders in any institution or organisation. The leaders of an institution would, therefore, benefit a lot from an understanding of emotional intelligence since they would be in a position to implement the new insights.

The institution or organization would benefit from the study as this would make leadership perform better, which would positively impact on institutional performance. Enhanced institution performance would benefit institutional stakeholders, both internal and external.

#### **Delimitation of the study**

The study included Zimbabwean institutions of higher learning, especially the sections of these institutions that were directly involved in open and distance learning institutions.

At a theoretical level the study was confined to emotional intelligence as a performance enhancement mechanism, it did not include a discussion in any of the other performance enhancement mechanisms.

#### **Ethical and legal considerations**

The participants in the study were informed of the objectives of the study and were asked to voluntarily take part in the study; those who were not comfortable with their involvement were requested to opt out. Participants were informed that they could withdraw their involvement at any time and without offering an explanation for their withdrawal. Pseudonyms were used to shield participants from being mentioned and being associated with the study. The institutions were also given pseudonyms.

#### **Review of related literature**

A review of related literature was undertaken in order for the researcher to be familiar with the aspect of emotional intelligence and what other researchers have done in the area. The researcher desired to establish the areas of theoretical consensus among other researchers, areas of differences and to establish gaps that need to be closed through the current study. Emotional intelligence was a new area of interest in these parts of the world and very little seemed to have been covered, which meant that the theoretical approach to the area needed to be explored and to be related to the local situation. Preliminary research done in the area by

this researcher indicated that, although a lot has been covered in the area of performance enhancement, a lot more needed to be done because what worked well for one situation may not work well with another situation, so institutional leadership needed to try many mechanisms until they settled for that which was appropriate in their peculiar situation.

#### **Conceptual framework**

The conceptual framework for the current study was borrowed from Goleman [1], who pioneered the work in emotional intelligence. Emotional Intelligence (EQ) was a relatively recent behavioural model, which sought to establish its role in the development and developing of people. EQ has gained currency in the search for theories to explain how workers and the leadership in organisations can improve performance and productivity, through the understanding and assessment of people's behaviour, management styles, attitudes, interpersonal skills and worker potential. Emotional intelligence has become assumed importance in human resource planning, customer relations, customer service, recruitment and interviewing of work applicants and management development, among many other disciplines.

The concept of Emotional Intelligence could be broken into four broad areas when employed in enhancing the performance of the organisation, which are: paving the way; doing the work of change; encouraging the transfer and maintenance of change (sustainable change); and, the evaluation of that transformation. Emotional intelligence assists in paving the way at work by: assessing the institutional needs; assessing the individual worker; delivering the assessments with utmost care; maximizing the learning choice; encouraging participation; linking goals to personal values; adjusting personal expectations to rhyme with institutional expectations; and, assessing the readiness and motivation for EQ development. EQ helps institutions perform better through: the fostering of relationships between learners and EQ trainers; helping in self-directed learning; setting goals; breaking goals into achievable steps; providing opportunities for practice; giving feedback; employing experiential methods; building support; using models and examples; and, encouraging insight and self-awareness. In encouraging the transfer and maintenance of sustainable change, Emotional Intelligence encourages the application of learning in jobs and the development of institutional culture that supports learning. Lastly, Emotional Intelligence assists evaluate institutional and individual effect.

The concept of Emotional Intelligence has assumed criticality in institutions that desire to explain worker and institutional performance and how that performance can be attained.

### **Theoretical framework**

The study adopted the theoretical framework proposed by Chapman [2], who spent a lot of time and did a lot of research on Daniel Goleman's concept of Emotional Intelligence (EQ), which was largely extrapolated from the Emotional Quotient concept.

According to Chapman [2] Goleman based the work on two aspects of Emotional Intelligence, which are the understanding of oneself, one's goals, intentions, responses to situations and behavior and, secondly, understanding other people and their feelings. From these two aspects Goleman devised five domains of EQ, as follows: the ability to know one's emotions; managing one's emotions; motivating oneself; recognising and understanding other people's emotions; and, managing relationships. These domains enable workers in institutions and organisations to embrace the concept of love and spirituality, compassion and humanity as fundamental pillars of life-forces. Emotional intelligence enabled workers to appreciate and develop vital inter-connections between, and among, the self, others, individual and collective purpose, the meaning of existence, of life and the world at large and be able to assist other people to do the same. At a personal level, an emotionally intelligent person should be able to self-motivate and be persistent; emotional intelligence can be taught to children so that they experience a better life to what they would otherwise experience, gain a better chance to use their intellectual potential in better and more productive ways than otherwise.

The data in the above paragraph was employed by Goleman [2] to construct an Emotional Intelligence Competence Framework that explained how employees who were emotionally intelligent were more productive and successful at work than those who lacked the gift of emotional intelligence. The framework explains that an emotionally intelligent worker was possessed of personal competence of self-awareness, self-regulation and self-motivation. Secondly, the emotionally intelligent workers were socially competent due to their superior social awareness and their possession of social skills. What made the concept of emotional intelligence so appealing and attractive so fast is that it was based on many branches of behavioural emotional and communication theories, such as Neuro-Linguistic Programming, Transactional Analysis and empathy.

The study sought to establish the presence of emotional intelligence in institutional leadership and how that emotional intelligence contributed to institutional success, based on the Emotional Intelligence Competence Framework proposed by Chapman [2].

### **Importance of Emotional Intelligence**

Nandewar, N [3] says that emotional intelligence was not appropriate in normal situations alone, it was found to be effective during times of high pressure when emotions needed to be managed. Emotions could be managed well during times of stress and high pressure only if they were understood as four major components made up of self-awareness, through which leaders needed to recognize their feelings and how they impacted on the feelings of workers; self-management, which was the ability of a leaders to control feelings and to adapt to new situations; social-awareness related to the ability to sense, understand and react to other emotions; and relationship management, which was the ability to influence and inspire other people.

Power [4] gives three reasons why emotional intelligence is important in the function of a leader. Emotional intelligence enables a leader to accurately identify personal feelings and the feelings of the people being led. The leader can utilise emotions by applying them to tasks at hand, like in thinking and problem solving. Leaders are able to control their emotions and those of the people around them, which mean they can motivate or inspire the people or calm them down during times of stressful emotions. Generally, people with a high level of emotional self-awareness are able to understand co-workers and meet deadlines; they are not worried by the criticism of customers and remain focused on outcomes; and, where two candidates possess similar qualifications, the one with higher emotional intelligence is likely to get the job.

The seven characteristics of emotionally intelligent people, according to Power [4], are that they are: change agents; they are self-aware; they empathetic and relate well with others; they are not perfectionists, but are aware that perfection is possible; they are balanced, and maintain a healthy professional and personal balance; they are curious, they explore possibilities; and, they are gracious, they feel good about their lives. People who are emotionally intelligent know how to make their work, and the world, a better place.

### **Five pillars for hiring employees**

Nepriakhina and DeLeon [5] extensively quote from Goleman's book, *Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More than IQ and Working with Emotional Intelligence*. In the book Goleman advises those who wanted to hire people who would thrive in organisations to look for those potential employees possessed of five pillars, which were:

#### **Self-awareness**

A potential worker with a healthy sense of self-awareness, who understood personal strengths and weaknesses, and how personal actions would affect

others. A self-aware person was far better able to handle constructive criticism than one who was not self-aware.

#### **Self-regulation**

A potential worker endowed with a high EQ could reveal personal emotions and be able to restrain themselves when the need arose

#### **Motivation**

Emotionally intelligent people were not motivated by money or personal wealth but they were self-motivated. These people were usually resilient and optimistic and they were driven by inner ambition.

#### **Empathy**

A potential worker possessed of empathy was also possessed of compassion and an understanding of human nature. An empathetic person offered great service and genuinely responded to the concerns of others.

#### **People skills**

Potential worker who were emotionally intelligent were able to build rapport and trust quickly with others on their teams. These people avoided power struggles and backstabbing, but were more inclined to enjoy the company of other people and attracted the respect of others.

Goleman devised these five pillars to assist employers employ workers who are able to make the company thrive and prosper.

#### **The dark side of EQ**

According to Grant [6] Emotional Intelligent has contributed to strife and warfare in the world; some world leaders used emotional intelligent to fuel a sense of militant behaviour in listeners. For instance, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. used emotional intelligent, the ability to recognise, understand and manage his and people's emotions when he delivered an electrifying dream message to African-Americans. Grant [6] acknowledges that Dr. King employed great skill in managing his own emotions and in sparking emotions that moved his audience; Dr. King presented a perfectly balanced outcry of reason and emotion and of anger and hope, and his tone of pained indignation balanced that note for note.

Grant [6] argues that Adolf Hitler also recognized the power of emotions and spent a great deal of time and effort perfecting that power. He worked very hard practising how to use gestures and the images of his movements and ended up as one of the most influential leaders of the 20<sup>th</sup> century; a spell-binding speaker.

The argument that Goleman posed and was reproduced by Nepriakhina and DeLeon [5] was that leaders, policy-makers and educators have all

recognized that emotional intelligence was the solution to many of the ills of the world: where children could be taught to control their emotions there would be less bullying in schools and there would be more cooperation; and, where emotional intelligence were cultivated in leaders there would be more caring workplaces and a lot more compassionate healthcare in the world. The recognition that emotional intelligence could help humanity solve most social problems has resulted in many countries to teach emotional intelligence in secondary schools, business schools and medical institutions.

The argument that Grant [6] makes is that Emotional Intelligence was an important tool that could be employed to great effect, but placed in wrong hands it could become a destructive and manipulative force. Leaders who knew their emotions could disguise the feelings, and if they knew the feelings of other people, they could disguise their own emotions and use the feelings of those they led to manipulate the feelings and motivate the people to act against their best interests. Grant [6] quotes Jochen Munges, a University of Cambridge professor, whose research findings were that when a leader delivered an emotional speech the audience was less likely to scrutinize the message, but was more likely to react emotionally; the content of the message was rarely remembered by the audience. In another research undertaken by the University of Toronto psychologist Stephani Côté, university employees who engaged in most harmful behaviour were Machiavellians who possessed high emotional intelligence; the employees employed their emotional skills to demean and embarrass their peers for personal gain.

These examples of how emotional intelligence could be maliciously used and many other examples not cited by Grant [6] caution leaders, policy makers and medical professionals not to resort to emotional speeches when they seek to solve social, and other, problems. Any leader who mastered emotions mastered the ability to rob people of their capacity to reason.

#### **Leadership success**

Lee [7] says a successful leader exudes a great deal of internal commitment, ambition, goal orientation and results orientation. This leader focuses on relationship building and on building a great sense of internal community. These were the findings of a research that Lee [7] carried out in the following countries: Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Czech Republic, France, Germany, India, The Netherlands, Norway, Peru, Poland, South Africa, Sweden, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States of America, and Venezuela.

Heathfield [8] gives the characteristics of a successful leader as: a person other people choose to follow; one who provides a vision for the future; a person who inspires others; a leader makes workers feel important and appreciated; one who behaves ethically and lives their values; one who sets the pace through their expectations and lead by example; leaders establish an environment of continuous improvement; a leader provides workers with opportunities for them to grow, professionally and in person; and, a successful leader is compassionate and cares for the led.

Llopis [9] says that the success of leadership is measured by the complete body of work that a leader accomplishes in life: there is no greater or lesser measure to this. Successful leaders arrive at decision from the basis of complete evidence on all aspects that should be considered before a decision is made; successful leaders they set goals for themselves; and successful leaders are not insensitive, selfish and insecure. Successful leaders believe that people matter the most in their success. Llopis [9] explains that leaders who succeed define that success as the totality of opportunities and advancements they create for other people, apart from their own.

Mueller (Ed) [10] gives eight key leadership success characteristics, which are: leadership secret; ability to gain knowledge on a continuous basis; commitment; the ability to plan; innovativeness; being solution-oriented; being able to assume responsibility; and, possessing a vision, or being a visionary. The leadership secret is the ability to remove all limitations that may hinder progress, including all limiting beliefs.

Although most of the citations focus on the characteristics of a successful leader, a picture can be drawn that shows that successful leadership refers to those leaders who addressed a broad view to deliver strong business performance in a collective environment, not just being a solid individual performer. The characteristics of the leaders that guided the current research were commitment, a focus on worker relationship, and innovativeness, planning and being a visionary.

## **METHODOLOGY**

Reality is created as a result of the interaction between and among social actors. When individuals participate in social activity they share ideas, argue over others and generally agree on issues discussed and the agreement results in what the social players view as reality. The interaction also results in the creation of knowledge and new insights by social players. In other words, knowledge and reality are not given but are a result of social creation.

The researcher adopted a qualitative paradigm, with an interpretivist approach to interpret the data that is accessed from the participants. The method of data generation shall be the case study which makes it possible for the researcher to sub-merge into a community and 'go native' in an effort to live the experiences of the participants, go through their experiences and share their beliefs.

## **Population**

The population of the study was composed of open and distance learning institutions in the Southern African Development (SADC) region, taking the Open University as a case study. The focus was on the perceived contribution of emotional intelligence to the success of institutional leadership.

## **Sample and sampling technique**

The study regarded every individual in the institution to have an equal chance to be selected for data generation. The study focused on the perceptions of the workers *et al.* levels of the organisation on the contribution of the emotional intelligence of leaders in the institution. The reasoning was that when an institution successfully accomplished its mission, the leadership of the same institution was deemed to have succeeded. The study sought to establish the contribution of leadership's emotional intelligence to the success of the whole institution.

The researcher carried out random convenient sampling in that he selected anyone who was free to enter into an interaction, starting with those at the national centre where the researcher was stationed, and moved to other locations of the institution within Harare. The university has workers scattered in four buildings in the central business district. These locations were visited and participants were randomly selected for an interview and some were asked to form themselves into groups for focus group discussion.

## **Instrumentation**

Two tools of data generation were selected, which were the in-interview and focus group discussion; the in-depth interview was employed to access the perceptions and experiences of participants concerning their perceptions on strategies senior leaders were using to engage workers. The same was true of focus group discussions. Both the interview and the focus group discussion were guided by an interview guide.

## **Interview**

The interview is an essential tool in qualitative research, especially interpretive ethnography because they give valuable data in the form of perceptions of participants concerning the engagement of employees in institutions of higher learning.

The interview provides some background information that is crucial in ensuring the reliability of data. Interviews also provide access to information that cannot be easily accessed through observations and

document study, for example, feelings and intentions. The researcher interviewed individuals in formal conversations. The author used an interview guide structured as shown in table 1 below.

**Table-1 : Interview guide**

1. How does emotional intelligence contribute to the success of a leader?	2. What are the characteristics of a successful leader?
3. Why should emotional intelligence be considered ahead of other leadership performance mechanisms?	4. How does emotional intelligence influence the performance of institutional leadership?

The number of questions was low in order to allow participants time to talk about their perceptions and experiences on the strategies that senior management employ in ensuring organisational success. The researcher avoided a scenario where his personal views could interfere with the perceptions of the participants. This approach ensured that the findings of the research would emerge from the data of the research.

Participants were brought together into a group of six for a discussion on the strategies senior leadership used to achieve leadership success. The focus group discussion was guided by an interview guide. The focus group discussion was meant to open participants to a discussion in which they interrogated each other's perceptions and experiences on strategies leadership employed to achieve institutional success and how these were related to emotional intelligence.

All the participants voluntarily agreed to participate in the study and they gave the researcher permission to take notes during interview and use a tape recorder. The researcher deemed it necessary to write detailed notes as field notes are also important in qualitative research because they can be useful to resort to when the transcription messages are not clear.

The focus group discussion produced data that complemented what the interview produced.

**Focus group discussion**

**Findings of the study**

The data that were analysed and interpreted gave a number of findings to the study. The data were analysed using themes, which represented the perceptions and experiences of the workers on the strategies that the leadership employed to achieve institutional success.

**Table-2 : Themes to participant responses**

Theme	Source	Characteristic
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These people do not care</li> <li>• Always absent</li> <li>• Care about their allowances</li> <li>• Full of greed</li> </ul>	Interview	commitment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workers are starving</li> <li>• Salaries come months after work</li> <li>• Don't seek solutions to worker problems</li> </ul>	Interview Focus group discussion	Relationship with workers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No future at this institution</li> <li>• Rationalisation meant to fire people</li> <li>• No light at end of tunnel</li> <li>• Where are we going?</li> </ul>	Focus group discussion	Vision
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Absence of plan when at start of new academic year</li> <li>• There is no direction</li> <li>• Radarless leadership</li> </ul>	Focus group discussion	Planning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Absence of new ideas</li> <li>• Seek new ways to solve problems</li> </ul>	Interview and focus group discussion	Innovativeness

The participants were forthright in advocating for emotionally intelligent leadership because they said the reality on the ground was that employees were not

engaged because leadership did not feel for the worker and did not employ characteristics that enhanced institutional success. In other words, the institution did

not succeed in its mission, which meant that the leadership did not succeed in its collective responsibility of attaining the institution's goals and objectives.

At the end of the academic year the institution did not collectively evaluate the year's performance by the workforce; the perception was that leadership would not be comfortable if the result of the evaluation exercise were negative. There were no quarterly performance reviews, as provided for in the annual plan.

The perceptions of employees on the contribution of leadership institutional success as evidenced by their emotional intelligence were that there was very little evidence that the leaders were emotionally intelligent. The absence of emotional intelligence meant that its contribution to leadership success, and ultimately, institutional success was not evident.

Employee perception was that the leaders did not exhibit the level of commitment that would spur them to work harder and excite the workers to do the same. Employees perceived that leaders "did not do not care"; they were deemed to have been "always absent"; from their places of work, and they only "cared about their allowances"; and they were "full of greed". This meant that the leaders were perceived not to be committed to the institution.

Secondly, the workers perceived that the leaders did not possess the vision to drive the institution to great heights. The employees "did not see any future at this institution"; the employees were apprehensive because they believed the "rationalisation was meant to fire people"; the workers said there was "no light at end of tunnel"; and wondered "where are we going?" The perception was that leadership failed to articulate a clear institutional vision and how it would be achieved.

Tied to the second theme was that the employees perceived a lack of innovativeness on the part of the leadership. There was an "absence of new ideas" in the institution; and leadership did not seem to "seek new ways to solve problems". There was a sense of stagnation in the institution.

Although the participants acknowledged the existence of a strategic plan, the perception was that it was not taken seriously to drive the operations of the institution and to give the drive direction. Participants cited the "absence of plan when at start of new academic year" as an indication that the institution was not strategic plan driven; participants felt that for the time the new annual plan was being worked on "there is no direction" being followed; and this meant that the institution had "radarless leadership". Participants

expected an annual plan for the following year to be ready before the start of that year, not the current practice of working on it when the year has already started.

Lastly, participants perceived a clear lack of employee engagement on the part leadership: an employee engaged leadership is seized with the welfare of the employees and does everything to ensure that workers are happy and live healthy lives, both at work and at home. Employees alleged that "workers are starving" because "salaries come months after work". Although the employees acknowledged that these problems were beyond the control of university leadership they still felt there was something that leadership could do or say to show their concern for employees; the perception was that leadership "don't seek solutions to worker problems". There was also the perception that leadership did not inform employees when any development occurred, or in cases where they just needed information about institution's happenings.

## CONCLUSION

The employees were forthright in their perception that senior leadership was inactive in employee engagement. The reason was the leadership's lack of concern over the performance of the institution. A minor view was that maybe senior leadership did not understand or appreciate employee engagement well enough to desire to do something about it.

An impression was created of a chasm between senior management and the lower ranks of the institution; that lack of a coherent relationship precluded the engagement of middle management, who would in turn engage lower levels of the institution.

## REFERENCES

1. Bradberry SJ, Savvasachi AJ, Martinez-Calvo M, Gunnlaugsson T. Development of responsive visibly and NIR luminescent and supramolecular coordination self-assemblies using lanthanide ion directed synthesis. *Coordination Chemistry Reviews*. 2014 Aug 15; 273:226-41.
2. Chapman B. Memo.
3. Nandanwar NV, Sable GS. Review on Force-Sensor-Less Power Assist Control. *International Journal of Emerging Technology and Advanced Engineering*. 2013;3(12):150-4.
4. Power RA, Steinberg S, Bjornsdottir G, Rietveld CA, Abdellaoui A, Nivard MM, Johannesson M, Galeslout TE, Hottenga JJ, Willemsen G, Cesarini D. Polygenic risk scores for schizophrenia and bipolar disorder predict creativity. *Nature neuroscience*. 2015 Jul 1; 18(7):953-5.
5. Deleon M. The importance of emotional intelligence at work. *Entrepreneur*. Retrieved. 2015.



6. Grant A. The dark side of emotional intelligence. The Atlantic. 2014 Jan; 2.
7. Lee H, Choi B. Knowledge management enablers, processes, and organizational performance: An integrative view and empirical examination. Journal of management information systems. 2003 Jul 1;20(1):179-228.
8. Heathfield SM. Leadership values and ethics: Secrets of leadership success.
9. Llopis G. Leadership success is no longer measured by money or power. Forbes.
10. Russell RF. The role of values in servant leadership. Leadership & Organization Development Journal. 2001 Mar 1;22(2):76-84.
11. Goleman D. Working with emotional intelligence. Bantam; 1998.