

A mixed-methods approach to leadership styles in small and medium sized businesses in Uganda.

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Abstract. Although there have been many studies on leadership, very little has been done on small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs). The goal of this study is to recognise and comprehend leadership styles in SMEs while taking into account the importance of this research issue. Three Ugandan SMEs used a mixed-method strategy to accomplish this (multiple case studies). Data came from the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ), SME collaborators, and owner-manager/leader interviews. The analyses utilised were descriptive and content-based. The results confirmed that leadership plays a crucial part in SME management. In the SMEs chosen, various levels of leadership outcomes were found. The results thus provide more evidence for the claim that leadership is crucial for successful management in SMEs. Discussion also includes how the findings might be put to use in the future.

Keywords. Leadership styles, Uganda, Small and Medium Sized Enterprises, Management, Leaders.

1. Background of study

A creation of a new, effective and resourceful format of how organisations are formulated is a crucial element for the up to date running of any company or organisation. This usually is identified by international business, keenness, advancement and knowledge (Beneke, et al. 2016; Akhtar et al. 2011), among other political and social aspects (Cacioppe 1998; Gunasekaran 2001). Agreeing with Walumbwa et al. (2008), organisations are progressively being exposed to and positioned in the global market. It is crucial to comprehend what this means for the performance of leaders and how they address the issues brought on by this globalisation. Effective leaders who comprehend the complexity of the continuously changing global environment are needed in today's businesses (Gill; 2002) Sakiru et al. 2013). The present-day small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) strategy should pay particular attention to these worldwide developments. With the ever changing business markets that consist of monetary challenges, redundancy rates that are on the rise, high business competition and communal exclusion, put SMEs on pressure to re-evaluate their obligations and the effects of their actions on society. Therefore, it turns out to be important to research who exactly a leader is and what part they play in any organisation given the prominence of SMEs in the African economies and their unique characteristics (Sila, I. 2007; Franco et al. 2011). In SME management, leadership plays a key role. According to Matović, (2021), SMEs represent the backbone of the private sector globally and have a significant impact on the Ugandan economy. According to Kisaame, (2002), Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), which make up the bulk of Uganda's private sector and contribute to two-thirds of the country's gross domestic product (GDP), are the foundation of the country's economy. Proprietors or bosses of SMEs in this regard, play a significant role in encouraging and supporting individual workers' ideas as well as in improving work procedures for the benefit of the company (Azanza et al. 2013). An operative leader influences individuals in the desired manner in order to achieve desired goals. Entrepreneurs are the unsung heroes of modern business and economic growth (Malik 2020). A leader should adopt sustainable practises, says Reed (2016), which means he should endeavour to bring his team, the environment, and the company's goals together. There are numerous ways to describe leadership, but fundamentally, it is the process of persuading people to take action without employing political or physical power (Amagoh and Francis 2009). For purposes of this research, leadership is referred to as "a procedure that persuades individuals to understand and agree to what must be done and how it may be done successfully. It is a method for facilitating both individual and group efforts in order to accomplish a goal (McCormick 2001). While most Small Medium sized Enterprises are grounded on community, financial value and societal backgrounds, their existence alone has an impact. This leaves a desire to comprehend the styles of leadership that are crucial for both the Small and Medium sized Enterprises as well as the general public in which they operate (Sakiru, 2013). The assertion that the style of leadership used is a key component in preserving a vigorous balance between the firm and its publics or society is also supported by Daft (2015) and Eisenhardt et al. (2000). A leader's conduct pattern that is generally consistent is referred to as their style of leadership (Gill; 2002). Regardless of the extensive importance on the subject related to styles of

leadership, there is still just a small quantity of empirical study available (Easterby-Smith 2011; Kerr et al. 2006; Amagoh and Francis 2009). This circumstance is more prevalent in the setting of SMEs (Tucker et al. 2010). There hasn't been ample studies carried out on how administration in SMEs and styles of leadership interrelate. To our knowledge, only four studies have been done to identify leadership styles in SMEs: those by Prasad, (2016), Leitch, (2013), Arslan, (2013), and Heikkilä, (2017). A gap still exists in identifying and comprehending leadership types in SMEs, notwithstanding the efforts made. There are not many research in this area, particularly in the Ugandan context. Therefore, the main goal of the current work is to fill this research gap by responding to the following query: what leadership styles exist within Small Medium sized Enterprises?

There is a need to fill the research gap due to the greyness in research concerning styles of leadership within SMEs especially within developing nations. It is imperative to note that past studies citing from the Ugandan context have failed to ascertain the types of leaderships SMEs employ within their management structure. Managers and owners of SMEs can help to assure their companies' development and effectiveness by understanding and implementing specific leadership styles. This research provides an enhanced thought process of SME and the styles of leadership in this regard. Since leadership styles and their impact on outcomes have not previously been studied in the Ugandan setting, this work advances understanding within the fields of SMEs as well as styles of leadership studies. The structure of the article is as follows. The theoretical synopsis of the key facets of the styles of leadership is given within the following part, which also shows how this subject may be used as an outline to expound on SME managing. The methods and information from several case studies of SMEs are presented in the third part, which uses a qualitative approach. The fourth portion provides and examines the results, with a focus on leadership philosophies. The final section conclusions, makes recommendations for owner-managers and practitioners, and outlines some study limitations.

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1.1. Styles of Leadership.

Studies from past researchers have written extensively about leadership, and several theories, techniques, and leadership styles have emerged to help explain this phenomenon (Dinh et al. 2014; Abbas et al. 2009). However, there is not yet a comprehensive definition that is widely acknowledged (Burke and Kenneth; 2010; Brannon 2011). Bolden et al. (2006) and DeRue et al. (2010) both demonstrate that despite vast years of studies, the definition of leading has not been established. Leading is a world-wide occurrence since it manifests in various ways across various contexts and organisations (Abbas et al. 2002). Especially today, it is difficult to define leadership, and given the difficulty of the topic, there is no widespread agreement on how to describe the analytical field. Judge (2009) asserts that there are many potential definitions of leadership since they depend on the goal behind the attempt to define it. According to Hauserman et al. (2013), "leadership can be described as the process manager's usage to motivate individuals reporting to them to contribute to the firm's goals." According to Senge

(1990), the idea of leadership is also connected to the stimulants and rewards that encourage people to work together to achieve a common goal. According to Papworth et al. (2009), attaining goals with and through people is the essence of leadership. Amagoh and Francis (2009) add that leadership is a method of influencing others to achieve goals. In addition to being a group activity, leadership can also be viewed as a personality trait, an exercise form of guidance offered, a certain sort of act or character, a power relationship, a tool for achieving goals, the outcome of an encounter, a specialised role, or the creation of a structure (Judge 2009; Bass 2000; DON and You 2004; El Masry et al. 2004).

Without leadership, Kotter (2017) asserts, there is a higher likelihood of errors and a decreasing number of opportunities for success. According to some authors and in this situation, leadership fosters collaboration, reduces disagreements, fosters innovation, and serves an integrating function by keeping individuals together even when they are not present physically. Shehadeh et al. (2016) have recently updated their perspective on leadership to include individual attributes, superior character, communication styles, and intentionality of connections, subordinates opinions, impact on subordinates, and impact over job goals, and encouragement of company values. The style of leading places more emphasis on the inter-personal communication amid a superior and subordinate than on the prerequisites for the emergence or development of effective leaders (Amagoh and Francis, 2009). Scholars have studied and categorised a wide range of unique styles or behaviours over the course of several decades. Fleishman et al. (1991), who reviewed the leadership literature, identified 65 typologies. The enormous variety in leadership styles was supported by later investigations, which include studies carried out by Luthans, (2003) and Zhang, (2010). O'dwyer, (2009) assert that there is still disagreement among the authors about leadership philosophies. But during the past two decades, transformational leadership has drawn experts' attention more than other leadership theories in organisational study (Bass 1985; Yukl and Gary 1999; Eagly, et al. 2003; Bass 2008). Many academics are still interested in transformational and transactional leadership in the modern period (Budur et al. 2021). Throughout this, the philosophy had been enlarged to signify 3 characteristics or style of leading: transformational style of leading, transactional style of leading, and passive-avoidant style of leading, this is grounded by supplementary studies that ranged from 1985 to 1995. (House 1990; Dionne et al. 2004; Givens, 2008). This term "full range of leadership" (Dionne, 2004) refers to this paradigm, which has recently gained a lot of popularity. Effective leaders have an impact through altering how their followers view themselves and by emphasising the opportunities and obstacles that the environment presents (Dionne et al. 2004).

It is believed that the effectiveness of any company is affected by the management or style of leading by those at the top (Mahdinezhad, 2013). The three major leadership philosophies examined in this study transformational style of leading, transactional style of leading, and passive-avoidant style of leading were assessed using the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (Rowold & Jens 2005). Based on previous studies, they demonstrated that the kind of leadership encourages workers' originality as well as invention, it is the typology that seems most suitable

to SMEs among those authors who deal with different styles of leading (Leithwood, 2005; Anderson, 2014; Zhang, 2010). Burns (2012) first used the phrase "transformational leadership," defining this style of leading as a collaboration in which "leaders and followers raise one another to greater levels of morality and motivation." Transformational style of leading involves motivating those that are being governed to uphold the vision and mission of the company like they would if they were running their personal company and encourages them to focus their strength on achieving the common aims of the company (Lemoine, 2019). According to Rosing (2011), transformational style of leading is defined by the impact the leader has on his employees and by the actions taken by those employees to achieve that impact. This style of leading displays a great level of subordinate dedication and connection with the leader and the organization's goals (Dionne, 2004; Afsar, 2014). When superiors "take the initiative in mobilising people for participation in the processes of change, encouraging a sense of collective identity and collective efficacy which in turn brings stronger feelings of self-worth and self-efficacy" within both personal and office sphere of employees, Klenke (2008) defined transformational style of leading in the same manner. According to Northouse (2021), transformative leaders inspire their teams to go above and beyond expectations. The perception of transformational leaders is that they are proactive people who make an attempt to advance not just the organisation but also the group and the person to exceptional results and strong moral and ethical standards. A transformative leader is defined by courage, drive, tenacity, accountability, impartiality, compassion, desire, commitment, and will of mind that is according to Burns (2012) and Bass (2008).

However, the literature has identified transactional leadership as the second most important style (House 1990; Dionne et al. 2004; Givens et al. 2008). Flawless arrangements as well as duties that enable their followers to accomplish goals are the goal of a transactional leaders. Since the leader controls the incentives and conditions, the relationship between the leader and the followers is one of "transaction" (i.e., "when you offer me something, I shall provide you that") (Leithwood et al. 2005). The acknowledgment process linked to the outcomes attained by followers sustains transactional style of leading. This connection that exists amid the superior and followers is intended to suite their (superior) desires. Simply termed as transactional leadership (Bass 2008). Bass (1985) adds that under this style of leadership, individuals who perform well are praised, while those who don't are disciplined. This style of leadership is only made possible once an individual seeks out yet another individual with the aim objective of trading. In return for their performance of their responsibilities as well as acquiescence, he "authorises" gifts to be given to their subordinates. When working with subordinates, a leader establishes mutually beneficial task agreements and makes clear the rewards that will be given if the predicted results are attained (Maher et al. 1997). Clarifying expectations and applying incentives and penalties in accordance with an employee's performance are the foundations of transactional style of leading.

Passive-avoidant style of leading was the final leadership type examined within the research. Passive-avoidant style of leading displays passive indifference to duties, subordinates, and

passive supervision using exclusion. Passive avoidant style of leading is made up of penalties and other corrective steps when faced with performance or standard deviations (Frooman 2012; Olsen 2021; Horwitz 2008). Such apathetic leaders avoid outlining agreements, outlining expectations, and setting norms and criteria for followers to meet (Frooman et al. 2012). The term "passive-avoidant" refers to a leader who shirks obligations, doesn't follow through on problems, and, in general, exhibits little sign of leadership (Felfe et al. 2004; Harold 2015; Breevaart et al. 2019; Sims et al. 2021). Since there are different varieties of leadership, it may be said that no leader "uses" a single type of leadership exclusively (Dwyer et al. 2016). In real-world situations, leaders exhibit more or less traits of one or more leadership styles. Agreeing with Bayrak (2006), the best style of leadership relies on circumstance rather than being a universal best practise. According to Gallon et al. (2013), a manger or administrator employs three management procedures depending on circumstance, duties, and individuals that are capable of implementing those particular duties. The leader, in accordance with this author, has duties completed, consults with his colleagues before coming to a decision, and also advises that a member of his team carry out a certain assignment. There are many different types of leadership, but the ones that have received so much prominence are transformational, transactional, and passive-avoidant leadership (Burns 2012; Bass 2008; Dionne et al. 2004; Frooman et al. 2012).

2.1.2. Leaderships in SMEs.

Only via the acceptance of leadership positions by the various persons in charge will SMEs be able to respond to the issues they are currently facing (Emuze et al. 2014). Constructing extraordinary performance groups, focusing on structuring the finest abilities, fostering an environment that is conducive to innovation, encouraging knowledge acquisition, and fostering a culture of validity that is always based on team cohesion and the calibre of the services offered are all significant ways to improve leadership competencies and effectiveness at different levels (Lehmann et al. 2021). According to J.C. Lee, Shiue, and Chen (2016), even little companies today have a global presence. Understanding how leaders deal with the difficulty of managing a culturally diverse workforce that comprises of variations in values, traditions, rituals, and opinions, as well as what makes an actual leader is crucial in this new environment. In the current business climate, it is crucial to understand SME leaders in addition to aspects like finance, strategy, and innovation since it is becoming more and more necessary to comprehend the path to success and the process of developing lasting economic benefits. There are a number of organisational characteristics that can affect leadership in SMEs this is in accordance to several researchers like (Khalifa et al. 2016; Blackburn et al. 2013). However, according to Tucker et al. (2010), there is currently no agreement among studies about these variables. Therefore, SMEs may be aided more in their growth process if the impact of leadership is well understood. Regarding the amount of expectations seen in customers and the level of global competitiveness, among other things, leadership assumes an increasingly vital relevance. Porter (1996) asserts that strong managers are liable to instil the organisation with the correction it needs to resolve what needs to be done and react to client

and industry changes while preserving the company's identity and preventing organisational goals from becoming dispersed. Anwar et al (2017) classification of the variables that can affect a leader's work as a factor promoting SME growth and performance include three classifications: (1) the leader's characteristics and features; (2) the leader's ambitions, motivations, and intentions; and (3) the leader's behaviour or participation. The very first concern is how a leader's position may be influenced or stimulated by experience, education, motivation for fulfilment, risk-taking propensity, attitude toward innovation (Stewart and Francis, 2005), and personal convictions (Brustbauer and Johannes, 2016). The second involves assessing how the manager's aims and objectives are manifested and replicated in his behaviour and outlook (Ajzen and Icek, 2011). The third factor is dependent on how the leader acts in relation to his organizational management skill for the company (Green et al. 2008). Consequently, the leadership approach used has an important influence on the management of businesses (Walumbwa et al. 2008; Bass et al. 2003). In fact, in the current dynamic market environment for SMEs, CEOs must be able to handle the volatility and competition brought on by market globalisation (Huxham, 2000).

In their studies, Alavi et al. (2001) also emphasise the critical spirit of leaders' part in turning understanding and data into accomplishment. In this regard, style of leadership is increasingly being taken into account as a crucial element in preserving and enhancing SME competitiveness. Ireland and Hitt (1999) provide evidence in support of this claim when they claim that leaders' cultivation of specific behaviours leads to competitive performance and above-average results. According to Rosenbusch et al. (2011), the conduct and direction followed by a corporation are related to its growth and success, and in this respect, the leader and the leadership used are paramount causing a key effect. Unfortunately, as all SMEs become further unprotected to a dynamic, competitive world full of changes and challenges, how they manage their human resources also evolves. Individuals are now viewed as experienced possession (Youndt et al. 2004), an essential component of the accomplishment of the firm who can provide more or less value. However, for this to occur, the organisation must show them appreciation, inspire them to accomplish to the best of their capabilities, and educate them on how to contribute to the success of the company. The leader must promote reciprocity of behaviour, and the success of this depends on the leadership style used. In a research on the significance of SME founders, Langowitz (2010). The study contends that many SME leaders exhibit proactive conduct and comes to the conclusion that the entrepreneur is the leader.

3. Methodology

3.1.1. Research Design.

The mixed technique, which combines together quantitative and qualitative approaches, was used within this research (Angeles et al. 2012). However, most focus was positioned on the qualitative approach of research because it was recognised as being more suitable when the goal was to analyse organisational phenomena, as argued by Yin (2011), Punch (2013), and

Senaratne (2021). Since "researchers are more interested in the investigation process than just in the outcomes or products deriving from it" (Yin 2011) in this type of approach, it can be inferred that understanding the phenomenon under study is of utmost importance. Because of this, the case study approach was selected for this kind of study in particular. According to Yin (2011), "among the methods of qualitative research, the case study is likely one of the most relevant." According to Patton (1990), case studies are intended to analyse the findings from specific situations since they offer more thorough, meaningful information about the topic under study. The field of leadership research is beginning to accept qualitative methodologies more and more. According to Walumbwa (2008); Franco (2011); Franco et al. (2011), more studies during the past three decades have incorporated qualitative research techniques. In terms of the design of this inquiry, three examples were looked at in order to compare the final results and draw conclusions about each of them individually. Three SMEs were the cases chosen for this study (Company A, B and C). The fact that the enterprises were classed as SMEs, which make up 99.7% of all businesses in Uganda, was one of the selection factors (Kisaame, 2002). Other considerations were the amount of creativity of the firms and aspects that were in line with workshops and how long the individuals held leadership roles or collaborations. Finally, it was intended to research companies engaged in several traditional industry areas with the hope that the findings would be distinct and permit comparison. These three SMEs will each be briefly described in the later section of this research.

3.1.2. Data Selection.

A variety of data collection techniques were used during the fieldwork (qualitative and quantitative). Quantitative data were gained using a survey, and in-depth interviews and document analysis were used to collect qualitative empirical data. According to Yin (2011), using a variety of data sources is important since it increases the reliability and validity of a case study. The potential to use different data-gathering sources, or to use triangulation of data to attain data, is one advantage of case studies, the same author endorses. In the qualitative approach, a semi-structured interview with the owners and manager of the chosen SMEs was conducted to determine leadership style. In order to confirm the terminology used in the interview questions and make sure that they enabled us to achieve the stated objectives, a pre-test of the interview procedure (Yin, 2011) was conducted. Table 1 summarises the interviews conducted and lists the socio-demographic details of the interviewees/leaders.

	Gender	Age	Education	Position
Company A	Male	50	Diploma holder	Owner
Company B	Female	38	Master’s Degree holder	Manager
Company C	Male	44	Bachelor’s Degree holder	Owner

The quantitative approach also looked at leadership outcomes and leadership philosophies. Therefore, all team members in the three SMEs that were chosen were given a copy of the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) (Rowold and Jens 2004) in order to assess these dimensions. These writers created the MLQ with the intent of evaluating leadership outcomes of the transformational, transactional, and passive-avoidant styles of leadership. This instrument was chosen because, as Bass (2003) and Langowitz (2010) note, the leadership type given here is the most frequently observed in SMEs. The MLQ originally consists of 73 questions, however this study employed a 35 question for subordinates to evaluate their leaders (Contreras et al., 2020). Furthermore, on a 5-point Likert scale, the MLQ responses were categorised as follows: 1 = Very likely; 2 = Likely; 3 = Very Unlikely; 4 = Unlikely; and 4 = Not sure/don't know, if not usually. The 35 questions are then broken down into five measures: influence, motivation, Intellectual stimulation, contingent payment, administration by exception, and laissez-faire. It is imperative to note that the transformational leadership will consist of two measures namely; influence and motivation while transactional leadership will consist of two measures as well namely; Intellectual stimulation and contingent payment and lastly passive-avoidant leadership will consist of only one measure which is laissez-faire and administration by exception measure.

The Cronbach Alpha reliability study was used to gauge the MLQ instrument's internal consistency as well as the degree of consistency between scales. With the exclusion of the passive-avoidant leadership scales, all of these internal scales linked to create a shared vision which produced an internal consistency alpha values of more than 0.70. Voss et al. (2000), however, asserts that appropriate Cronbach alpha values are those of 0.60 or higher for the kind of exploratory investigation that was conducted here. The reliability coefficients in this study were also 0.931 for transformational leadership, 0.786 for transactional style of leadership, 0.603 for passive-avoidant style of leadership, and 0.900 for leadership results. Since the widely held individuals had Cronbach alphas above 0.78, this ensures the psychometric tool utilised in this study has good reliability. The normal scales for each individual is used to compute the findings for every individual. The outcome for each scale is calculated by taking the average of the responses for that scale and dividing it by the quantity of questions that scale corresponds to. When it comes to the questions, the values of the answers are summed for each one before being distributed by the entire amount of responses. The uppermost values on each scale indicate the behaviours of the leader that are most frequently noticed, and so indicate a larger or fewer degree of observational support for a certain leadership style. In order to authenticate the terminology used in the questions and make sure that it would be read as projected with the idea of collecting and evaluating the needed data, the MLQ experienced a pre-test, similar to the interview with leaders. The findings appeared to be simple to comprehend and interpret.

The following are discovered in relation to the scales that make up leadership styles: motivation is a process by which leaders are able to exert significant power and influence over their colleagues. Leaders inspire their colleagues and in turn are seen as exceptional, trustworthy therein having the uttermost faith in their mission and vision. As far as influence is concerned, leaders turn into role models that their followers adore, respect, and try to emulate. In the same

manner, Walumbwa et al. (2008), states that those in power with the ability to influence usually prioritise the needs of their followers above their own, take calculated risks alongside them, and show a strong commitment to a set of guiding ideas and morals. When it came the measurement of intellectual stimulation, leaders encourage their followers' determination to be inventive and innovative by challenging, reformulating and finding new methods to address recurring problems. The leader solicit ideas from their followers and search for original solutions (Walumbwa, 2008). Contingent payment on the other hand translates to leaders who believe in the reward system. This trait is predicated on the idea that rewarding behaviour improves both individual and group performance. Leaders must establish recognition and rewards for achieving organisational goals in order to implement reward for objectives. Management by Exception refers to the practise of supervisors "penalising" employees who fall short of predetermined goals. This characteristic necessitates strict, meticulous, and ongoing oversight of errors and deviations so that remedial action can be implemented whenever they arise. We mention laissez-faire and passive management by exception in regard to passive-avoidant leadership (Amirul, 2012). When managers only take action when issues deteriorate, this is known as passive management by exception. Laissez-faire is connected to the lack of leadership behaviour in the "leader," i.e., leaders don't become concerned with significant issues, they typically aren't there when significant decisions need to be made, and they might even decide against making those decisions (Frooman et al. 2012).

3.1.3. Data Analysis.

Upon choosing the tools for acquiring data, we moved on to organising and analysing the data. The qualitative approach employed document and interview content analysis techniques. Content analysis is a method of study that permits an unprejudiced, orderly, and quantitative explanation of the data revealed in communications with the intention of interpreting it (Ahuvia and Aaron 2001). A "distinctive method to analysis" called content analysis aims to "quantify the substance of texts in a systematic and repeatable manner" (Prasad et al. 2008). This information was analysed with descriptive analysis utilising MLQ functionality for the survey (quantitative technique). The SPSS 26 version was used to analyse the data. In conclusion, all the material was validated scientifically using the triangulation technique, which involves comparing data from many sources of confirmation (interviews and surveys) to assess coherence, accuracy, and dependability.

4. Findings and Discussions

4.1.1. Case study one.

Company A

Company A is a manufacturing company with headquarters in Uganda's Kampala district. It is crucial to remember that Company A has already weathered a number of crises. The business produces electronic components for two or three significant clients. It has been in operation for

more than three years. From the data gathered during this study, it reveals an equilibrium amid the individuals of transformational leadership and transactional leadership from the study of the data generated by the collaborators in Firm A since these groups have values that are very similar. As a result, followers distinguish between the leader's sometimes and frequently linked behaviours with both leadership philosophies. This predicament is related to the fact that this boss occasionally, but not always, gives his employees bonuses. Regarding this, the interviewee/leader says, "At the end of the year, I pay a bonus according to the performance of each one," though "not to all elements." He is confident in his co-workers' ability to do their jobs well and asserts that "each one must give of their best" because doing so "provides experience and information that, one day, may be critical factors in professional development, whether inside or outside the business." According to studies by Skakon et al. (2010), Chang and Heidi (2017), and Barnett and Donald (2017), transformational and transactional style of leadership behaviours are significant contributors to workers' job contentment. This evidence supports their findings. The most frequent behaviours identified by collaborators and subordinates in the transformational leadership group as being shown by their leader include influence, motivation, and intellectual stimulation. Influence can be described as the leader ability to know that all his co-workers place their un-questionable trust in him to lead them to the company's mission and vision. In regards to motivation, the leader argues that there is a connection between the goals of the company and the contentment of one's co-workers. In fact, the findings demonstrate that leaders may inspire a particular group by their actions, fostering a sense of teamwork that includes shared goals for the business and its employees. This highlights the sense of identity and value they have for their leader. However, company A does not yet have a defined strategy for inspiring its employees. According to the respondent, given the current state of affairs in the world, motivation should come from having a job, which all co-workers should preserve via their work, because if the clients stop coming in, there will be no reason to be driven. Without customers, there would be no business, no business, no money, and no money, no job chance. Regarding Intellectual Stimulation, the evidence for this measurement is backed up by the fact that the leader views his team members as innovative, and they are aware of how he inspires their inventiveness.

According to an interview conducted with the leader about the respondent's connection with his co-workers, the respondent sees theirs as a typical relationship that includes emotional connection because he knows that closeness and appreciation encourage his co-workers to put forth a determination and gave a less bit more often than is required. The respondent also states that "diplomatic communication between himself and his colleagues is the foundation of [his] management." He therefore views his team as being dependable, effective, and innovative, and is confident that they respect his leadership based on their daily output. He describes himself as a trustworthy, watchful, and an inspiring leader. The findings demonstrate that transformative leadership creates the best managerial conditions for this SME. Because of this, the owner may best encourage entrepreneurial behaviour within the company when he instils a sense of goal (motivation), offers coaching or mentorship, encourages people to think creatively (intellectual stimulations), and earns their trust. This is consistent with past researches that discovered that

transformational leadership elements encourage staff members' inventiveness and originality (Skakon et al. 2010; Chang and Heidi 2017; and Barnett and Donald 2017). The measurement that sticks out the most in the Transactional Leadership Group is administration by exclusion, which is demonstrated when leaders take a punitive stance toward subordinates who fail to fulfil predetermined goals. Subordinates' recognition of this behaviour is related to the leader's practise of punishing reoccurring incidents and even escalating to termination. According to the interview, the company's goals are communicated to all employees and are set by the hierarchy's top level, who always considers employee input to ensure that they can be accomplished, even though the specific strategies for doing so are continuously decided by the leader. According to this leader, "the company's aims and co-worker satisfaction are both of essential importance and only make sense if taken together since putting more weight to one would make it very difficult to accomplish another." This entrepreneur also finds a reason to stay current on company events so that he can promptly address any issues that may arise, and he strongly supports his team members when they are not performing "up to their regular standard." He only imposes penalties when circumstances occur frequently, with termination becoming the appropriate response in certain circumstances. Employees under transactional leadership are more likely to be materialistically driven (contingency rewards and management by exception), making them less likely to do more than the call of duty requires them to test out novel ideas for the company.

According to the empirical information gathered, co-workers in this SME hardly ever recognise passive-avoidant leadership or the behaviour that goes along with it. Due to the absence of transactions or agreements with groups, the particular leadership style happens to be the polar opposite of the leadership architecture. Regarding, passive-avoidant administrators may refrain from interfering within the workplace politics of their subordinates or entirely neglect their managerial duties (Moriano et al. 2014). And per the literature research and as indicated by Dwyer et al (2016), leadership style is based on the scenario and the particular circumstances encountered by the leader. This is what we can infer from the assessment of the meeting with the CEO of company A: 'He does not exhibit a pristine leadership style'.

4.1.2. *Case Study Two.*

Company B

Company B operates a retail business and is likewise based in Kampala, Uganda. Only one year has passed since this particular business began operations. With a turnover of less than \$1 million, it is currently run by a female. The results of the data analysis in company B show that transactional leadership has the greatest score among the various leadership philosophies. The contingent payment is the most notable measurement in the transactional leadership style. The interviewee is certain that all co-workers share the company's goals to the point where a monthly production incentive is established for everyone who achieves the suggested goals. However, "even so, some co-workers simply focus about putting in the hours, and are not always willing to give a little more of themselves" despite the fact that this method is successful overall.

Additionally, this leader adds, "Aside from this technique, I consider psychology to be highly crucial for inspiring my team and fostering a positive work environment." This source claims that saying "that one of the primary conditions to integrate the company's workforce is to appear every morning with a smile on your face" is quite regular, if not every day. The person in charge of this SME also claims that she makes an effort to link each component with her profession whenever possible in order to maintain this positive attitude and happiness. As a result, whenever the team leader observes a co-worker performing below standard, they are disciplined if the problem persists. If the problem is more serious and the leader decides it is not worth intervening because the contract is about to expire, she does not intervene and the employee is fired when the contract expires. However, due to the goals and deadlines they work under, that conduct is not always achievable. This leader always tries to determine the causes of bad performance and, if she thinks it is valuable, she offers support. Co-workers cite inspiration and intellectual stimulation as the most common behaviours within the transformational leadership style. According to motivation, the group is motivated by the leader's actions, which fosters a sense of teamwork and shared objectives. The leader argues in favour of this point by saying that "both the company's aims and co-worker satisfaction are two criteria that cannot be examined in isolation." In other words, "without incentive, co-workers cannot produce results.

Regarding the evaluation of intellectual stimulation, followers also believe that their superiors exhibit behaviours that inspire them to be inventive and creative, which is consistent with the superior's opinion of her subordinates, whom she believes to be resourceful. Leaders can raise employee awareness of issues and influence them to approach them from various angles by stimulating their minds. Additionally, executives seek out ideas from staff members and take calculated risks in order to inspire and support their innovation (Franco et al 2015). The respondent describes herself as a trustworthy, inspiring, and attentive leader, and she views her team members as devoted, resourceful, and loyal. She responds, "demanding; sure," when asked how her subordinates perceive her as a leader. Another statement made by this businesswoman is that she thinks "anyone dealing with demanding people manages to learn and improve her capacities as much as someone who specifically deal with less demanding individuals." The organisation consistently establishes annual, half-yearly, monthly, and weekly goals as part of its strategy. "Weekly meetings are held where the week's objectives are conveyed and where the opinions of some co-workers are taken into consideration," the respondent says. Lastly, it should be noted that Company B employees hardly ever recognise Passive-Avoidant Leadership behaviour. By offering fresh information and drawing new inferences regarding the inefficiency of this leadership style in SMEs, this result also advances knowledge in the field of leadership. In conclusion, it is true that when "pure" transactional leadership is used, subordinates may put out greater effort and go above and beyond what is required of them. A productive organisational environment is consequently created when co-worker satisfaction with the leader's activities and leadership style is higher. These data are accurate since this SME has expanded and more growth is anticipated, and because its employees are happy and contented.

4.1.3. Case Study Three.

Company C

This particular company is described as a construction company located in Kampala, Uganda. Company C has been in existence for three years. Analysis of the data for Company C discloses that the transformational leadership style has the uppermost rating. In other words, co-workers frequently recognise a transformative leader in themselves or in the leader's actions. Influence was also mentioned by respondents as the most common measurement for this kind of leadership. Influence/charisma describes a leader's outstanding behaviours that make others associate with him. Colleagues are emotionally drawn to charismatic leaders. This has to do with the leader's capacity to serve as an example for his subordinates, having a separate set of standards and upholding them at all times (Franco et al 2015). The interviewed leader also clarifies that influence is a pertinent measurement within the management recognized, concerning "adaptation whenever possible of each element to the job" when he believes he is able to accomplish further effectively when he says that "between me and my followers there is a relationship of intimacy and respect." In addition, the respondent in this SME believes that "usually, it is a good relationship and pretty close" with his co-workers. This leader did note that closeness is always treated with great respect, but he also said that "occasionally that needs to be overridden in order for things to perform as expected." This businessman describes himself as a leader who is upbeat, focused, inspiring, and somewhat controlling. He claims he is unable to identify any unique qualities in his perception of his subordinates or from the possibilities put forth. Additionally, the interviewee states that "they strictly adhere to the office hours in order to earn their compensation when completed."

Top management determines the company's strategy, however it is crucial for the business to take line management and employee input into account. Weekly goals and how they should be achieved are defined in a meeting that takes place every week. The line manager is completely responsible for this and must take into consideration current issues. The informant from this SME added that "absenteeism, which is on the neighbourhood of 5 percent," is what is most noticeable. The leader also noted that it was customary to "take into account each individual's recommendations, in order to better their performance." However, those recommendations or grievances must be "justly grounded," and if they are, leadership takes action, making every effort to place each person in a position where they will be most successful and efficient. Because while there was a financial incentive for achieving goals for every quarter of the work calendar, the manager observed "that it was always the same ones making an effort, and the great majority benefited from others' efforts," Company C currently lacks any process for motivation or reward. The businessman made the decision to do away with this technique even though he still pays "one or two who merit it but it is very unusual" or on occasion. Despite this, the CEO of company C believes that his employees are happy in their jobs because they know they can advance their careers and "become top managers." In Case Analysis 3, the manager always attempts to be aware of all circumstances so that, if necessary, he can quickly resolve them. He claims that he makes every effort to avoid errors, pauses, and surprises, adding that he makes an effort "to prepare all jobs and activities." Additionally, the interviewee stressed

that "whenever he observes a co-worker performing below what is required, He firstly attempts to find out the causes and only then does he decide to give help or discipline" Once again, after examining the manager of company C's interview, we discover a situation in which no one leadership style can be claimed to predominate. Once more, a situation is found where the sort of leadership used is dependent on the circumstances.

5. Equivalent study

The managers' interviews were content-analysed to identify specific behaviours and/or traits that belonged to particular leadership styles. However, we focused more on Transactional and Transformational management ways and their effect on leadership outcomes, equally approached and defended (Anwar et al 2017). Harkiolakis and Nicholas (2016) asserts that these are the leadership philosophies that are generally acknowledged. The most prevalent leadership style among SMEs, according to Mkheimer et al (2018), is a transformative one. In any case, this study also takes into account passive-avoidant leadership as another style of leadership. Below is a list of the different leadership styles found in each of the 3 examples examined, along with Leadership Results, after the quantitative analysis of the MLQ used to assess co-workers and responders. Using the findings, it was determined that Company A exhibited both transactional and transformational leadership, whereas Company B displayed transactional leadership and Company C shown transformational leadership.

Table 2: showing the results from Leadership style in the three companies

	Identified Leadership Styles	Results from Leadership style
Company A	Transformational and transactional	Average
Company B	Transactional leadership	High
Company C	Transformational leadership	Normal

Due to Company A's SME's using the compensation mechanism, its leader notes, "not to all elements," two styles of leadership (transactional and transformational) were found. We therefore believe this would be one of the factors used to determine whether a leader was using Transactional Leadership in certain instances or Transformational Leadership in others. Momentous study focus has been given to the preparation and inspection of transformational leadership Harkiolakis & Nicholas (2016), and it has been discovered to be related to a significant number of significant personal and organisational outcomes (Anwar et al 2017; Mkheimer et al 2018). One leadership style was found in company B. (Transactional Leadership). In this SME, all co-workers who meet the suggested targets receive rewards for achieving the goals. The pay-out in this case is monthly and predetermined. However, company A's incentive is yearly and has not been explicitly specified, which may make it less clear to co-workers.

One particular leadership style, Transformational Leadership, was also found in Company C. This is the only SME out of the three examples examined that blatantly lacks a reward system for accomplishments. According to Laforet and Sylvie, (2008) in this regard, a Company's leadership should be in line with its aims, intentions, and strategies, acting as a component

aiding the accomplishment of those aims and intentions. When it comes to the leadership outcome, Company A was rated as "average" level since, in the words of its leader, "the company had showed steady annual growth from its founding until last year when business halted." The leadership outcome in Company C had previously been "excellent," but recently, "things have grown more tough," according to this SME leader.

Various leadership philosophies could influence outcomes. Compared to transactional leadership and passive-avoidant leadership, transformational leadership substantially more closely correlates with results. The most effective predictor of outcomes among the three leadership philosophies is transformational leadership (Harkiolakis and Nicholas, 2016). This study, however, demonstrates that transactional leadership is the most efficient than transformational leadership. We identify three communal, cross-cutting factors that apply to all three of the cases under study that included; - all leaderships demonstrate and are certain that there is somewhat a respectable association amid the leader and their co-workers; secondly, even though the company's objectives are established at the top of the hierarchy, co-workers' opinions are always taken into consideration; and lastly, all the managers are mindful that the company's goals and co-worker gratification remain intertwined. Baglibel (2018), supports this theory by stating that the leader must acquire sustainability-related traits and strive to strike a balance between the company's goals and those of his employees.

The fundamental distinction between the three SMEs under study has to do with the presence of reward and motivational processes. In fact, it is clear from looking at perceived performance that Company C, clearly had a properly demarcated and executed motivation and reward structure hence having the most pronounced growth as well as more stable prospects for continued growth and higher levels of colleague satisfaction. Additionally, it is the only SME that has been researched to successfully conjugate as leadership. According to Rosenbusch et al. (2011), the leadership style of the leader determines the behaviour and course that the Company takes.

Additionally, all leaders believe that their employees are happy and contented, but only in Companies A and B where their management outcome considerably support this claim. This issue does not align as closely with the leader's concept in Company C. It is also critical to point out that among the three companies researched, it is only Company C that is exemplifying "pure" transformational leadership without any known or applied incentive or motivation mechanisms. This line of reasoning is predicated on the idea that transformational leadership applies to all co-workers and is not just for specialised specialists. In this sense, different departments can benefit from the favourable benefits of intrinsic motivation, orientation, and vision on job satisfaction and performance.

6. Conclusion and Implications

A contemporary commercial climate, is usually described by worldwide markets as a sphere that involves competition, technology, and innovation, which often leaves SMEs under immense pressure to come up and implement strategies that will enable them combat hindrances that are associated with being an SME. Nonetheless, in order to effectively achieve these objectives, it is indispensable to know that leaders are by far the most significant managers participating in the procedure of transformation. The leadership style chosen will be determined

by the conduct, deeds, and attitudes of leaders. This then makes sense to assume that the leadership style of owners or managers affects SME management. The main objective of this study was to determine whether this influence has been empirically supported up to this point. In actuality, the goal of this study was to comprehend the various leadership philosophies used by SMEs. Three SMEs in Uganda were therefore examined using a hybrid methodology (qualitative and quantitative). Based on the factual data this current study has collected, management of SMEs cannot be highly dependent on only one kind of leadership style. It was discovered that several leadership philosophies had wavering effects on the results. However, among the three SMEs that were examined, the SME that used the transactional leadership style demonstrated the finest management outcomes. These SMEs gain an additional strength from employees that devote themselves to their responsibilities and obligations with more vigour, as well as seeing a significant increase in employee enthusiasm with the company's performance and achievement. Additionally, because it plays a significant part in how the businessperson can assist top management, transformational leadership might be especially pertinent in the context of SME. Due to SMEs' typical modest size, the businessperson frequently individually conveys his expectations to co-workers. Transformational leadership specifically addresses employees' intrinsic drive, making it a valuable asset in SMEs.

Reflecting on the outcomes from this research, the study further draws deductions that an SME's ideal leadership style is highly dependent on the features within any working sphere, that are not limited to vitality, unfriendliness and its industry or location. A typical example can be cited by Jansen et al. (2009), who according to their research, transformational leadership simply encourages excellent efficiency in vivacity environments, whilst this type of leadership will not be pertinent in a setting of little dynamism, as the purpose of the environment is for employees to offer their services from time to time successfully. The main objective of this research was to ascertain whether transformational, transactional, and passive-avoidant leadership styles are beneficial in SMEs in Uganda. This would be considered as an original impact on the comprehension of a renowned philosophy since it had never been done in Uganda before. Our study will also help business people become mindful of the possibility of their leadership style and how it can influence and impact the outcomes of that leadership, in addition to helping them comprehend the function of a leader in SMEs. The current study adds to the continuing discussion from a theoretical standpoint by outlining the three major leadership philosophies in the context of a developing nation. Our results on how transformational, transactional, and passive-avoidant leadership interact within the Ugandan context are in line with the scant number of earlier studies carried out within affluent nations. The uniformity of outcomes supports Bass's (1997) claim that certain leadership philosophies are universal. The findings also contribute to the body of understanding in the field of leadership by offering fresh information as well as analysis on the efficacy of transactional and transformative leadership within SMEs as well as the failure of passive-avoidant leadership.

The current study's most significant application is to the growth of management and leadership styles within SMEs. Small and medium businesses must support this if the leadership style

being employed by the owner or management of SMEs has a significant role in explaining specific organisational factors. The significance that leaders apportion to the working sphere has a paramount effect and this is evidently shown within the study findings. According to earlier academics, those superiors who portrayed transformational leadership qualities were believed to obtain the capability to enhance the effects of their leadership on other crucial variables. This is because they have the capacity to favourably alter organisational aspects (Dionne et al. 2004; Givens et al. 2008). According to Yukl (2006), the transformational leadership style may boost staff members' willingness to take hold of risks as well as their commitment to and pleasure with their jobs (Yahaya et al 2016). Additionally, research suggests that in a lesser convoluted and more unsolidified environment of Small and medium sized businesses (SMEs), employees may be more susceptible to transformational and transactional leaderships. Results from the existing investigation bolster the above opinion. The findings from this study showed that followers gave extraordinary ratings to their superiors who exhibited transactional and transformative qualities in their leadership. To further understand the significance of these results, more study is required. The research has several restrictions. First one is about the use of case study methodology, which prevents conclusions from being generalised to all SMEs. The behaviour, findings and conclusions drawn from this study are in fact limited to the three examples examined and as such should be evaluated with caution. Second, the three SMEs under study come from various industries. It is obvious that this is not enough of a "sample" that is adequate for a generalisation of deductions from other enterprises within these segments. This is because only one firm was researched from each area. Thirdly, because every business examined is situated in the same region 'the capital city of Uganda' it would be fascinating to look at other SMEs from various industries and regions in the future. In fact, this would endorse whether the findings acquired were comparable or dissimilar from those analysed in this study. Additional, future studies could apply this research using a quantitative method approach while employing organisations of various sizes in order to allow for a comparison analysis and, as a result, the ability to generalise the findings. This would enhance the conclusions drawn from this study. Another recommendation is the potential to re-analyse the findings discussed from this study to see whether the outcomes stay the same or alter. Considering the above shortcomings, we still think the findings and recommendations from this study can make a real difference to our knowledge of the topic of leadership styles in SMEs.

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