

MANAGER'S PERCEPTION OF WHAT CONSTITUTES GOOD MANAGEMENT WHICH SHOULD ENHANCE PRODUCTIVITY IN INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING

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ABSTRACT: *Perceptions inform the way people behave and how they see their environment, thus the perceptions are the realities of the perceiver. Managers themselves are appointed based on the perceptions of the selection and recruiting team, either through an interview or simply through long association in an organisation. But, every human being moves around with their own baggage emanating from childhood, cultural background, religion, interaction with other people, the level of education and what was taught them, and of cause from peers and role models. The manager, like any being is a mixed bag of all sorts of information, ideas, values, beliefs and traits all culminating into the perception the manager will have about what constitutes good management. This empirical research sought to understand how the average Cape Town manager perceives managerial behaviours are considered to be ideal to enable the subordinates to be productive. Primarily to establish their perceptions about what constitutes good management behaviour. This research seeks to evaluate good management in the eyes of the manager – more like self-evaluation by evaluating the other manager. It should be pointed out that South Africa just recently emerged from apartheid and not much has changed within the organisational and racial structures in relation to “who the managers are.” The work environment is very diverse with whites (dominating) and coloureds (as second class citizens) with blacks at the tail end. To add to this, there has been an influx of foreigners as economic refugees whose perceptions about work and the environment are radically different. The research finds that many managers use the X theory though there are elements of the Y theory displayed. The Cape Town manager does not show much interest in the welfare of the subordinates and has no interest in getting closer to these subordinates.*

KEYWORDS: Manager's Perception, Good Management, Productivity, Institutions

INTRODUCTION

Perception is a process of organising, identifying and interpreting sensory information to represent what is considered to be the reality in the environment. Bernstein (2011:123-124) defines perception as interpretation of sensory information in order to understand the environment. All perception is a result of physical and or chemical stimuli which results in signals in the nervous system (DeVere and Calvert, 2010:33-37). In view of the above definitions, perception does not passively receive these signals but depends on experience, exposure, memory, expectations and the degree of focus and interest in the stimuli. The perceptions of the leaders about themselves and their subordinates create the climate and culture found in organisations, be it work ethics, performance and unity and team work. Otara (2011:21-24) explains perception as a way “we all interpret our experiences” suggesting therefore that every human being has perceptions about certain things due to our upbringing, the environment we live in, the places we go to associate, and the kind and level of education

we may have attained. Too often the perceptions of the managers are derived from their values as they relate to their opinion about the subordinate. As an example, the manager's of an educated subordinate may differ from their perception of a low level uneducated employee. Deriving from the old English adage; "The problem with perceptions is that people see what they want to see, or believe what they want to believe." An individual or manager in this case may perceive themselves as hard working and efficient, contrary to what others may perceive to be the reality. The reaction of the managers and how they perceive success may therefore depend on what their perception of the situation is; women equals poor leadership, black manager equals affirmative action appointment, and so on and so forth. This study intends to look at the way managers see themselves, or what they consider to be effectiveness and good management.

Background

When a manager is employed or appointed, there are generic expectations that are considered critical, and these will relate to ability to plan, ability to organise, ability to staff and ability to lead. These are what constitute good management in the eyes of the employer because management is defined as "forecasting, planning, organising, coordinating and controlling" (Henri Fayol as cited by Deslandes, 2014:14-16). And Deslandes himself defines it as "a vulnerable force, under pressure to achieve results and endowed with the triple power of constraint, imitation and imagination, operating on subjective, interpersonal, institutional and environmental levels." Although there has been numerous attempts to define management since the days of Henri Fayol, there has not been any significant changes to the definition. In its broadest sense (including all other definitions) management is forecasting, planning, organizing, commanding, coordinating and controlling.

Frank (2006:7) makes reference to a theoretical scope of management which involves among other things; identifying the mission, setting the objectives, outlining the procedures, rules and policies to be used, and the manipulation of the human capital to contribute to the success of the organisation. It can be added that the skillful manipulation (management) of the human capital will need to include good communication and motivation to enable the subordinates to perform. Self-perception theory (SPT) asserts that people develop attitudes (Robak, Ward and Ostolaza, 2005:337-344) through observation of behaviour and make conclusion on what attitudes may have caused the behaviour. This is essentially based on what the perceiver may consider to be a cause, more to do with self-reflection of their own behaviour. This is based on the understanding that attitudes cause behaviour, and the person interprets their own behaviour by observing the behaviour of others.

Evidently, many aspects of our lives and our responses to other people's behaviour are informed by our perception of the other people's behaviour. Or, it is our attitude, beliefs and values that inform us on how we should interpret the behaviour of other people. Based on the self-perception theory, it is hypothesised that people make inferences of their own attributes or attitudes by choosing from the actions of other people (Goldstein and Cialdini, 2007:402-417) with whom they identify and classify the behaviour as their own. Therefore a manager's perceptions may be based on not only their beliefs, values and attitudes, but also on those behaviours of the people they consider to be a true reflection of their selves. The culture of the organisation and the work environment and expectations also impact on the manager's perception of good management practice.

Baron and Byrne as cited by Bergh and Theron (2003:193) support the fact that real or imagined similarities (appearance, personality traits, values, attitudes, interests and abilities) are strong factors which lead to attraction. Berg and Theron (2003:190) postulate that cultural influences are strong determinants of social behaviour, meaning therefore that cultural similarities may become a strong reason for liking and or accepting an individual. Such liking may therefore influence the perceptions of the manager about good management if it is shared amongst people of the same culture, all other things being constant. By implication therefore, any other management style may not be considered “good” if it does not rhyme with the perceiver’s expectations emanating from the cultural background. It can be stated therefore that to the extent that people see similarities with the other people, they are more likely to like the people similar to them more than those they are not similar to. The more similar they are the higher the attraction towards that individual. Similarities are therefore a reason for an individual to see congruency which leads to acceptance and approval (Jawah, 2013:708-719). As evidenced from the research by Brunelle (2001:62), people’s perceptions and attitudes change with experience and exposure. It can be hypothesised that the manager’s perception about good management practice is based on their overall experience and interaction (both formal and informal), education and the value system they subscribe to.

Problem Statement

Most studies focus on what good management is from surveys carried among the subordinates, little work seems to focus on the managers themselves. It is understandable that the subordinate should judge better how they should be led. This research sought to identify what managers themselves perceive to be good management. Amidst all the theories about good management and people’s perceptions lies the realities that the managers live with. The research accepts that the perceptions are the managers’ way of looking at the environment and the circumstances under which the managers work. Managers do not depend on theories as academics would, rather they are the practitioners on the ground trying to address real problems and dealing with real issues and real people.

Research Objectives

The objectives have been stated in the problem statement, the primary objective is to understand how managers understand what constitutes good management practice..

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Bachelor of Technology students (part time) were given questionnaires to interview their own managers on what constituted good management. Some of the students were actually managers themselves, but no student serving as a manager was eligible to fill in the questionnaires used for data collection. The questionnaires were to be administered randomly at the workplace, and the researcher never had direct contact with the interviewees.

Target population

Managers in the different industries represented by the students and not in a particular discipline, as long as they were managers. Manager in this context meant anyone who supervised five or more subordinates. 50 managers in all participated in the survey and this was considered large enough to make inferences on the managers’ perceptions about themselves.

Sampling method used

The researcher was not directly involved in the data collection process as this was done in the work environment by employees (subordinates) who themselves knew the managers. Essentially all the interviewees were expected to do was to ask as many managers in the organisation as they could come up with.

Data collection and analysis

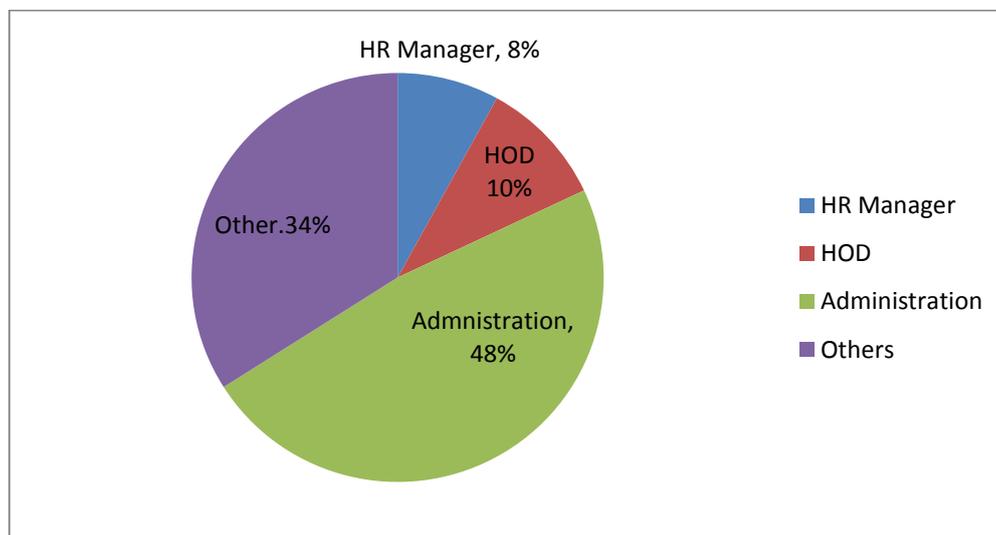
Data was collected with the use of a structured instrument which had provision for “open ended questions” for the respondents. All the instruments (questionnaires) filled in were collected, edited, cleaned and coded for data capturing. The captured data was processed using an excel spread sheet to come up with the figures, tables, graphs etc used in reporting the findings.

FINDINGS

The findings are reported below in the order in which the questions were asked, each question is followed by a diagram, figure or a table with explanation of the findings and implications. Where the response warranted generalisation, it was clearly stated and can be hypothesised thus.

Question 1; what is your position in the organisation? The purpose for the question was to determine eligibility of the respondents in order to screen all those not eligible for the survey. The response to this question is illustrated diagrammatically in figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Positions of the research participants in percentages



Source: own work from the survey

The largest group responding was that of administrators (48%) who themselves had supervisory roles with some people reporting to them. Others (34%) comprised of store managers, logistics managers, sales managers and production managers all of whom had some supervisory roles. The third group at 10% comprised of heads of departments (HODs), a

management position commonly used in government and quasi-government organisations. The least group was 8% for the human resources managers (HR Manager).

Question 2; How long have you been a manager including other places? The number of years experience was meant to assist in understanding the people responding. Particularly because the years of experience may have taught the manager the problems of management and how to tackle the problems. This would mean increased objectivity. Table 1 below illustrates the years of experience of the different respondents.

Table 1 Ages of the different respondents

Period (years)	Total	Percentage
0-5	28	56
6-10	14	28
11-15	4	8
16- more years	4	8
Sum of Participants	50	100

Source: results from survey

Managers with experience of 5 years and below is the largest at 56% followed by 28% of these as having 6-10 years work experience in management. The next group is the 11-15 years experience, these have considerable experience that may be utilised, but the number is small at 8% of the total of the respondents. Most probably senior managers, the survey tool did not make provision for comparing years experience to the age of the respondents. This would have assisted in understanding the difference in perceptions on the matter between the different age gaps.

Question 3; Have you been through any management training? This question deliberately intended to make judgment on the possible change of the original perceptions to that currently experienced by the managers. It is believed strongly that training assists in moulding certain people into a particular way of management, these perceptions of good management practice become the realities the trainee managers live with. Table 2 below shows details of the respondents.

Table 2 Prevalence of training for managers

Training	Total	Percentage
No	14	28
Sometimes	22	56
Fairly regularly	11	22
Always	3	6
Sum of Participants	50	100

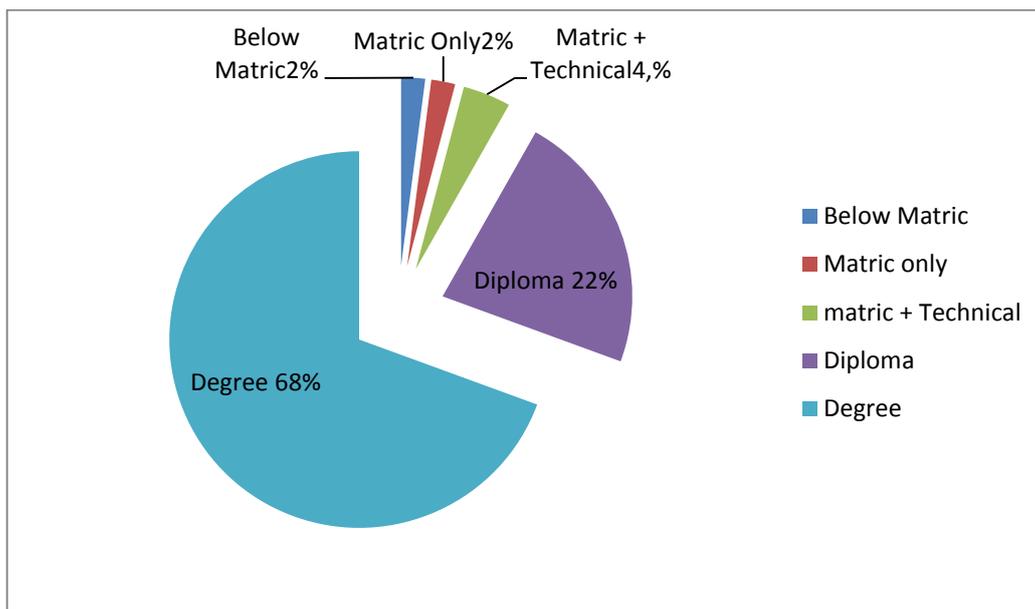
Source: data collected from the survey

Just over a quarter of the respondents (28%) have not received any form of training, it is not clear whether these were new appointments, or if the senior management had seen no reason for sending them for training. Under sometimes (this did not have any particular value) which did not quantify the frequency of the training, the respondents (56%) are twice the number that never have training. This is followed by fairly regularly at 22% followed by those attending

regularly at 6%, the statistics here should have made comparison of the age of the people to assist in understanding why they may have been taken for training.

Question 4; What is your highest educational qualification? It was thought important to understand the level of education of the respondents, as there may be a direct relationship between the level of education and knowledge of the theory of management. This would obviously influence their perceptions of good management practice. The results of this survey are in figure 2 below.

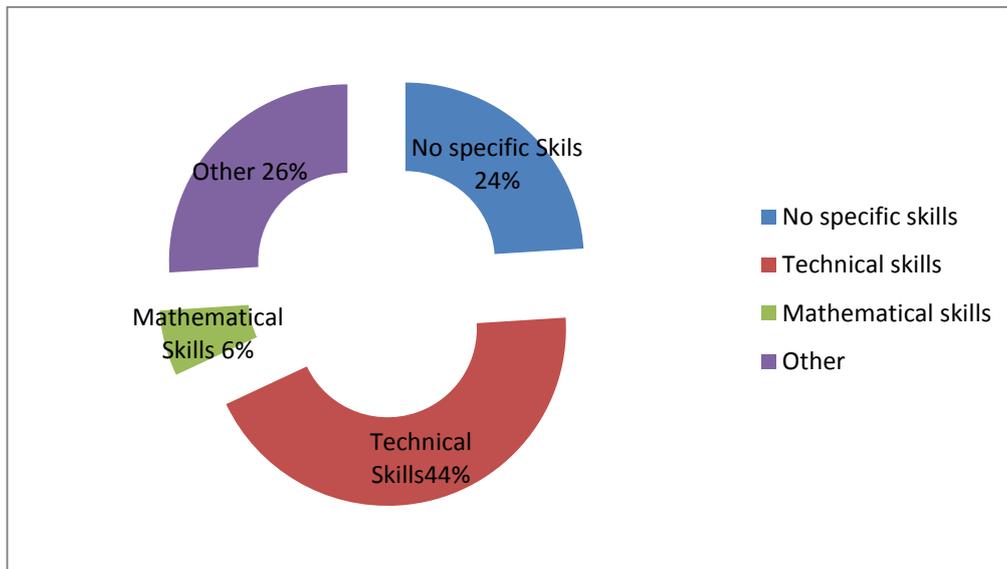
Figure 2 The levels of the qualifications of the respondents



Source: data from survey

Of particular interest is the fact that 68% of the respondents have a tertiary qualification, no discipline or area of specialisation was requested for in the questionnaire. This is followed by those with national diplomas (3 years of tertiary schooling) at 22%, thus a total of 90% of the respondents had a tertiary qualification. The remaining 4% (matric plus technical), 2% (matric only) and 2% (no matric) may most probably be people who came through the ranks of these organisations over many years.

Question 5 What kind of skills do people that report to you have? The style of management will also depend on the type of followership, hence it was necessary to try and get the context within which these managers work. The perceptions of effective management cannot be discussed in isolation from knowledge about the type of people to be managed. The responses are illustrated in figure 3 below.

Figure 3 Level of skills for the respondents' subordinates

Source: analysed from collected data

Apparently the “Other Skills” section (26%) was not filled in by all the respondents, could be they did not know exactly what skills their subordinates had. But of particular interest is that 44% of the respondents indicated that their subordinates were technically skilled. 24 per cent had no specific skills, but were evaluated (by the respondents) as having skills. 6% of the respondents had mathematical skills.

Question 6: What industry are you involved in? Performance and management skills differ largely dependent on the tasks to be performed, hence this question was considered important in judging the type of perceptions the manager has, given the industry in which they operate. The responses are provided in table 3 below.

Table 3 Industry worked by the respondents

Industry	Total	Percentage
Engineering	7	14
Manufacturing	6	12
Distribution	5	10
Other	32	64
Sum of Participants	50	100

Source: data from the survey

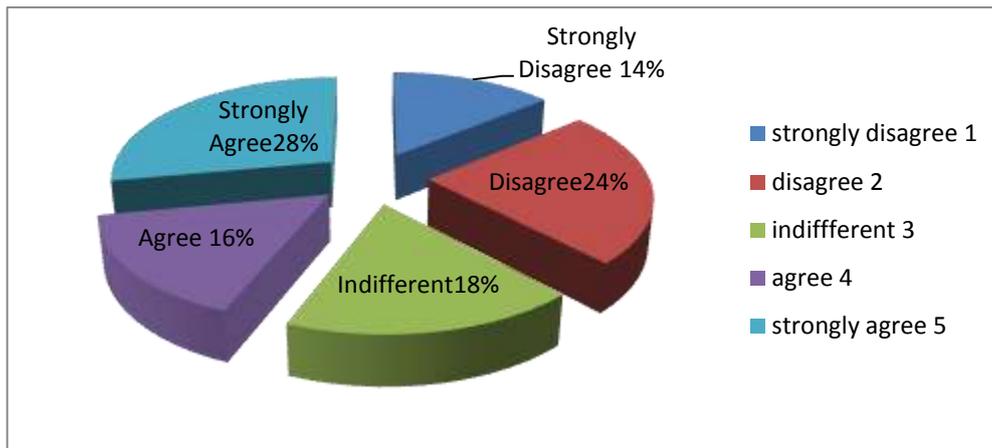
The industries represented in the research are; 14% from engineering, 12% from manufacturing, 10% from distribution and 64% was from other types of industries. It means that there was a fair and broad distribution of the representatives from diverse work environments. No specific industry dominated.

SECTION B. This section spoke directly to the study in that this section allows the managers to indicate their perceptions about good management. The questions asked were based on the literature reviewed prior to conducting the study, and a Likert scale was used to extract

information from the respondents. The responses are what the managers felt about those statements on a scale of one to five.

Statement 1 We come to work and there’s no time for relationships; this is taken from management theories like the X theory, transactional leadership styles, and such theories where the manager believes strongly that the task performance is more important, and that relationships may not be necessary. The responses in figure 4 below were not as expected.

Figure 4 Managers’ perceptions about relationships to employees.

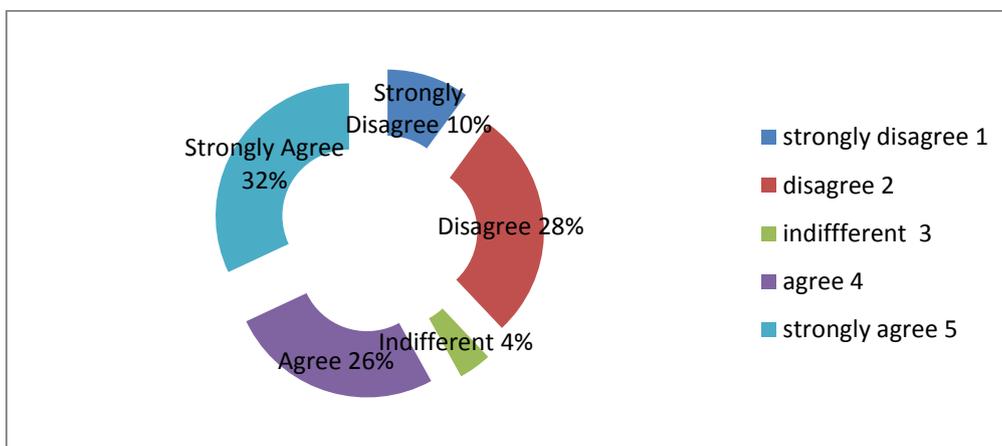


Source: data collected analysed

Those strongly agreeing (28%) and agreeing (16%) total 44%, whereas the neutral are at 18%. The remaining 38% (14% strongly disagree and 24% disagree) has a small difference of 6% with the agreeing. No generalisation can be made.

Statement 2 Family problems do not belong to the workplace; This statement was to check if managers believe that employees who have problems at home will carry their concerns with them and thereby impacting negatively on performance. The managers’ responses are illustrated in figure 5 below.

Figure 5 Managers’ perceptions about employees family problems



Source: analysis from collected data

Only 10% of the respondents strongly disagree, 28% disagree (totalling 38%) with 4% showing ambivalence. 32% and 26% (strongly agree and agree respectively) totalling 58%, it can be generalised that the managers do not believe that employees' family problems have anything to do with the performance of the employees. Thus a competent manager will not worry about employees' family problems.

Statement 3 Everyone has a task to be performed and that needs to be done first; this statement sought to distinguish between transactional and transformational management styles. With transactional leaders focussing on the tasks assigned to the employee with little concern about the employees' conditions or abilities. Table 4 below gives the details of the responses from the managers.

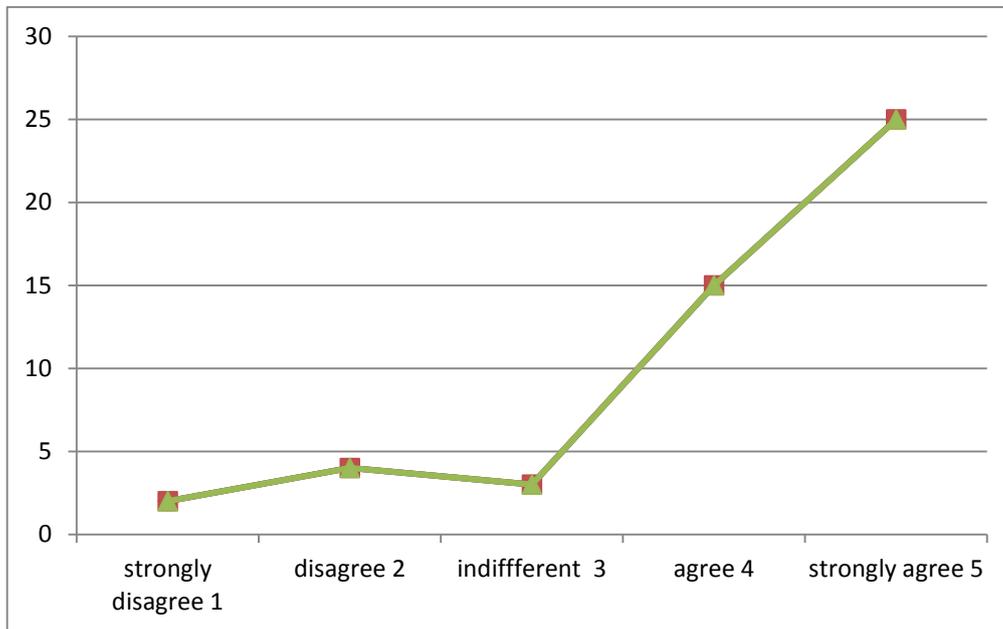
Table 4 Managers' perception about task performance

Rating	Total	Percentage
Strongly disagree 1	2	4
Disagree 2	1	2
Indifferent 3	3	6
Agree 4	21	42
Strongly agree 5	23	46
Sum of Participants	50	100

Source: Analysis of data collected for the research

46% of the respondents strongly agreed and 42% agreed with setting of tasks as a measure of good management. This gives an overall 88% of managers as believing that good management should be transactional. It can therefore be generalised that the South African managers in Cape Town accept the X theory and slave driving as the best ways to get people to perform and be productive.

Statement 4 A good worker knows how to separate work from personal life; this statement was a follow up on the previous statements on personal life and family life getting to be part of the employees performance. The previous responses indicated that managers separated employees' life from work activities as if the employee at work is not the same employee at home. Example; how will an employee who has just lost a mother be expected to perform well because it is time for work? The responses from the managers are illustrated in figure 6 below.

The figure 6 Managers perceptions about good worker in relation to personal life

Source: From analysis of data collected for this survey

As shown in the graph above (figure 6) 50% and 30% (strongly agree and agree respectively) of managers totalling 80% submit that there is no relationship between the employees' welfare and their performance at work. A good manager would be one that does not entertain any family problems or concerns from the subordinates – work is more important than anything else. It can be generalised that good management means not empathising or listening to subordinates personal problems.

Statement 5 Workers are generally lazy and must be given tasks to accomplish; The X theory is under scrutiny here to try and establish the managers' perceptions about performance and productivity. Cognisance should be taken here that the manager's perceptions about his/her subordinates are reflected in the way he / she disseminates duties to them. The response is shown in table 5 below.

Table 5 Managers' perception about the laziness of workers

Rating	Total	Percentage
Strongly disagree	2	4
Disagree 2	5	10
Indifferent 3	6	12
Agree 4	21	42
Strongly agree 5	16	32
Sum of Participants	50	100

Source: From analysis of data collected

74% of the managers in their response confirm that employees are generally lazy (42% agree and 32% strongly agree), 12% are indifferent with 14% shared between disagree and strongly disagree. While perceptions come from experience, background, values and beliefs, it is

disturbing to see that almost $\frac{3}{4}$ of managers believe that workers are inherently lazy. This therefore informs the way they manage and lead the employees.

Statement 6 Setting tasks makes people perform because they know what to do; judging from the responses above, it is clear that the perception of managers about their subordinates informs the methods resorted to in getting the subordinates to perform. Table 6 below provides the detailed response by the managers.

Table 6 Managers' perceptions about use of tasks to measure performance

Rating	Total	Percentage
Strongly disagree 1	2	4
Disagree 2	5	10
Indifferent 3	6	12
Agree 4	21	42
Strongly agree 5	16	32
Sum of Participants	50	100

Source: Data collected from managers during the survey

A good transactional manager will clearly cut out for the employees what exactly is to be done, this doesn't make transactional leadership bad. The managers concurred with the statement with 42% agreeing and 32% strongly agreeing, this totalled 74% allowing for a generalisation that good management means clearly explaining the tasks for the workers.

Statement 7 A good manager must think for workers and give them direction; this statement goes a little further suggesting that the workers need the manager to think for them. The statement does not indicate what level of workers, nor what their qualification is, but simply that good management means thinking for the workers in order to give them the direction. Table 7 below provides details of the results of the survey.

Table 7 Managers' perception about thinking for subordinates

Rating	Total	Percentage
Strongly disagree 1	3	6
Disagree 2	10	20
Indifferent 3	8	16
Agree 4	15	30
Strongly agree 5	14	28
Sum of Participants	50	100

Source: Analysis of collected data

Surprise from the results, only 26% of the managers perceive that not thinking for the subordinates and allowing them to think for themselves could be a sign of good management. 16% were indifferent whereas 58% of the managers (30% agree and 28% strongly agree) perceive it a good idea to think for workers in order to give them direction. It can be generalised that managers subscribe to the X theory stating that employees are lazy, they can't think for themselves and they need to be given a direction for them to perform.

Statement 8 It’s easier to set goals and targets if work is defined in daily tasks; a manager who thinks that employees are generally lazy will most likely divide the work into daily tasks to be achieved by the worker. It should be noted here also that such measures might also have more to do with the nature of the job, specifically so in projects where time is of the essence. The managers perception is reported in table 8 below.

Table 8 Managers’ perception on use of daily targets to manage workers’ performance

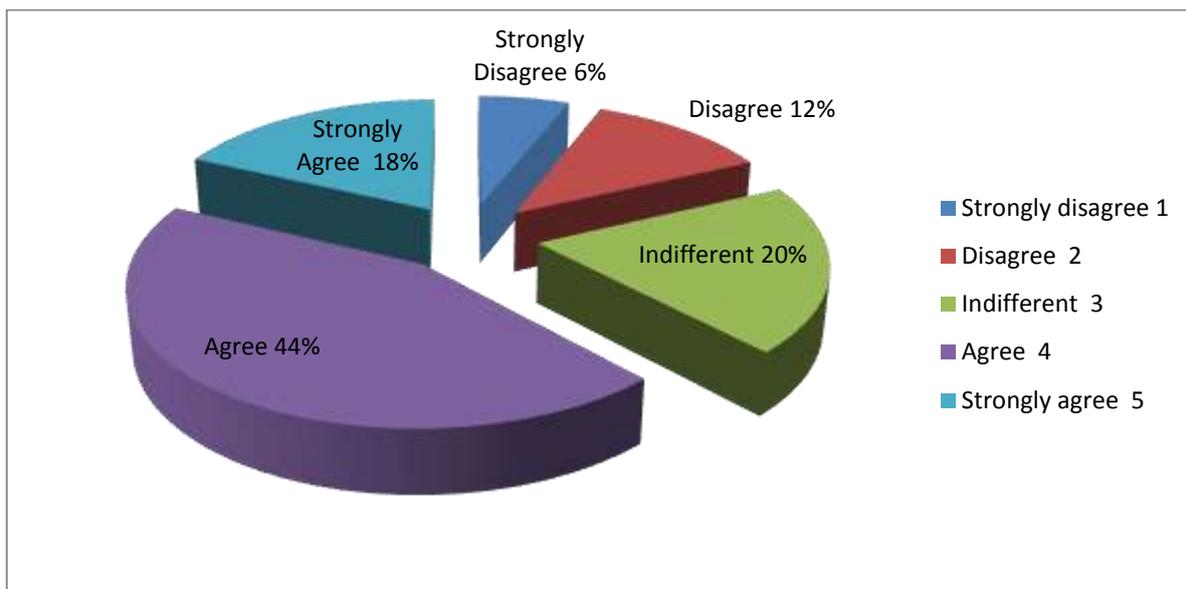
Rating	Total	Percentage
Strongly disagree 1	1	2
Disagree 2	2	4
Indifferent 3	12	24
Agree 4	22	44
Strongly agree 5	13	26
Sum of Participants	50	100

Source: Data from managers’ response to management by targets.

26% of the managers strongly agreed with 44% agreeing making a total of 70% of managers believing that setting of daily targets is the best way to manage. There is an unusually high percentage of ambivalence (24%) leaving 6% of those strongly disagreeing and disagreeing. It can be generalised that managers perceive management by targets as an effective way of managing subordinate performance.

Statement 9 Workers work well if they have their targets set by themselves; this statement deliberately was set as a contradiction of the X theory, the Y theory postulates that employees are not lazy and can work on their own if allowed opportunities to develop themselves, and that they love their jobs. To this statement, the managers responded as recorded in figure 8 below.

Figure 8 Managers’ perceptions about workers setting their own targets

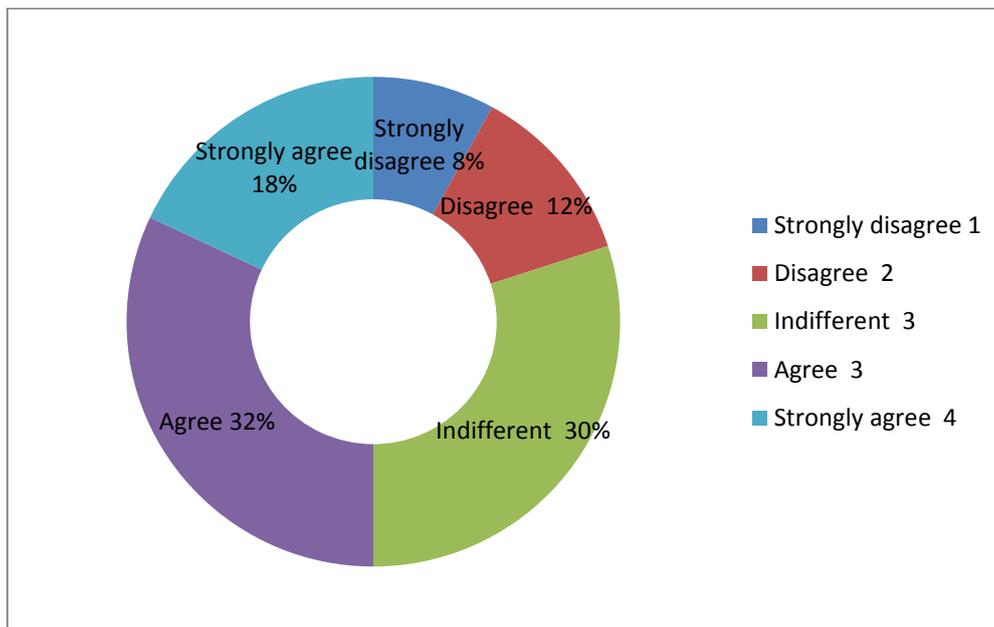


Source: Data from the survey

This is somewhat a surprise response given the trend in preceding responses, 62% (18% strongly agree and 44% agree) allowing a generalisation that managers believe that if workers are allowed to set their own targets, they perform well. The statement does not delve into any differences between the employees' and managers' targets. It is however clear that the managers accept that employees would work better with their own targets. Ambivalence is extremely high at 20% leaving disagree (12%) and strongly disagree (6%) at a total of 18%. It is therefore generalised that managers perceive allowing employees to set their targets enables them to work well. The working well has not been quantified.

Statement 10 Give employees the direction they will find the road themselves; the statement seeks to ascertain if managers believe that employees would be able to find solutions to problems on their own if empowered to do so. This statement exposes the thinking of managers in relation to empowerment of employees to enable them to grow in their career path. The response is put in figure 9 below.

Figure 9 Managers' perception on ability of employees to work on their own



Source: Detail from analysed responses from the survey

The level of indifference is disturbingly very high at 30%, those strongly agreeing (18%) and agreeing (32%) total 50% in all. The strongly disagreeing and disagreeing comprise of 20% together, it may be difficult to make a generalisation, but those agreeing at 50% are in the majority. Managers do not seem to agree in large numbers that employees are able to perform if given the right information.

Statement 10 Workers perform better if you care about their personal problems; the Y theory believes in attending to employee personal problems as part of overall good management. The assumption made is that employees love their jobs and would perform well if they are well cared for. The managers' perceptions about this statement are recorded below in table 9.

Table 9 Managers' perceptions about employees' personal problems

Rating	Total	Percentage
Strongly disagree 1	4	8
Disagree 2	8	16
Indifferent 3	13	26
Agree 4	20	40
Strongly agree 5	5	10
Sum of Participants	50	100

Source: Analysed data from survey

Again 50% of the managers (agree – 40% and strongly agree – 10%) seem to accept that there is a relationship between performance and the emotional state of an employee. Ambivalence is high at 26% leaving 8% (strongly disagreeing) and 16% (disagree) totalling 24%, almost equal to ambivalence. The total of the disagreeing and the ambivalence gives a 50% score equal to the 50% of managers who think that it may be important to care for employees' personal problems. Employees' welfare doesn't seem to be a priority with the managers.

Statement 11 Sharing workers' problems will allow for loyalty to you; some of the characteristics of effective leaders (managers) are the ability to develop a relationship with their followers (subordinates), this relationship leads to loyalty to their managers. This statement sought to establish if managers perceive development of personal relationship with employees as necessary, the response is reported in table 10 below.

Table 10 Managers' perception about personalising relationship with workers

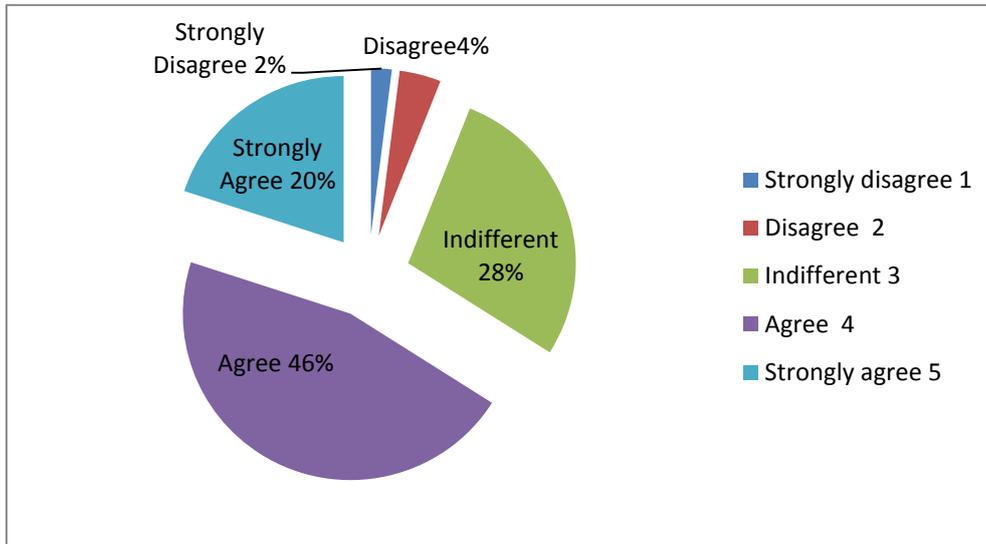
Rating	Total	Percentage
Strongly disagree 1	5	10
Disagree 2	10	20
Indifferent 3	13	26
Agree 4	17	34
Strongly agree 5	5	10
Sum of Participants	50	100

Source: Data collected and analysed from the survey

A total of 30% disagreed with the statement (10% strongly disagreeing and 20% disagreeing), meaning that managers do not think it is necessary for them to personalise their relationship with subordinates. On the other hand a total of 44% (agreeing – 34% and strongly agreeing – 10%) that it is necessary to develop personal relationships with subordinates. No consensus has been reached in this suggesting that managers do not consider this important.

Statement 12 An employee left to work alone is empowered and performs well; the empowering of employees is a Y theory postulate and is understood that workers can be able to find their own way if empowered. This had been asked earlier under the X theory, albeit indirectly, and there is a contradiction of the response from the same respondents. The responses are illustrated in figure 10 below.

Figure 10 Managers’ perceptions about employees left to work alone



Source: Analysis of data collected for the survey

66% of the managers agree that empowering employees by leaving them to think on their own increases the ability of the employee to operate on their own. Indifference is high at 28%, it is difficult to understand why many managers have no opinion on this issue. It can be generalised that managers believe that it is good management practice to leave employees to develop themselves. In a sense, micromanagement doesn’t produce the desired performance from an employee. This is contrary to an earlier reporting where managers perceived that thinking for employees was ideal.

Statement 13 Discuss issues in detail with employees and leave them to work; by and large the only difference between the manager and the subordinates may be the information that the manager has by virtue of being in an authoritative position. This statement was based on this hypothesis, meaning some employees with the same privilege would be as effective if not better than the manager. The managers’ response to this is illustrated in table 11 below.

Table 11 Managers’ perceptions about giving employees information

Rating	Total	Percentage
Strongly disagree 1	1	2
Disagree 2	1	2
Indifferent 3	4	8
Agree 4	35	70
Strongly agree 5	9	18
Sum of Participants	50	100

Source: collected and analysed from the survey

There is an interesting twist in the response with 4% of the managers disagreeing with the statement above, indifference is at an all time low of 8%. This leaves the 88% of the managers agreeing with the statement that if the employees are well informed about what needs to be done, they will be able to do the work on their own. Communicating relevant information and

leaving the employees to work on their own is therefore perceived to be a sign of good management.

Statement 14 An informed employee finds easy better ways of solving problems; it is common knowledge that information is critical in the making of any decision, personal or business. Two heads are better than one – and managers could have less headache if they shared information with subordinates. This statement sought to understand the mind of managers as relates to the ability of subordinates to function if provided with adequate information – the old adage, knowledge is power. The response is reported in table 12 below.

Table 12 Managers' perceptions about informed employees' ability to solve problems

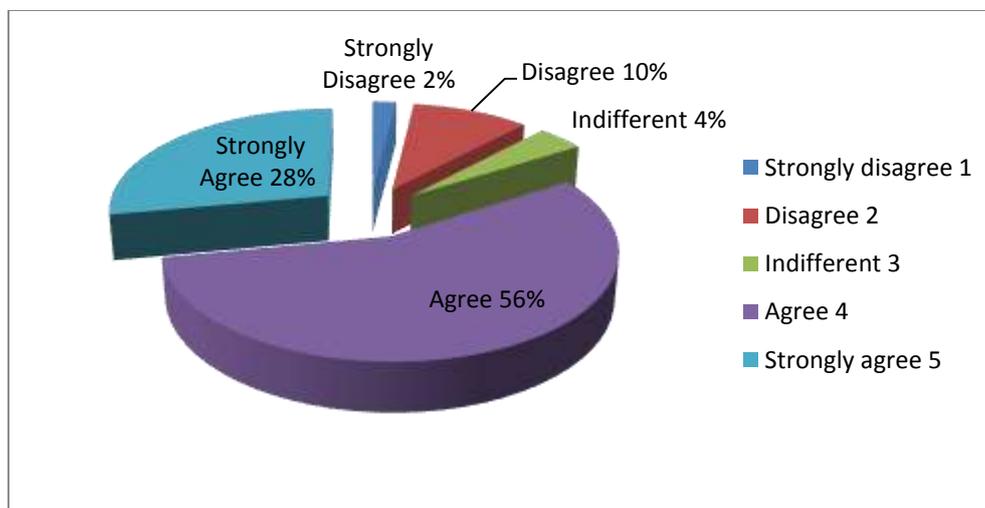
Rating	Total	Percentage
Strongly disagree 1	0	0
Disagree 2	0	0
Indifferent 3	4	8
Agree 4	28	56
Strongly agree 5	18	36
Sum of Participants	50	100

Source: From analysed survey

There was a resounding 'yes' response from the managers on this issue with 92% agreeing (strongly agreeing – 36% and agreeing – 56%). Without explaining the other scores, it is evident (can be generalised) that managers perceive that informed subordinates may be able to solve the problems better and faster. Ambivalence was at 8% and there were no managers disagreeing.

Statement 15 Employees will protect a business where they think they belong; Too often managers act as the only ones with the organisation at heart, too often for selfish reasons. This statement sought to measure their perceptions about employees claim to belong to the organisation. The response is in figure 11 below.

Figure 11 Managers' perceptions about employees' belonging to the organisation



Source: Graph drawn from data analysed from research

A total of 84% (28% strongly agreeing and 56% agreeing) was reported as agreeing with the statement that if employees are made to feel that they belong, they will protect the organisation. Those disagreeing and strongly disagreeing are at 10% and 2% respectively with 4% indifferent or neutral. It can be generalised that good managers will make the employees belong to the organisation. Employees that belong are most likely to work hard to protect the organisation.

Statement 16 Empowering employees to think is like giving them ownership; the process of empowering workers can be viewed in many ways, training them, allowing to decide on the future of the organisation, etc. This statement sought to understand management perceptions about the form of empowering through allowing them to think and give the workers ownership. Table 13 illustrates the perceptions of managers on this issue.

Table 13 Managers' perceptions about thinking and ownership by employees

Rating	Total	Percentage
Strongly disagree 1	1	2
Disagree 2	5	10
Indifferent 3	2	4
Agree 4	28	56
Strongly agree 5	14	28
Sum of Participants	50	100

Source: Data from survey on managers' perceptions

Even though earlier responses in the research suggested that managers perceive that subordinates should be helped with thinking by the managers themselves, it is evident that they are aware of the benefits of allowing subordinates to think. In all 84% of the managers consider it good management to allow the subordinates to think for themselves so that they may have ownership of the organisation. It can be generalised then that managers' perceptions are that enabling subordinates to think constitutes good management.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that the managers have mixed feelings about what constitutes good management as evidenced from contradictions in the responses. The respondents were not unanimous on the relationships with subordinates including assisting with family problems. 58% of them consider it good management practice not to assist employees on family issues. Whatever the reason, this leaves the subordinate on their own, which may impact on their productivity. Approximately 8 hours or one third of their day is spent at work. This is further confirmed with 80% of the managers announcing that it is good management practice to fully dissociate from employees' personal problems, nor entertain the problems.

In fact 74% of the managers believe that employees are inherently lazy, suggesting that any complaints from the subordinates may be taken for "lame excuses" for not wanting to work. The same number of managers (74%) asserted that the only way to manage an employee is by clearly defining the tasks and 58% suggest that managers should think for the employees. Apart from describing the tasks as alluded to above, the managers (74%) think of it as an effective good practice to set up daily targets for employees. Thus far the managers' perception about subordinates is that of a people who are lazy, can't think, and can't work without being driven.

It can be hypothesised here that such managers generally have a negative attitude towards the subordinates.

However, there are surprise responses from 62% who believe that if subordinates set their own targets, they may perform better. One expects that the subordinates will set targets commensurate with their own abilities to perform the tasks at hand. It is of particular interest to note that the neutral have somewhat increased in number, a possible indication that the managers have no opinion on such issues. There's a sudden reduction also on the number of those taking firm positions, with 50% believing that employees may perform well if given the right information. In response to another statement, the managers (50%) accept that there is a relationship between an employees' performance and their emotional state. Those ambivalent are almost in a tie with those disagreeing at 26% and 24% respectively. There is no consensus among the managers on the importance of employees' welfare in relation to good performance and productivity.

Thus creating personal relationships with the employees remains in the perceptions of managers a sign of bad management. Though managers think that they should do the thinking for the subordinates (58%), the same managers consider it good management practice to allow subordinates to think for themselves (66%) as this is considered "empowering." There is concurrence with the statement on the possibility of giving adequate information to the subordinates as a good management practice that will enable employees to work on their own. The managers (92%) also believe that informed subordinates may be able to solve the problems better and faster. Employees that are empowered claim ownership and have a feeling of belonging which makes them want to protect the organisation according to these managers (84%).

In all 84% of the managers consider it good management to allow the subordinates to think for themselves so that they may have ownership of the organisation. It can be generalised then that managers' perceptions are that enabling subordinates to think constitutes good management.

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