Effective Leadership as a catalyst for enhancing employee retention in SMEs in Zimbabwe

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Abstract

Most managers agree that employees are the greatest asset that any organisation may have. However, retaining them is one of the toughest challenges experienced by these managers. While Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) are fundamental to the sustainable growth and development of developing economies, they have witnessed high levels of employee turnover which has paralysed operations and negatively affected viability. The paper argues that effective leadership acts as a catalyst for enhancing employee retention in Zimbabwean SMEs. Guided by the positivism research philosophy and the deductive approach, the study adopted a quantitative research design where a survey strategy was used to collect primary data from 197 participants from Bulawayo's Central Business Area (CBA) who had been chosen using proportional stratified sampling. The study found that having and communicating a clear vision, effective communication, employee development, fairness, transparency, and accountability were related and positively contributed to employee retention. The study concluded that effective leadership is a catalyst for enhancing employee retention in SMEs in Zimbabwe. Leaders were recommended to communicate in a timely manner and provide feedback in a humane way. They should also ensure that organisational processes such as performance appraisal, disciplinary and grievance handling procedures are not only fair but are seen to be fair.

Key words: Clear vision; Effective communication; Effective leadership; Employee development; Employee retention; Fairness; Transparency and accountability.

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1.0 Introduction and background

Most managers agree that employees are the greatest asset that any organisation may have as they constitute its life-blood (Das & Baruah, 2013). However, retaining them is one of the toughest challenges experienced by these managers. This is worsened by a critical shortage of talented employees prevalent in a highly competitive world (Wakabi, 2016). Employee turnover is associated with costs such as recruitment, training, reduction in productivity and lost time (ibid). These costs pose a significant challenge to organisations (Carter, Dudley, Lyle & Smith, 2019).

Sustainable competitiveness of an organisation is driven by human capital (Singh, 2019). Organisational success, whether measured using metrics such as customer satisfaction, increased sales, large market share or high profitability depends on an organisation's ability to retain the best employees (Das and Baruah, 2013). As leaders begin to understand that sustainable competitive advantage comes from people, they will employ strategies to ensure that the best employees are retained so that quality performance is assured and sustainable competitive advantage is guaranteed (Wakabi, 2016).

Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) are fundamental to the sustainable growth and development of developing countries (Tinarwo, 2016). They play an important role in employment creation (Maseko and Manyani, 2011), act as a nursery for larger firms (Mamman, Kanu, Alharbi & Baydoun, 2015) and act as an incubator of innovative ideas (Muriithi, 2017). However, despite their importance, SMEs have been affected by a high failure rate (Mudavanhu, Bindu, Chigusiwa & Muchabaiwa, 2011) which is largely blamed on ineffective leadership (Madanchian and Taherdoost, 2017; Saasongu, 2015; Jalal-Eddeen, 2015). This has been corroborated by Nemashakwe, Zinyemba & Gumbe (2022) who found out that leadership in Zimbabwean SMEs was not effective. SMEs have witnessed high employee turnover rates which have paralysed operations and negatively affected viability (Daka, 2016).

Singh (2019) is of the opinion that high level of turnover negatively affects the image of the organisation and sends a wrong message to prospective employees about the organisation. When employees leave an organisation, they deprive the organisation of their knowledge, skills, experience, and right attitude (ibid). These valuable

resources that might have been gained courtesy of the organisation may be used against the same organisation especially if the exiting employee joins a competing firm. It has been argued that rather than leaving the organisation, employees leave managers. Leadership plays a critical role in the retention of employees. It determines whether employees stay or leave the organisation (Mwita, Mwakasangula & Teferukwa, 2018; Puni, Agyemang & Asamoah, 2016). When employees are treated poorly by their leaders, they experience psychological distress and lower job satisfaction, which unfortunately leads to lower commitment and high staff turnover.

2.0 Literature review

2.1 Leadership

Leadership is regarded as one of the least understood phenomena despite its ranking amongst the most important topics in human sciences (Hogan and Kaiser, 2005). This has resulted in difficulties in coming up with a common definition (Silva, 2016; Peretomode, 2012). Although there has been a proliferation of innumerable definitions (McCleskey, 2014), Northouse (2015)'s definition captures the essence of leadership. The author defined leadership as "a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal" (p. 3). This definition clearly shows that leadership involves a process of influence between the leader and followers (Maaitah, 2018). It "involves the ability to build and maintain a group that performs well relative to its competition" (Hogan and Kaiser, 2005, p. 172).

Leadership is one of the key organisational components that determine whether an organisation succeeds or not (Kumar and Matheen, 2019). It is critical to any organisation because the leader's behaviour either makes or breaks the organisation (Maaitah, 2018). Arham (2014) identified leadership behaviour and skills as the important ingredients that determine the survival and growth of SMEs. Leaders should be effective when it comes to interpersonal and intercultural communication. Effective communication nurtures an environment of openness and trust (Singh, 2019).

2.2 Employee retention

Many organisations have understood the importance of employee retention (Singh, 2019). It involves encouraging employees to remain in the organisation for a long period of time or until the completion of a project (Das & Baruah, 2013). It involves

numerous strategies employed by an organisation to encourage its human resources to remain with it for a long period of time (Singh, 2019). Employee retention aims at minimising voluntary turnover (Wakabi, 2016).

Retention is essential for the growth and stability of an organisation. It reduces the cost of replacing employees and ensures that loyal customers are kept in the organisation (Wakabi, 2016). Great organisations deploy their arsenal with the aim of retaining their valued resources since they are aware that quality employees are hard and costly to find. Das & Baruah (2013) believes that the onus is on leaders to adopt and implement appropriate employee retention strategies. Effective retention strategies prevent skilled and experienced employees from leaving the organisation as this may compromise productivity and service delivery. It has also been estimated that the cost of recruiting and training a replacement employee is equivalent to 50% of the employee's annual salary (Maaitah, 2018). Research has shown that when employees are committed, they are less likely to leave their organisations (Frye, Kang, Hu & Lee, 2020). This means that more committed employees are less likely to leave their organisations as compared to less committed employees.

2.3 The role of leadership in employee retention

Wakabi (2016) believes that leaders play a critical role in employee retention since the type of leadership they practice impacts directly on the feelings employees have about the organisation. Transformational leaders inspire and motivate their followers to achieve higher performance targets (Lim, Loo & Lee, 2017). This may resultantly motivate employees to stay with the organisation as the leader and followers mutually trust and remain loyal to each other. The leadership style of a manager may be one of the stressors causing employees to leave their jobs.

If organisations are to retain employees, leaders should embrace leadership styles that promote staff retention (Wakabi, 2016). The common understanding that employees leave their jobs because of bad leadership shows the significance of leadership in contemporary organisations (Lim et al., 2017). Leaders should create a conducive environment that will endear the organisation to employees and influence them directly and indirectly to remain with the organisation irrespective of opportunities arising outside the organisation (Wakabi, 2016).

Transformational leaders have been found to act as change agents as they articulate the vision of the organisation, challenge the status quo, inspire and motivate followers to achieve their greatest potential (Lim et al., 2017). Due to the vision articulated by the transformational leader, followers become loyal and are committed to following the leader towards achieving the shared vision (ibid). Relationship oriented leaders take the responsibility of assisting employees to develop their careers (Wakabi, 2016). Transformational leaders have been found to care for their employees and provide coaching and mentoring to the employees which inspires the followers to rally behind the leader and assist in the achievement of the organisational vision (Lim et al., 2017). Provision of coaching and mentoring activities improves job satisfaction which ultimately reduces turnover intention in employees (ibid).

Pay has been viewed as a great motivator and an employee retention technique especially for lower-level employees. If good performers in an organisation are not rewarded sufficiently, they leave their jobs (Wakabi, 2016). Although pay is important, most employees are of the view that intrinsic rewards such as recognition, sense of achievement and work autonomy are more important than extrinsic rewards (Frye et al., 2020). These intrinsic rewards have been found to have a strong effect on employee turnover. Mwita et al. (2018) advised leaders in organisations to constantly seek feedback from their employees regarding perceptions on leadership style and institute improvements before aggrieved employees decide to leave. Organisations that give employees freedom to voice their dissatisfaction with working conditions have a greater chance of retaining their employees (Singh, 2019).

In a study to examine the link between leadership and employee retention in Tanzanian commercial banks, Mwita et al. (2018) found a significant linear relationship between the two variables. Ng'ethe, Namusonge and Iravo (2012) found the relationship between leadership style and the retention of academic staff in public universities in Kenya to be significant. This means that the perceived quality of the leadership style has an effect on whether employees stay or leave the organisation.

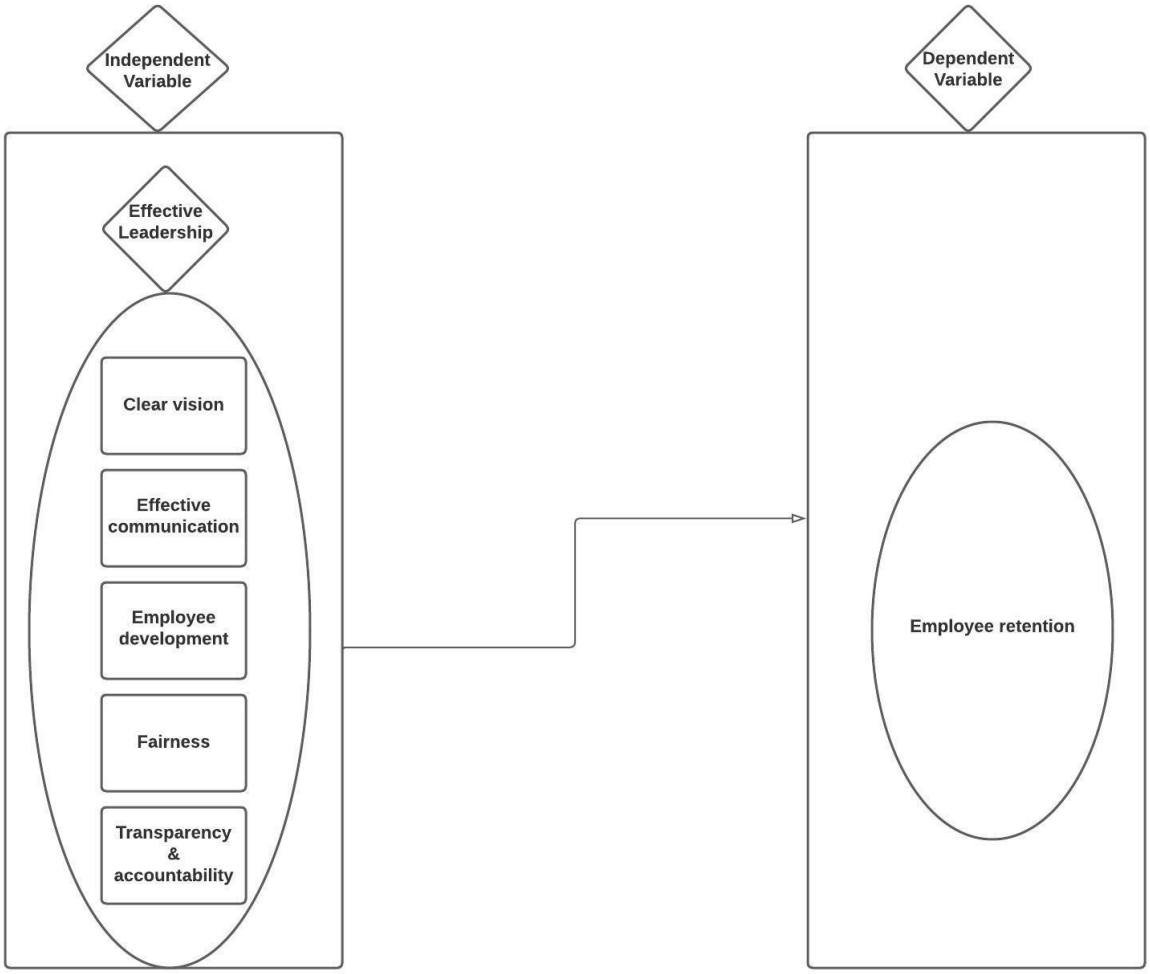
In a study by Nwokocha and Iheriohanma (2015) to examine the nexus between leadership style, employee retention and employee performance in Nigeria, it was concluded that effective leadership style is important for attaining organisational goals. The study found that when leadership style is perceived to be repulsive by employees,

it will affect employees' performance and prompt their inclination to leave the organisation. Khalid, Pahi, and Ahmed (2016) found a strong and positive relationship between leadership and employee retention in the banking sector in Pakistan. In a study by Koesmono (2017) to assess the impact of transactional leadership on employee turnover intention in Indonesia, it was found that transactional leadership in conjunction with work motivation and job satisfaction have an impact on turnover intention. A study by Carter et al. (2019) found that having an immediate superior in the military possessing strong leadership increased retention rates by 2.7 percentage points while having a senior leader with strong leadership increased retention rates by 2.1 percentage points.

3.0 Conceptual Framework

The following conceptual framework shown in figure 1 was proposed for the study.

Figure 1: Conceptual framework



Leaders play a critical role in the retention of employees in any organisation. Since it is believed that employees leave managers rather than organisations, it is also true that managers are the reason why employees may decide to remain with an organisation for a long period of time. This all depends on the type of leadership that managers practice in an organisation. The study proposed that employee retention is dependent on effective leadership. Five elements were chosen to represent effective leadership namely clear vision, effective communication, employee development, fairness, and transparency and accountability.

3.1 Independent variables

3.1.1 Clear vision

Employees love to work for an organisation with a clear direction. One way that leaders provide strategic direction to an organisation is through crafting and communicating a compelling vision to all stakeholders. A leader who can create and communicate a compelling vision in a clear, concise and inspiring manner rallies employees towards the achievement of the vision. When employees believe in a leader's vision and sees it as achievable, they are prepared to remain in the organisation and work with others towards the achievement of the vision.

3.1.2 Effective communication

Cloutier, Felusiak, Hill, & Pemberton-Jones (2015) believed that effective communication is essential for retention of employees. When leaders communicate with employees in a timely manner, without withholding any information whether it is positive or negative, mutual trust is built between employees and their leaders. Employees are prepared to stay in an organisation where two-way communication is encouraged. This will show employees that they are valued because it affords them an opportunity to communicate their opinions and grievances to their leaders as compared to a situation where they are constantly on the receiving end. Employees stay in an organisation where they constantly get feedback irrespective of whether the feedback is positive or negative as long as they get the feedback in a humane way. Leaders should encourage open communication. Fostering open communication in an organisation has been found to be one of the factors which reduces employee turnover (Wakabi, 2016).

3.1.3 Employee development

A study by Mehta, Kurbetti, & Dhankhar (2014) showed that employees are likely to stay longer with organisations where there are career opportunities. Such employees will also exhibit greater loyalty to the organisation. Employees are prepared to stay with leaders who exhibit an interest in their career progression. When leaders understand that it is their responsibility to assist employees in their career progression, employees will be loyal and remain with the organisation. This should involve making sure that employees who want to develop themselves have been given ample time and support to do so without any hindrance. The support should also involve resources especially for those whose salaries and benefits might not be enough to allow them to advance themselves.

3.1.4 Fairness

Employees know very well when they are treated fairly and when they are not, and few employees will willingly remain in an organisation where they are not treated fairly. If managers want to retain employees, they should treat them fairly. Employees should not be unnecessarily discriminated against. They should be paid a fair wage for a fair day's work. Nadiri and Tanova (2010) cited in Frye et al., (2020) postulated that fair compensation and fairness within the working environment are some of the factors that make employees satisfied with their jobs and choose to remain in those organisations. Leaders in organisations should desist from having favourites as this will demotivate employees and encourage them to look for alternative organisations. Organisational processes such as performance appraisal, disciplinary and grievance handling procedures should not only be fair but should also be seen to be fair for employees to have confidence in the organisation and decide to stay longer.

3.1.5 Transparency and accountability

Modern managers should be transparent and keep their subordinates well informed about the important facets of the business. Employees are prepared to work for organisations where managers do not hide anything and are prepared to explain their actions or decisions to subordinates. When managers are transparent and are prepared to be accountable, trust is nurtured between the leaders and their

subordinates. This trust will motivate employees to stay with the organisation for a long time. Nemashakwe, Zinyemba and Gumbe (2023) cautions leaders from instilling fear in their subordinates and engaging in retributive behaviour as this may motivate employees to quit the organisation and look for friendly organisations.

3.2 Dependent variable

3.2.1 Employee retention

Although it is difficult to tell with certainty whether an employee will be with the organisation for a long time, there are signs that may signal whether the organisation is on course to retain the employee or not. Employees who are happy to continue with the organisation and are not thinking of quitting jealously guard the reputation of the organisation, knowing fully well that the organisation is their home and they will not be going anywhere anytime soon. These employees are not actively looking for employment elsewhere and do not consider or apply for any vacancies that may arise outside the organisation. Employees who are not harbouring any ambitions of leaving the organisation anytime soon are not active on job hunting platforms. Employees who believe in the organisation and are not thinking of leaving anytime soon show interest and are focused on long term projects. In contrast employees who are about to leave are reluctant to commit to long term projects.

4.0 Methodology

The study was guided by the positivism research philosophy and the deductive approach. Positivism was ideal because it placed greater emphasis on empirical data collection and effect-oriented analysis (Neuman, 2014). It was also chosen because of its ability to produce pure data and facts not influenced by human interpretation and bias (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2016). Deductive approach was chosen because of its ability to explain causal relationships between variables. The study adopted a quantitative research design where a survey strategy was used to collect primary data from 197 participants from Bulawayo's Central Business Area. Quantitative research design was chosen so that opinions, attitudes, behaviours and variables could be quantified (Mohajan, 2020) and also because of its ability to save time and resources (Eyisi, 2016). A survey strategy was chosen because it goes hand in hand with a deductive approach and most researches in social sciences use it as a data gathering

technique (Neuman, 2014). It was also possible for standardised data to be collected from participants in a cost-effective way allowing for easy comparison (Saunders et al., 2016).

Research participants were chosen through proportional stratified sampling where the population was first separated into strata based on the sector in which the SME operated before a random sample was drawn from the different strata in relative proportion to the size of the stratum in the population as enunciated by Greenfield and Greener (2016). Proportional stratified sampling was ideal because the researchers had prior knowledge about the population (Jawale, 2012) and it enhanced the sample representativeness in relation to the population (Saunders et al., 2016). Data was analysed through the use of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23 and Smart PLS version 3 tools. The study was conducted in a manner that safeguarded the best interests of research participants (Magwa and Magwa, 2015).

5.0 Findings and Discussion

5.1 Response rate

Out of the 250 questionnaires that were distributed, 197 were returned. This gave a response rate of 78.8% which was considered enough for statistical analysis (Saunders et al., 2016; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011). The distribution of the questionnaires is shown in table 1 below.

Table 1: Distribution of questionnaires

Participant category	Questionnaires distributed	Questionnaires analysed	Percentage
Non-managerial	150	119	79.3%
Supervisory	65	53	81.5%
Managers	20	14	70.0%
Owner-managers	15	11	73.3%
Total	250	197	78.8%

5.2 Sample adequacy and significance

In order to test the sample adequacy and significance, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sample adequacy and the Bartlett's test of sphericity were used and the results are shown in table 2 below.

Table 2: Sample adequacy and sphericity

KMO and Bartlett's test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		0.836
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	11631.683
	df	947
	Sig.	0.000

The KMO value of 0.836 is above the accepted threshold of 0.50 which showed that the sample was adequate and appropriate for exploratory factor analysis (Hair, Black, Babin & Anderson, 2014). The BTS value of 0.000 showed that the sample was statistically significant.

5.3 Instrument reliability

The internal consistence of the research instrument items was measured using the Cronbach alpha coefficient and the results are shown in table 3 below.

Table 3: Cronbach alpha values

Theme	**Number of items**	**Cronbach alpha value**
Clear vision	6	0.821
Effective communication	5	0.813
Employee development	6	0.792
Fairness	6	0.873
Transparency and accountability	4	0.743
Employee retention	6	0.833
Total	**33**	

All the Cronbach alpha values were above 0.7 showing a strong and solid item covariance (Gerber and Hall, 2017; Saunders et al., 2016). This proved that the instrument used for the study was reliable.

5.4 Spearman correlation analysis

The spearman correlation analysis was used to test the direction and the strength of the monotonic relationship between the proposed independent variables (clear vision, effective communication, employee development, fairness, transparency and accountability) and the dependent variable (employee retention). The results are shown in table 4 below.

Table 4: Spearman correlation values

Dimension	Effective leadership
Clear vision Sig N	0.591 0.000 197
Effective communication Sig N	0.621 0.000 197
Employee development Sig N	0.477 0.003 197
Fairness Sig N	0.523 0.000 197
Transparency and accountability Sig N	0.539 0.000 197

Table 4 above showed that the correlation coefficient values for clear vision, effective communication, employee development, fairness, and transparency and accountability were 0.591, 0.621, 0.477, 0.523 and 0.539 respectively.

5.4.1 Clear vision

A Spearman coefficient (rho) of 0.591 showed that clear vision was positively correlated to employee retention and was also significant at 5% level of significance. The relationship between clear vision and employee retention was moderate

(Saunders et al., 2016). An analysis of the findings showed that leaders of SMEs were not worried about creating and communicating a compelling vision. As a result of the absence of a compelling vision, employees were prepared to leave their current organisations in search of new organisations because there was nothing to rally employees behind. 72.6% of the respondents were of the view that leaders were not communicating a compelling vision. 56% of managers and owner-managers were of the view that leaders were not communicating a compelling vision to stakeholders. Lim et al. (2017) were of the view that when leaders articulate a compelling vision, followers become loyal and committed to following the leader towards achieving the shared vision. When a leader develops and communicates a compelling vision effectively, employees will identify themselves with the vision such that it becomes inconceivable for them to exit the organisation before they participate in the fulfilment of the vision.

5.4.2 Effective communication

A Spearman coefficient (rho) of 0.621 revealed that effective communication was positively related to employee retention and was statistically significant at 5% level of significance. A rho of 0.621 showed that the relationship between effective communication and employee retention was strong. An analysis of the findings showed that leaders in SMEs were not effectively communicating. 71.6% of the respondents were of the view that communication was predominantly one way. 80.7% of non-managerial employees reported that they were not given negative feedback in a humane way. This resulted in them being less loyal to the organisation and harbouring ambitions of exiting the organisation. These findings were consistent with the findings of Wakabi (2016).

5.4.3 Employee development

A Spearman coefficient (rho) of 0.477 revealed a positive correlation between employee development and employee retention and the relationship was significant at 5% level of significance. A rho of 0.477 showed a moderate relationship between employee development and employee retention. 81.2% of the respondents were of the view that SMEs had limited career progression avenues which affected the desire of employees to stay with the organisation. 90.1% of non-managerial and supervisory respondents were of the view that leaders were not interested in their careers. The

same respondents were of the view that their leaders were not supportive in terms of career development. When leaders are interested in the careers of their subordinates and are supportive, employees will begin to see the organisation as a family which requires their loyalty irrespective of occasional problems that may emerge. As such, the appetite to leave the family will decrease.

5.4.4 Fairness

A Spearman coefficient (rho) of 0.523 showed that fairness was positively correlated to employee retention and was significant at 5% level of significance. A rho of 0.523 showed a moderate relationship between fairness and employee retention (Saunders et al., 2016). 85.5% of non-managerial and supervisory respondents were of the view that they were not treated fairly although they valued fairness at work. 69% of the respondents believed that leaders had favourite employees. As such, if an employee was not among the favourites, it was time for them to move on and look for another organisation to work for where either they could become favourites of leaders or where employees were at least treated fairly.

5.4.5 Transparency and accountability

A Spearman coefficient (rho) of 0.539 showed a positive relationship between transparency and accountability and employee retention. A rho of 0.539 showed that the relationship was moderate (Saunders et al., 2016) and was significant at 5% level of significance. 65.5% of the respondents were of the view that leaders were not transparent. 84.8% of the respondents were of the view that leaders were not accountable while 88% of managers and owner-managers believed that leaders should not be accountable to their employees. These findings were consistent with the findings of Nemashakwe et al., (2023). When leaders are transparent and have nothing to hide, employees will believe that the leaders will do everything in the best interest of them and the organisation. Employees will love to work in an organisation where they can demand accountability from their leaders and will stay with that organisation for as long as it takes.

5.5 Research hypotheses

Five hypotheses were formulated for the study and table 5 below shows the t-statistics and p-values for the hypotheses and whether they were supported or not supported by empirical findings.

Table 5: Research hypotheses values

	t-statistic	p-value	Hypothesis	Decision
Clear vision contributes to employee retention	3.147	0.027	H1	Accepted
Effective communication contributes to employee retention	3.319	0.014	H2	Accepted
Employee development contributes to employee retention	2.637	0.036	H3	Accepted
Fairness contributes to employee retention	2.784	0.031	H4	Accepted
Transparency & accountability contributes to employee retention	2.968	0.029	H5	Accepted

5.5.1 Clear vision

The study tested the hypothesis that clear vision contributes to employee retention. The t-statistic for clear vision on employee retention was 3.147 and was greater than 1.96 (Nawanir, Teong & Othman, 2013). The p-value was 0.027 and was less than 0.05 (Firmansyah & Maemunah, 2021). The hypothesis was accepted and it was concluded that a clear vision contributes to employee retention.

5.5.2 Effective communication

The study tested the hypothesis that effective communication contributes to employee retention. The t-statistic was 3.319 and was above 1.96 (Nawanir et al., 2013). The p-value between effective communication and employee retention was 0.014 and was less than 0.05 (Firmansyah & Maemunah, 2021). The hypothesis was accepted and it was concluded that effective communication has a positive influence on employee retention.

5.5.3 Employee development

The study tested the hypothesis that employee development contributes to employee retention. The t-statistic for employee development on employee retention was 2.637 and was above 1.96 (Nawanir et al., 2013). A p-value of 0.036 was achieved and was less than 0.05 (Firmansyah & Maemunah, 2021). As such, the hypothesis was accepted and it was concluded that employee development positively contributes to employee retention.

5.5.4 Fairness

The study tested the hypothesis that fairness contributes to employee retention. The t-statistic for fairness on employee retention was 2.784 and was above 1.96 (Nawanir et al., 2013). The p-value obtained was 0.031 and was less than 0.05 (Firmansyah & Maemunah, 2021). The hypothesis was accepted and it was concluded that fairness contributes positively to employee retention.

5.5.5 Transparency and accountability

The study tested the hypothesis that transparency and accountability contribute to employee retention. The t-statistic was 2.968 and was above 1.96 (Nawanir et al., 2013). The p-value for transparency and accountability on employee retention was 0.029 and was less than 0.05 (Firmansyah & Maemunah, 2021). As such, the hypothesis was accepted and it was concluded that transparency and accountability have a positive influence on employee retention.

6.0 Conclusion

The study sought to determine whether effective leadership influences employee retention in SMEs. The study concluded that having and communicating a clear vision, effective communication, employee development, fairness, and transparency and accountability, which are all fundamental ingredients of effective leadership were all related and positively contributed to employee retention. Overally, the study concluded that effective leadership is a catalyst for enhancing employee retention in SMEs in Zimbabwe.

7.0 Recommendations

It is recommended that leaders should map the direction of their organisations by articulating and communicating a compelling vision to employees. They should foster open communication, communicate in a timely manner without withholding information unnecessarily and provide timely feedback to employees in a humane manner. Leaders should support employees in career development. They should make sure that resources are availed to those who want to improve themselves. Managers should take an active interest in the careers of their subordinates and should be prepared to act as their mentors.

In order for employees to stay with their organisations for longer periods of time, managers should be fair. They should desist from unfairly discriminating against employees. Organisational processes such as performance appraisal, disciplinary and grievance handling should not only be fair but should also be seen to be fair. If employees are to choose to stay with an organisation, managers should be transparent in everything they do and they should also be prepared to be accountable for their actions. Managers should desist from instilling fear in subordinates and engaging in retributive behaviour when employees become assertive.

8.0 Guidance for future research

The study was carried out in Bulawayo's Central Business Area which could limit the generalisability of its findings. Future researchers may extend the study to other geographical locations and sectors. The study adopted a quantitative design. Future researchers may also do either a qualitative or mixed methods research so as to compare the findings.

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