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The Influence of Participative and Supportive Path-Goal Leadership Styles on Employee Performance of Coffee Trading Companies in Kenya

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Abstract:

Purpose: The purpose of this study was to examine the extent to which supportive and participative path-goal leadership styles influence employee performance of coffee trading companies in Kenya.

Methodology: The study was guided by the positivism philosophy and used a descriptive correlational research design. The population for the study was 180 senior managers of coffee trading companies in Kenya. Using stratified random sampling technique, a sample size of 139 was determined from the total population and structured questionnaires were administered to collect primary data. Out of 139 questionnaires administered, 117 were successfully completed and returned. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data. The descriptive statistics were mean and standard deviation while the inferential analysis included factor analysis, correlational analysis, chi-square and regression analysis.

Results: Results of multiple linear regression analysis revealed that supportive leadership style did not significantly predict employee performance, $R^2 = 0.001$, $F(1, 110) = 0.118$, $p \leq .05$, $\beta = -0.040$, $p \leq .05$ but that participative leadership style significantly predicted employee performance, $R^2 = 0.865$, $F(1, 115) = 735.111$, $p \leq .05$, $\beta = 0.943$, $p \leq .05$. Task structure was found to moderate the relationship between path-goal leadership styles and employee performance, $R^2 = 0.094$, $F(5, 101) = 6.92$, $p \leq .05$, $\beta = 0.208$, $p \leq .05$.

Unique contribution to theory, practice and policy: The study provided a unique contribution to the theory and practice of path-goal leadership styles in a new perspective in terms of how supportive and participative leadership styles influence employee performance of coffee trading companies in Kenya. The study findings led to the recommendation that leaders of coffee trading companies should apply a participative leadership style with their employees. Constant communication and consultation between leaders and employees is healthy and beneficial for the organization and for optimal performance of employees. Future scholars should carry out a similar study for supervisory level to assess the effect of leadership styles across the spectrum of the organizations

Keywords: Path-Goal theory, supportive leadership style, participative leadership style, employee job performance

1. Introduction

1.1. Background of the Study

The success of any organization is highly dependent on the performance of employees and leaders constantly have to seek ways to enhance employee performance, (Rennie, Meaney, Hazlewood, Kumra & Dias, 2015). An argument posed by Kerpen (2016) is that people are not necessarily managed as they would desire to be managed and this results in varying levels of performance and staff retention. With the evolvement of the leadership discipline, many theories have emerged. One of these theories, the path-goal theory, advocates that the style of a leader has to fit with an employee and his or her work environment so that the leader can effectively guide the employees in the path to achieving the goals of the organization (House & Mitchell, 1974).

All leaders have unique styles. However, leaders do not necessarily use the same style in all situations. Ojokuku, Odetayo and Sajuyigbe (2014) consider leadership behavior or style as the manner of or the approach to providing direction, implementing plans, and motivating people. The path-goal theory which has been classified as a contingency theory explains leadership styles as a function of a leader, the characteristics of the followers, and the situation or

circumstances that he or she is operating under (Lussier&Achua, 2013). The four leadership styles under the path-goal theory are the directive leadership style, the participative leadership style, the supportive leadership style and the achievement oriented leadership style (Northouse, 2016).

Globally, studies have demonstrated significant relationships between leader behaviors and components of organizational performance with mixed findings and conclusions reached for specific leadership behaviors. For instance, in Malaysia, Mahdi, Mohd and Almsafir (2014) examined the effect of directive and supportive leadership styles on organizational commitment in four plantation companies. The results showed positive correlations between both styles and the three measures of organizational commitment namely normative, affective and continuance commitment. In Africa, a study of selected business organizations in Abuja, Nigeria was conducted by Mohammed, Yusuf, Sanni, Ifeyinwa, Bature and Kazeem (2014) to examine the effects of leadership styles on employee performance. The findings showed positive and significant associations between supportive leadership style and employee performance.

In Kenya, a study by Kiboss and Jemiryott (2014) examined the relationships of leadership styles used by principals and the satisfaction of secondary school teachers in Nandi South District, Kenya. The study which was also underpinned on the path-goal theory found a negative correlation between autocratic or directive leadership style and job satisfaction of the teachers. On the other hand, the study found positive associations between participative leadership style and employee performance. Head teacher using participative leadership style were able to motive and enhance teachers' commitment to duty and their performance.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Since Kenya gained independence in 1963, up until 1986, coffee earnings were Kenya's number one source of foreign exchange and accounted for about 40.6 per cent of the national foreign exchange earnings (Skouw-Rasmussen, Kapande, Eisler, Andersen & Gedremichael, 2014). Despite the continued global appreciation for the quality of Kenya coffee, the once thriving coffee industry has been struggling and its performance over the last two decades has been dismal and declining (AFFA, 2016). The Government instituted several policy and regulatory changes but without success. The President even appointed a task force to look into the sector and make recommendations for enhanced performance (Kieyah&Lesiyampe, 2016). Meanwhile, coffee trading companies in Kenya have been grappling with complex leadership challenges as leaders try to motivate their employees in the face of the multiple regulatory and policy changes (ICO, 2015), a declining turnover, constant pressure to cut costs to remain sustainable, resultant internal disgruntlement, accusations from other stakeholders for malpractices and for not doing enough to revive the once thriving sector (Mbithi, 2018). Despite the importance of the coffee trading companies who deal in 85% of the coffee produced in the country, the gaps in literature were evident in the area of their performance and there is an urgent need to undertake research in this area.

The deteriorating performance has resulted in a growing interest in research though nearly all the research appears to have focused on the cooperative sector. Ngeywo, Werunga, Biwott and Waliaula (2016) found that service delivery of employees in the coffee cooperatives could be improved by having qualified leaders. Baka (2013) recommended that more competent leaders should be employed by Kenya Planters Cooperative union to help meet the challenges of competitive business. Bagal, Belletti, Marescotti and Onori (2013) pointed out that the coffee industry has multiple operators but the situation is opaque from the perspective of some operators in the industry including in the area of leadership of coffee trading companies.

Employee performance is critical for the achievement of success, and the importance of the role of leaders in directing, guiding and motivating employees to attain organizational goals in our competitive business arena cannot be overstated. The coffee sector is very important for the country's economy and this study sought to fill existing knowledge gaps by exploring the influence of two path-goal leadership styles, supportive and participative leadership styles on employee performance of coffee trading companies in Kenya.

1.3. Research Purpose

The purpose of the study was to examine the influence of supportive and participative leadership styles on employee performance of coffee trading companies in Kenya.

1.4. Research Questions

- To what extent does supportive leadership style influence employee performance of coffee trading companies in Kenya?
- To what extent does participative leadership style influence employee performance of coffee trading companies in Kenya?

1.5. Research Hypothesis

- H01: Supportive leadership style does not have a significant influence on employee performance of coffee trading companies in Kenya.
- H02: Participative leadership style does not have a significant influence on employee performance of coffee trading companies in Kenya

2. Literature Review

2.1. Theoretical Review

The study was underpinned by the path-goal theory. The Path-goal theory has evolved following studies undertaken over a period of time. It was first introduced by Evans in the year 1970, then developed by House in 1971 and refined by House again in the year 1996 (Evans, 1970; House & Mitchell, 1974; House, 1996). The path-goal theory describes how a leader can provide support to subordinates on the path to goals by using specific behaviors contingent on the needs of the subordinates and the work situation. The four path-goal leadership styles are directive, supportive, participative and achievement-oriented leadership styles. The path-goal theory assumes flexibility on the part of leaders and suggests that leaders should choose behaviors that best suit subordinate needs and work situations. Essentially, a leader can help subordinates by selecting a style of leadership that provides what is missing in a particular work setting (Northouse, 2013).

2.2. Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 presents conceptual framework for the study. Conceptual frameworks are mental maps show the relationships between interplay of variables graphically and diagrammatically (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). This conceptual framework illustrated below comprises of the independent variables which are supportive and participative leadership styles and the dependent variable is employee performance.

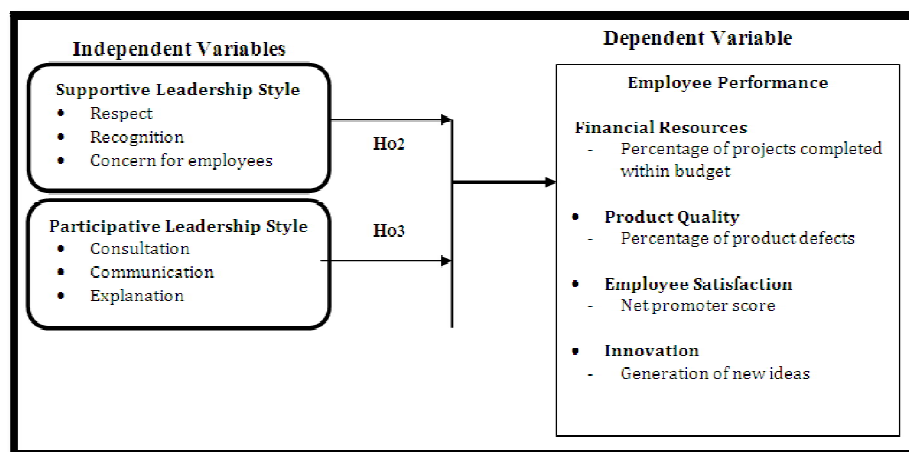


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

2.3. Empirical Review

2.3.1. Supportive Leadership and Employee Performance

Supportive leadership style is defined as leader behaviors that provide emotional support for employees and include expressions of concern for employees' needs and welfare (House, 1971). This section includes an empirical review of studies that demonstrate the effect of leaders deploying supportive leadership style on employee performance. The literature has been analyzed and is presented for the constructs for supportive leadership style for this study which were respect, recognition and concern for employees.

When managers respect their subordinates' way of doing things and trust their ability to do their work, subordinates tend to improve their outputs (Hocine et al., 2014). According to Euwema et al. (2014), trust, a vital component of leadership, has the ability to enhance the influence of the leader and therefore his or her effectiveness in motivating employees to achieving organizational goals. Trust is optimized under supportive leadership and the caring leader is able to connect with the followers by staying attuned with followers' needs and conveying concern and understanding of the follower's circumstances.

A study by Hocine et al. (2014) found that respectful leaders played a crucial role in improving the financial performance of the organization. When subordinates felt they were respected and valued for their contributions, they would be motivated to work even under minimal or no supervision leading to improvement of the profitability of the organization. The recommendation from these findings were that that managers should emphasize employees' development because concern for employee personal growth resulted in employees feeling they were valued and this tremendously influenced their enthusiasm for work and resulted in high levels of performance.

The findings from Aberdeen Group (2013) indicated that when leaders recognized positive behaviors of employees and demonstrated appreciation for their contributions, employees repeated those behaviors, remained engaged with the company and were motivated to keep performing. Employees whose contributions were recognized publicly felt special and were motivated to perform to optimal levels.

While a large majority of the studies showed that supportive leadership style positively influenced employee performance, an important finding by Caza, Zhang, Wang and Bai (2015) revealed that the external supportive

behavior demonstrated by the leader did not yield better performance in all situations. Where followers perceived their leaders were insincere, distrust followed and performance or output by them declined. Followers then felt they were being manipulated and resented the leaders who used supportive style only as a tool to achieve results from them. Leaders need to be perceived as sincere and genuinely care for their employees. This was consistent with the findings of Hassan and Ahmed (2011) who cautioned that leaders who were considered insincere and pretentious did not yield high performance from their followers. Trust in the leaders was therefore considered to be a necessary precursor for followers to perform optimally and leadership must exercise tact so as not to be perceived pretentious especially when they show care and concern to employees. Pimpa and Moore (2012) also emphasized the significance of employee perceptions of leader behavior in establishing a proper climate to draw out creativity and high performance from employees.

2.3.2. Participative Leadership Style and Employee Job Performance

Evans (1979) defined that participative leadership as the process of having a shared influence in decision making by a leader and his or her subordinates. This section includes an empirical review of studies that demonstrate the effect of leaders deploying participative leadership style on employee performance. The literature has been analyzed and is presented for the constructs for participative leadership style which for this study which were consultation, communication and explanation.

The results of a study (Pedraja-Rejas, Rodríguez-Ponce, & Rodríguez-Ponze, 2013) of 126 respondents from small and medium sized companies in Chile found that participative leadership style had a positive influence on employee effectiveness and this enhanced the percentage of tasks completed within budget. They proposed that participants are motivated by participation, by the acceptance of their opinions, suggestions and ideas in the decision-making process and therefore leaders should avoid making lone decisions and must collaborate with team members, provide a good work climate, be concerned with the team's well-being and treat them fairly. Another study by Lumbasi, et al. (2016) found that the combination of participative leadership style and achievement oriented leadership style yielded optimal employee performance.

A study by Khuong and Hoang (2015) of 320 auditors in Vietnam also found participative leadership style was positively associated with higher motivation in employees, stronger relationships between leaders and employees. The behavior of leaders of consulting and encouraging employee participation in decision-making resulted in motivated employees who freely shared information, discussed perspectives and collectively arrived at better decisions and ideas. Sagnak (2016) found that employees valued leaders who applied participative leadership style as they felt their opinions were valued and they were included in the decision making process. Employees experienced enhanced feelings of justice and trust and these behaviors resulted in optimizing employee satisfaction and performance.

On the other hand, a study by Murugesan (2012) found that the downside of using a participative style was that employees perceived the leaders as incapable of making decisions without them. Another downside according to Bhatti et al. (2012) is that the use of this style by leaders results in slowing down the pace of performance of employees. The suggestion therefore provided was that leaders should apply a participative approach when team work was considered essential and where the requirement for quality exceeded the need for speed to market. The findings of Iqbal, et al. (2015) however found that the behavior of leaders in engaging followers, obtaining their input and integrating such input before reaching decisions actually resulted in tasks being accomplished successfully by their preset deadlines.

Timmerman (2012) attributed the behavior of participative leaders in constantly deploying principles of engagement, involving employees in strategic discussions, actively listening and showing empathy to innovative ideas being evoked through the healthy discussions and found that employees were more committed to the organizational goals and gained personal growth from the participative process.

3. Research Methodology

This section illustrates the research philosophy, research design, target population, sampling design, data collection and data analysis methods used in the study.

The research philosophy adopted was positivism. The study adopted descriptive correlational research design to analyze the data collected and test the hypothesis. The population of the study was 180 senior managers and a sample size of 139 managers was arrived at using stratified random sampling.

The data was collected using self-administered questionnaire and then analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data. The descriptive statistics were mean and standard deviation while the inferential analysis included factor analysis, correlational analysis, chi-square and regression analysis.

4. Results and Findings

The results and findings of the analysis of the data are presented in this section based on the demographic information and research questions.

4.1. Demographic Information

Of the total respondents, 26.5% were finance managers, 21.4% were quality control managers, 23.1% were trading managers and 29.0% were human resource managers. In terms of gender, 48.7% were female while 51.3 were male. 17% of the respondents were over 55 years, about 59% were in the 41 to 55 years age bracket, 23% were in the 26 to 40 years age bracket and 1% were in the 18 to 25 years age bracket.

4.2. Supportive Leadership

4.2.1. Supportive Leadership Style and Employee Performance

The descriptive analysis conducted for the influence for supportive leadership style on employee performance is summarized in Table 1 below.

Supportive Leadership Style	N	(M)	(SD)
My supervisor respects the employees in our organization	114	4.17	.775
My supervisor recognizes employees for their achievements	114	4.18	.779
My supervisor shows concern for employees	112	4.19	.822
Influence of Supportive Leadership Style on effective use of Financial Resources by Employees			
To what extent does the respect your supervisors have for employees influence the effective use of financial resources by employees in your organization?	112	2.63	1.107
To what extent does recognition of employee achievements by your supervisor influence the effective use of financial resources by employees in your organization?	112	2.76	1.109
To what extent does you're the concern for employees by your supervisor influence the effective use of financial resources by employees in your organization?	112	2.73	1.090
Influence of Supportive Leadership Style on Product Quality Produced by Employees			
To what extent does respect by your supervisor for employees influence the quality of products produced by employees in your organization?	112	2.04	1.378
To what extent does recognition of employee achievements by your supervisor influence the quality of products produced by employees in your organization?	112	2.05	1.400
To what extent does your supervisor's concern for employees influence the quality of products produced by employees in your organization?	112	2.04	1.375
Influence of Supportive Leadership Style on Employee Satisfaction			
Considering the respect your supervisor has for employees, how likely are you to refer friends and family to work in your organization?	107	4.29	.456
Considering the recognition of employee achievements by your supervisor, how likely are you to refer friends and family to work in your organization?	107	4.35	.497
Considering the concern for employees by your supervisor, how likely are you to refer friends and family to work in your organization?	107	4.22	.441
Influence of Supportive Leadership Style on Innovation			
To what extent does respect for employees by your supervisor influence the generation of new ideas in your organization?	107	2.04	1.205
To what extent does recognition of employee achievements by your supervisor influence the generation of new ideas by employees in your organization?	107	2.17	1.277
To what extent does the concern for employees by your supervisor influence the generation of new ideas by employees in your organization?	107	2.03	1.193

Table 1: Mean (M) and Standard Deviation (S.D) for Supportive Leadership Style

The findings revealed that on average, the managers were neutral in their opinion on whether or not recognition of the employee achievements influences the effective use of financial resources ($M = 2.76$, $SD = 1.109$), managers disagreed that concern for employees by supervisors' concern influences the quality of products produced ($M = 2.04$, $SD = 1.375$). The findings further revealed that managers agreed that, on considering the recognition of employees by supervisors, they are very likely to refer friends and families to work in the organization ($M = 4.35$, $SD = 0.497$) but disagreed that the respect supervisor showed for employees influences the generation of new ideas ($M = 2.04$, $SD = 1.205$).

4.2.2. Correlation between Supportive Leadership Style and Employee Performance

The results in Table 2 show the Pearson's correlation coefficients results which reveal that supportive leadership style did not significantly relate to employee performance $r(112) = -0.33$, $p \leq .05$.

		Supportive Leadership	Employee Performance
Supportive Leadership	Pearson Correlation	1	-.033
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.731
	N	114	112
Employee Performance	Pearson Correlation	-.033	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.731	
	N	112	112

Table 2: Correlation Between for Supportive Leadership Style and Employee Performance

4.2.3. Chi-Square Test for Supportive Leadership Style and Employee Performance

The study sought to examine whether there was a statistically significant association between supportive leadership style and employee performance. The results of the Chi-square test in Table 3 did not indicate the existence of a statistically significant association between supportive leadership style and employee performance $\chi^2(48, N = 117) = 131.748, p \leq .05$.

	Supportive Leadership Style
Chi-Square	131.748*
Df	48
Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	.056

*Chi-Square is significant at $p \leq .05$ (2-tailed).

Table 3: Chi-Square Test for Supportive Leadership Style

4.2.4. Regression Analysis and Hypothesis Testing

Multilinear regression analysis was conducted to establish the effect of supportive leadership style on employee performance among senior managers of coffee trading companies in Kenya. The study tested the hypothesis:

- H_{01} : Supportive leadership style does not have a significant effect on employee performance of coffee trading companies in Kenya.

4.2.4.1. Regression Model Summary

The results in Table 4 indicate that supportive leadership style explained 0.01% variation in employee performance among the senior managers of coffee trading companies, $R^2 = .001$. Therefore, only 0.1% of the changes in employee performance among senior managers could be explained by the supportive leadership style. The findings of the regression model for employee performance and supportive leadership style is shown in Table 4.

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.033 ^a	.001	-.008	.917

Table 4: Regression Model Summary for Supportive Leadership Style

a. Predictors: (Constant), Supportive Leadership Style

b. Dependent Variable: Employee Performance

4.2.4.2. Regression ANOVA

The regression ANOVA results are represented in Table 5.

ANOVA ^a						
Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
1 Regression	.100	1	.100	.118	.731 ^b	
Residual	92.594	110	.842			
Total	92.694	111				

Table 5: Regression ANOVA for Supportive Leadership Style and Employee Performance

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Supportive Leadership Style

ANOVA is significant at the 0.05 level (2 tailed)

The results in Table 5 indicate that supportive leadership style did not significantly predict employee performance, $\beta = .040, t(111) = 0.344, p \leq .05$. Therefore, a unit increase in supportive leadership style would not lead to a significant increase in employee performance among the senior managers of coffee trading companies in Kenya. The study therefore concluded that supportive leadership style did not significantly predict employee performance of senior managers of coffee trading companies in Kenya.

4.2.4.3. Regression Coefficients

The results of the regression coefficient for supportive leadership style and employee performance are presented in Table 6.

Coefficients ^a					
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	
1	(Constant)	2.908	.491		.000
	Supportive Leadership	.040	.116	.033	.731

Table 6: Regression Coefficients for Supportive Leadership Style and Employee Performance

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Performance

The results in Table 2d indicate that supportive leadership style did not significantly predict employee performance, $\beta = .040$, $t(111) = 0.344$, $p \leq .05$. Therefore, a unit increase in supportive leadership style would not lead to a significant increase in employee performance among the senior managers of coffee trading companies in Kenya. The study therefore concluded that supportive leadership style did not significantly predict employee performance of senior managers of coffee trading companies in Kenya.

4.3. Participative Leadership Style

4.3.1. Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive analysis conducted for the influence for participative leadership style on employee performance is summarized in Table 3 below.

Participative Leadership Style	N	(M)	(SD)
In my company, my supervisor consults employees to discuss problems and generate workable solutions	117	3.98	.731
In my company, my supervisor regularly communicates with employees on developments	117	3.92	.721
In my company, my supervisor listens to explanations from employees	117	4.08	.709
Influence of Participative Leadership Style on the effective use of Financial Resources			
To what extent does the consultation between your supervisor and employees to discuss problems and generate workable solutions influence the effective use of financial resources by employees in your organization?	117	3.12	.618
To what extent does regular communication between your supervisor and employees on all developments influence the effective use of financial resources by employees in your organization?	117	3.12	.659
To what extent does the role played by your supervisor in listening to explanations from employees influence the effective use of financial resources by employees in your organization?	117	3.12	.632
Influence of Participative Leadership Style on Product Quality Produced by Employees			
To what extent do consultations between your supervisor and employees in discussing problems and generating workable solutions influence the quality of products produced by employees in your organization?	117	1.64	1.133
To what extent does regular communication between your supervisors and the employees on all developments influence the quality of products produced by employees in your organization?	117	1.67	1.167
To what extent does the role played by your supervisor in listening to explanations from employees influence the quality of products produced by employees in your organization?	117	1.69	1.102
Influence of Participative Leadership Style on Employee Satisfaction			
Considering the consultation by your supervisor of employees to discuss problems and generate workable solutions, how likely are you to refer friends and family to work in your organization?	117	4.21	.518
Considering the regular communication on developments between your supervisor and employees, how likely are you to refer friends and family to work in your organization?	117	4.20	.513
Considering how your supervisor listens to explanations from employees, how likely are you to refer friends and family to work in your organization?	117	4.20	.495
Influence of Participative Leadership Style on Innovation			
To what extent does consultation of employees by your supervisor for problem solving to generate workable solutions influence the generation of new ?	117	2.52	.847
To what extent does regular communication between your supervisor and employees on all developments influence the generation of new ideas by employees in your organization?	117	2.40	.708
To what extent does listening to explanations of the employees by your supervisor influence the generation of new ideas by employees?	117	2.38	.668

Table 7: Mean and Standard Deviation for Participative Leadership Style

The results in Table 7 indicate that, on average, the respondents agreed that consultation between supervisors and employees to discuss problems and generate workable solutions influences the effective use of financial resources by employees in the organization ($M = 3.12$, $S.D = 0.618$); managers disagreed that regular communication between supervisors and the employees on developments influences the quality of products produced ($M = 1.67$, $S.D = 1.167$); managers agreed that, considering how supervisors listen to explanations from employees, they were very likely to refer friends and family to work in the organization ($M = 4.20$, $S.D = 0.513$); managers were neutral as to whether or not consultation of employees by supervisors to discuss problems and generate workable solutions influences the generation of new ideas in the organization ($M = 2.52$, $SD = 0.847$).

4.3.2. Correlation between Participative Leadership and Employee Performance

Correlation analysis was conducted to examine the strength and direction of the relationship between participative leadership style and employee performance of senior managers of coffee trading companies in Kenya. Table 8 shows the results of the correlations between the measures of participative leadership style and employee performance. The result of the Pearson's correlation coefficient reveals a strong positive and significant correlation between participative leadership style and employee performance $r(117) = .956, p \leq .05$.

Correlations			
		Participative Leadership Style	Employee Performance
Participative Leadership Style	Pearson Correlation	1	.956*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	117	117
Employee Performance	Pearson Correlation	.956**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	117	117

Table 8: Correlation between Participative Leadership Style and Employee Performance

*Correlation Is Significant At the 0.05 Level (2-Tailed)

4.3.3. Chi-Square Test for Participative Leadership

The study sought to examine whether there was a statistically significant association between participative leadership style and employee performance. Table 9 shows the results of the chi-square test on participative leadership style and employee performance.

	Participative Leadership Style
Chi-Square	590.058*
Df	133
Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	.000

Table 9: Chi-Square Test on Participative Leadership Style

*Chi-Square is Significant at the 0.05 Level (2-Tailed)

The results in Table 9 indicated there was sufficient evidence to conclude chi-square test indicated that there was sufficient evidence to conclude that there is a statistical significant association between participative leadership style and employee performance $\chi^2(133, N = 117) = 590.06, p \leq .05$.

4.3.4. Regression Analysis and Hypothesis Testing

The study tested the hypothesis:

- H_{02} : Participative leadership style does not have a significant influence on employee performance of coffee trading companies in Kenya.

4.3.4.1 Regression Model Summary

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.930 ^a	.865	.864	.270

Table 10: Regression Model Summary for Participative Leadership Style

The study findings in Table 10 indicate that participative leadership style explained 86.5% variation in employee performance among the senior managers of coffee trading companies, $R^2 = .865$.

4.3.4.2. Regression ANOVA

Table 11 presents the results of the regression ANOVA for participative leadership style and employee performance and these findings indicate that the model was statistically significant in linking participative leadership style and employee performance among senior managers of coffee trading companies in Kenya, $F(1, 115) = 735.111, p \leq .05$. Thus, the findings indicate that the effect of participative leadership style on employee performance was statistically significant. The model was significant in giving explanation on the relationship. Basing on the significance of the F-statistic, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis that participative leadership styles significantly influences employee performance was accepted.

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	53.583	1	53.583	735.111*	.000
	Residual	8.383	115	.073		
	Total	61.966	116			

Table 11: Regression ANOVA for Participative Leadership Style

**Regression ANOVA is significant at the 0.05 level (2 tailed)

a. Dependent Variable: Employee performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Participative leadership

4.3.4.3. Regression Coefficients

Multiple linear regression analysis was conducted with the purpose of determining the magnitude and direction of the relationship between participative leadership style and employee performance among senior managers of coffee trading companies in Kenya.

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.285	.139		2.056	.042
	Participative leadership	.943	.035	.930	27.113	.000

Table 12

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Performance

The results in Table 12 indicates that participative leadership style positively and significantly predicted employee performance, $\beta = 0.943$, $t(116) = 27.113$, $p \leq .05$. This implies that a unit increase in participative leadership style would lead to a significant increase in employee performance among the senior managers of coffee trading companies in Kenya by 0.943 units. The study hence concluded that participative leadership style positively and significantly predicted employee performance of senior managers of coffee trading companies in Kenya.

5. Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendation

5.1. Discussion of the Findings

5.1.1. Supportive Leadership Style

The first objective of the study was to establish the extent to which supportive leadership style influenced employee performance of coffee trading companies in Kenya. The findings from correlational analysis showed that supportive leadership style did not have a significant relationship with employee performance, $r(112) = -0.033$, $p \leq .05$. Interestingly, the findings of this study contradict the findings of a number of studies. The study differs with that of Shin et al. (2016) who explored the multilevel dynamics involving team leaders' supportive leadership style and the number of projects completed within budget, and found that supportive leadership style positively and significantly affected the number of projects completed within budget. Khalid et al. (2012) also found that supportive leadership style negatively affected job stress for employees, and the reduced levels of stress in worker meant helped them feel more satisfied with their work and this positively affected employee performance.

The Chi-Square test results revealed no association between supportive leadership style and employee performance, $\chi^2(48, N=117) = 131.748$, $p \leq 0.05$. The study finding contradicts Euwema et al. (2014) who stated that supportive leadership styles involved critical factors that led to better performance such as leader sensitivity to individual and group needs, care for individuals and a focus on harmonic working relations. These factors fostered trust in the leader-followers relationships and enhanced performance. Meanwhile, the findings of study by Hassan and Ahmed (2011) revealed that leaders can only be effective in using supportive leadership style if followers perceived them as sincere and authentic. Their findings indicated that subordinate trust by the followers was a vital component and where employees did not have such trust, then employee performance was not enhanced. Subordinate trust for leaders was not examined in this study so it is not possible to assertively determine the mediating role of such subordinate factors for this study.

5.1.2. Participative Leadership Style

The second objective of the study was to examine the extent to which participative leadership style affected employee performance. The correlation analysis indicated that participative leadership style was significantly related to employee performance, $r(117) = 0.956$, $p \leq .05$. The results of this study concur with the findings of Ijah (2012), who studied the effects of leadership styles of secondary school principals on the staff and found that participative leadership style had a positive and significant relationship with job performance, ($r = 0.8114$). The findings also agree with those of Pedraja-Rejas et al. (2013) who revealed that participative leadership style had a positive influence on employee effectiveness measured by the percentage of tasks completed within budget. In the study, employees responded positively and were motivated by leaders being open to and accepting their opinions, suggestions and ideas in the decision-making process.

The results of the Chi-Square test revealed a significant association between participative leadership style and employee performance of senior managers of coffee trading companies in Kenya, $\chi^2(133, N=117) = 590.06, p \leq .05$. The findings of the study concur with the findings of Salman et al. (2016) who examined the mediating role of work engagement on employee performance and established a positive association between participative leadership style and work engagement and employee performance. The findings of the study disagreed with Bhatti et al. (2012) whose findings indicated that participative leadership style resulted in a slower pace of employee performance.

5.2. Conclusion

5.2.1. Supportive Leadership and Employee Performance

The multiple linear regression results established that supportive leadership style had no significant influence on employee performance among senior managers of coffee trading companies in Kenya, $R^2 = .001, F(1, 111) = .118, p \leq .05; \beta = .040, p \leq .05$. The null hypothesis that supportive leadership style does not have a significant influence on employee performance was not rejected. Based on the result, the study concluded that leaders who engage supportive leadership style on their employees do not enhance employee performance and that they may mix the use the leadership style with other leadership styles to achieve employee performance.

5.2.2. Participative Leadership and Employee Performance

The multiple linear regression results determined that participative leadership style was significant in predicting employee performance among senior managers of the coffee trading companies in Kenya, $R^2 = .865, F(1, 116) = 735.111, p \leq .05; \beta = 0.943, p \leq .05$. The null hypothesis that participative leadership style had no significant influence on employee performance was therefore rejected. This led to the conclusion that when leaders engage employees and allow them to participate in important organizational functions such as decision making, employee performance is enhanced.

5.3. Recommendations

5.3.1. Recommendations for Improvement

5.3.1.1. Supportive Leadership and Employee Performance

The study established that supportive leadership style did not significantly predict product quality, employee satisfaction or innovation but significantly predicted effective use of financial resources. Leaders of coffee trading companies should be mindful of how employees perceive their actions. Care and concern for employees are vital considerations and should not be ignored. Considering the results of this study, it is evident that leaders of coffee trading companies should ensure they are perceived as being sincere. Employees like to be recognized and respected for the value they bring to the organization and so it is important that leaders should strive to gain the trust of their followers and are not perceived as being pretentious. The leaders should use other leadership styles like participative leadership style in combination with supportive leadership style to draw out better overall performance from employees.

5.3.1.2. Participative Leadership and Employee Performance

The study established that participative leadership style was significant in predicting financial resources, product quality, employee satisfaction and innovation. The study revealed that participative leadership style significantly predicted employee performance. Leaders in coffee trading companies should utilize participative leadership style to manage their employees and that constant communication and consultation between supervisors and employees is very healthy and beneficial to the organization and to the performance of employees.

5.3.2. Recommendation for Further Research

The study recommends that a similar study should be carried out for all supervisory level managers and even lower level managers to assess the influence of path-goal leadership styles across the spectrum of the organizations.

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