

LEADERSHIP STYLES AND PERFORMANCE OF PREMIER LEAGUE FOOTBALL CLUBS IN KENYA

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Abstract

The challenges of coping with the current uncertainties in sports management has put many football clubs and on the edge. To survive depends on the leadership provided by the managers and football administrators who have the mandate and expected to drive and achieve organizational objectives as well as motivate staff in order to achieve desired results. The objective of this study was to establish the relationship between leadership styles and performance of Kenyan Premier League football clubs. This study will thus make special contribution to the existing knowledge, address and provide the background information to research organizations and individual researchers who will use it as basis for conducting research in the same area. The study adopted institutional theory, theory of planned behaviour and goal setting theory. The research design adopted was a descriptive research design that is cross sectional in nature. The study target population was 66 comprising staff of Football Kenya Federation; Coaches of Kenyan Premier League clubs, CEOs of Kenyan Premier League clubs as well as team captains (players) of the clubs. During data collection, a total of 54 respondents were sampled, among them 9 staff at Football Kenya Federation, 17 coaches of Kenyan Premier League clubs, 11 CEOs of clubs and 17 team captains. Questionnaires were used for data collection among the population. A pilot study was conducted to test the accuracy of the instruments to ensure that the data was reliable and valid. The data was later analysed by use of SPSS and inferential statistics and presented using tables and figures. Descriptive statistics including mean and standard deviation was adopted in the analysis. The data was first coded and organized into concepts from which generalization was made of the entire population. The relationship between the variables was determined using regression model of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20. The research findings indicate that leadership style explains 45% of the performance of Kenyan Premier League clubs. According to the study findings, transformational leadership to a large extent impacted the performance of clubs more than any other style (mean of 4.3 out of 5). The study therefore concluded that leadership style is a critical ingredient in the performance of premier league clubs in Kenya and primarily determines the success of teams.

Introduction

The challenges of coping with uncertainty in sports management today have put many football clubs on the edge. These clubs are trying to survive the heat brought about by competition and the mover of such strategy towards clubs' survival is the leadership provided by the managers and football administrators. Management have the mandate and expected to drive and achieve organizational objectives and motivate staff in order to achieve desired results. Shafie, Baghersalimi, and Barghi (2015) describe the importance of leadership style in organization and especially where people are apparently the biggest asset of the organization. The drivers of companies are managers and the people they manage give life to the organization. Organizational leadership is the most critical in realization of the set objectives since it's a vital factor in the improvement of organizational performance and organizational failure and success depends on effectiveness of leadership at all levels. According to Dimitropoulos (2010) football today has become a capital market and the main characteristics of which is the investment of uncounted billions. Excessive expenditure for transfers, Astronomical sums for signing contracts with footballers, battles among sponsors to get the star footballer to advertise and promote their products, negotiations to obtain the television rights and the leadership is on the verge of finding which model will attract potential investors.

Performance of a football club may carry different meaning for different persons depending on the nature of the relationship between the individual entity and the football club. Football stakeholders who may be interested in the performance of the football club include fans, the sponsor, the betting companies, club owners, the media, the football players, the government and the local community. Performance can be measured as the result on the play field, the hype generated, and the revenue amongst others. The performance of the clubs in the eyes of the supporters is the most influential in the running of the football clubs, however this is the most difficult to estimate due to the fact that expectations of this group is the most difficult to comprehend (Gonzalez & Picazo, 2010). Poor planning or lack of it, coupled with underperformance, has played a big role in investors' hesitance to delve into the murky waters that is club football in Kenya.

There are various types of leadership styles such as democratic leadership style, autocratic leadership style, Laissez-Faire leadership style, Transformational leadership style and Transactional leadership style among others (Nanjundeswaraswamy & Swamy, 2014). Democratic leadership style is where people take a more participative role in the decision-making process. Autocratic leadership style is one where the leaders tell their employees what they want done and how they want it accomplished, without getting the advice of their followers (Puni, Ofei & Okoe, 2014). Laissez-faire leadership is where the leader allows the employees to make the decisions. However, the leader is still responsible for the decisions that are made. This is used when employees are able to analyse the situation and determine what needs to be done and how to do it. Transformational leadership style is the leadership style in which leaders encourage, inspire and motivate employees to innovate and create change that will help grow and shape the future success of the company (McCleskey, 2014). Transactional leadership is a style of leadership in which leaders promote compliance by followers through both rewards and punishments.

Lohrke, Bedeian and Palmer (2010) established that there is a direct link between participation of organization leadership style and success of strategies in the organization. They further also established that management commitment is a sound quality policy which states organization corporate vision and mission of the quality of the service or product the organization produces. Leaders who search for the most effective leadership style may find that a combination of styles is effective because no one leadership style is best (Darling & Leffel, 2010). If leadership style applied is good and can give a good direction to subordinates, then it creates confidence and work motivation to employees, thus increasing employee morale which also leads to better employee performance. Leaders must work together with subordinates/employees to achieve better performance (Sundi, 2013).

According to Pinder (2008) efficiency of football clubs' performance can be determined by natural aptitude that the organization acquires over time. The reason why a person is motivated to perform certain tasks but he does not have the required knowledge for the job which they are required to do; work can still be affected due inadequate skills required. Positive staff perception in terms of ability, motivation and a conducive working environment are important to enhance and drive interests of employees to accomplish organizational goals. Andrews (2007) football clubs' performance levels can be enhanced with motivation and economic wellbeing can be increased as well. In other words, if the staffs are not motivated to perform their duties, their personal satisfaction cannot be achieved and as result performance level will be low hence decrease in productivity. Once productivity is reduced the finances of that organization will go down in the market. Kreitner and Kinicki (2014) workers' ability in determining the effectiveness of performance is crucial for the organization, although staff with high motivational level can still perform-well if they possess sufficient skills. In order for staff to remain relevant at the work place their skills and ability to do carry out in any assignment given to them by their employers. Individual performance can be identified by role perception (Locke, 2011).

The Kenyan Premier League is a private entity incorporated on 31st October 2003 under the companies Act chapter 486 of the laws of Kenya. The entity is owned by 18 clubs that participate in the league and has affiliation to Football Kenya Federation (FKF). The responsibilities of FKF and KPL is to organize and coordinate the annual events in a calendar year, training coaches, match commissioners, referees and youth development programmes. KPL and FKF are also responsible for appointing match officials for premier league matches. Winners of the league represent the country in the CAF Champions League aside from being rewarded with a trophy. Every calendar season, the league relegates the last two teams to the lower leagues while accepting two teams promoted from the lower league to take up the open slots.

Literature Review

Theoretical Literature Review

The study is anchored on the Traits Theory. Trait is among the oldest theories of leadership that was discovered in 1940s. The theory indicates that great leaders are born and have distinguished personality that makes them better leaders and they are different from other people's especially the followers. Stogdill (1948) observed that leadership situations vary significantly and place different demands on leaders and leading to the emergence of behavioural and situational approaches. The behavioural theory emphasises the point that conduct of a given leader provides a greater satisfaction to the people they lead. However, this approach has its own limitation that states that particular action and behaviour of a leader maybe relevant and effective at a particular point of time while at another it may be ineffective and irrelevant which makes this approach a time factor which is an important element that needs to be considered.

Empirical Literature Review

Leadership has been researched on over the years and there is no clear definition of leadership that has been universally accepted. There are many definitions of leadership by various scholars; Talat (2015) asserts that leadership is a wide spread process which calls for delegation of power, authority and responsibility that direct, persuade and guide followers towards achieving organizational and personal goals.

Ragins (2017) defines leadership as a process by which an individual influences others to accomplish objectives and directs a firm in a way that makes it more coherent and cohesive. This can be achieved through leadership attributes such as ethics, values, skills, character, knowledge and beliefs. According to Ragins (2017) leadership is an integral part of sharing resources, vision and value to induce change in a positive way, it's the ability to build up zeal and confidence among the followers.

Ulukan (2012) did a study on impact of the democratic leadership style on the footballers' performance. Participants included 76 male and 18 female coaches from a variety of amateur football teams. The study found that coaches' leadership on sport teams is very important for a player to achieve a common goal. Hence, there is a significant relationship between leadership styles. At the end of the study, it showed that coaches and peer leaders exhibited different leadership behaviours. However, the results indicated that democratic leadership style influenced the team members and enhanced the team's performance.

Hayes (2018) pointed that it is important to note that football management is a complex task and success of a football team is likely due to numerous factors that extend beyond the leadership style of the coach. These include availability of resources, governance, quality of players and the stability of the team. However, studies have shown that there exists a strong relationship between team cohesion and success and team cohesion is related to leadership behaviour (Ramzaninezhad & Kehstan, 2017). Results of the study conducted by Carron, Bray and Eys (2016) indicated that increases in players' perceptions of team cohesion was positively correlated with perceptions of their coach exhibiting higher levels of social support, positive feedback, democratic behaviour and lower levels of autocratic behaviour.

Crust and Lawrence (2016) indicated that for a football team to perform better it does not matter whether an autocratic style is more effective than a democratic, or supportive one, but rather whether the style is right for the situation and for the team. The importance of coach flexibility cannot be ignored, with a critical skill being the ability to perceive the needs of the team in the moment and to adapt as necessary to maximise team performance.

Ramzaninezhad and Keshtan (2017) conducted a study on relationship between coach's leadership styles and team cohesion in Iran football clubs professional league (2006-2007). Athletes (n=264) from 12 football teams completed the perceived version of the leadership scale for sport (LSS) and the group environment questionnaire (GEQ). Both questionnaires were administered at the end of season. The findings support the significant relationship between team

cohesion and leadership behaviour, and highlight the interdependence in team sports, which can significantly affect the need for team cohesion that contributes to team success.

Hypothesis

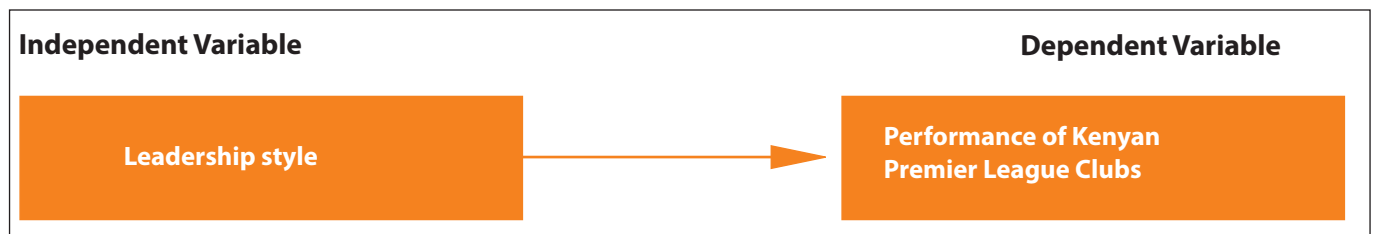
The following hypothesis was used to test the relationship depicted in the study objectives;

H_{01} : Leadership style has no significant relationship with performance of Kenyan Premier League football clubs.

Conceptual Framework

The research is guided by the theoretical structure. The conceptual framework presents and defines the philosophies that attempt to explain the research problem under study with a keen focus on the specific variables being sought in the study.

Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework for theory, independent and dependent variables



Methodology

Orodho (2009) defines research design as general layout that is used to answer research questions. The research problem will be conducted using a descriptive research design that is cross sectional in nature. The study describes and defines the subject matter by profiling issues under study (Cooper & Schindler, 2008). According to Kombo and Tromp (2009) a research design that is descriptive is appropriate for studies that have specific issues where problems have been defined.

The descriptive research design enables description and observation of a subject without influencing it; it is used for obtain better understanding of the subject under the study. Descriptive research design is limited in geographic scope hence tend to be logically simpler and easy to conduct besides providing the basis upon which other research can be carried out (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). The researcher adopted this method in obtaining the most relevant, recent and in-depth information on the study topic. This also helped the researcher to critically analyse the problem in question with a view of drawing more specific and detailed information that is useful to the research study and most often than not it is used as a precursor to statistical research that provide valuable pointers as to which study variables are test worthy quantitatively (Cooper & Schindler, 2008).

According to Kombo and Tromp (2009) target populations are units that have observable characteristics that the study uses to generalize the finding. Borg and Grall (2009) described target population as common set of study units which the researcher wishes to generalize results. The study target population was composed of Staff at Football Kenya Federation, Coaches of Kenya Premier League clubs, Kenya Premier League CEOs and team captains. These are the people and institutions that are involved in football management in Kenya. The target population of the study are tabulated in table 3.1

Table 3.1: Target Population

Category	Target population	Percentage
Football Kenya Federation Staff	12	18
Kenya Premier League Coaches	18	27
Kenya Premier League CEOs	18	27
KPL Team Captains	18	27
Total	66	100

Kothari (2004) defines a sample as a subject of a population that is selected to represent population characteristics. Since the target population of this study was small and manageable, the study employed census method for the study. Census is a way of gathering information from each and every member of the group. This method is appropriate since it gives all the respondents from each of the four strata, equal chance to participate. Participants were stratified into the following categories; Staff at Football Kenya Federation, Coaches of Kenya Premier League clubs, Kenya Premier League CEOs and team captains.

The study used questionnaire and interview guide to collect primary data. The researcher used questionnaires to collect quantitative data. Kombo and Tromp (2009) describe questionnaires as a list of standard questions prepared to fit certain inquiry. A questionnaire is an instrument of research that contains questions on the variables of the study (Kothari, 2004). Questionnaire is more efficient and economical tool for descriptive research for the sample size that is chosen. According to Orodho (2009) questionnaires measures likelihood of straight, blunt and even answers. The researcher used Likert-type format of questionnaires and further divided into two sections, section A captured demographic information while section B was organized according to research questions and objectives.

To ensure validity of data collecting instruments the researcher ensured that the questionnaires are thoroughly checked for validity and assessed the relevance of the questions and content of the study. The researcher used both content and face validity to ascertain validity of the questionnaire. Kombo and Tromp (2009) describe validity as the correctness, capacity of interpretations founded on study finding. The research conducted the pilot study to validate the study questionnaire. Content validity draws an extrapolation from assessment scores to large domain of similar to those on the test. Gillham (2008) explains that understanding and expertise protected by items tested in large area dynamics. This is important in finding out any deficiencies in the questionnaire and rectifying them before the actual questionnaire are issued out to the respondents.

The data was analysed with the aid of descriptive statistics. The data analysis tool that was used is SPSS and the use of inferential statistics and simple tabulations and presentations of the report using spread sheets. Graphs, charts and tables were used for presenting data that was coded first and organised according to study variables from which generalizations were made.

This study also used inferential statistics to show the relationship that exists between the study variables. This includes correlations and regression analysis. The study used Pearson correlation matrix. Pearson correlation helped in predicting and describing the association between the variables in terms of magnitude and direction. The correlation test was conducted at the 5% level of significance with a 2-tailed test. Thus, the significance critical value is 0.025 above which the association is deemed to be insignificant and vice versa.

The analysis of variance (ANOVA) was checked to reveal the overall model significance. In particular, the calculated F statistic was compared with the tabulated f statistic. A critical p value of 0.05 was used to determine whether the overall model was significant or not. A multiple linear regression model was used to test the significance of the influence of the independent variable on the dependent variable. To estimate model of composite index of organizational performance measure, α is a regression constant or intercept, $\beta_1 - \beta_3$ is the regression coefficient. ϵ_1 is the random error term that accounts for the viability of the organization performance that cannot be explained by the linear effect of the predictor variables. The multiple linear regression models are as laid below.

The regression equation is:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 L_{s_1} + \alpha$$

The equation is established as follows;

Y it stands for the dependent research variable which in this case is firm performance,

β_0 it stands for the coefficient of the regression model,

β_1 stands for the gradient of the model equation,

L_{s_1} is the Leadership style,

α stands for the model error term that is usually distributed at a mean score of zero and for the purpose of this study it will be considered to be zero.

Results of the Study

From the study, 54 out of 66 target respondents filled in and returned the questionnaire contributing to 82% response rate. This response rate was good, representative and conforms to Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) stipulation that a response rate of 50% is adequate for analysis and reporting; a rate of 60% is good and a response rate of 70% and over is excellent. The questionnaires that were not returned, 18% (12) were due to respondents not being available to fill them in time and even with persistent follow-ups, there was no positive feedback from them. The response rate demonstrated the willingness of the respondents to participate in the study.

The study sought to establish the extent to which respondents agreed with the statements given with regards to how leadership styles influence performance of premier league football club. According to the study findings obtained, most of the respondents agreed to a very great extent that transformational leadership style affect performance of football clubs as depicted by the mean score of 4.30. In addition, respondents to a large extent agreed that the supervisor gives timely feedback that is correctional that determines and affects performance, FKF doing enough to promote performance of football clubs and that autocratic leadership style affect performance of football clubs in Kenya, 3.69, 3.58 and 3.56 respectively.

Democratic leadership style enhances performance of football team, laissez fair leadership style affect performance of football clubs in Kenya, footballs clubs are managed by qualified board members or officials and that supervisor gives supportive supervision to employees while she or he maintains mutual working relationship influence performance of football clubs in Kenya to a large extent as illustrated by mean score of 3.54, 3.52, 3.46 and 3.43 respectively. Lastly, respondents indicated that Transactional leadership style affect performance of football clubs in Kenya to a moderate as indicated by mean score of 3.09.

Figure 4.1: Leadership Styles and Performance of Premier League Football Club

	Mean	STDev
Democratic leadership style enhance performance of football team	3.54	1.059
To what extent does transformational leadership style affect performance of football clubs in Kenya	4.30	0.690
Laissez fair leadership style affect performance of football clubs in Kenya	3.52	1.211
Autocratic leadership style affect performance of football clubs in Kenya	3.56	1.239
Transactional leadership style affect performance of football clubs in Kenya	3.09	1.154
Footballs clubs in Kenya are managed by qualified board members or officials	3.46	0.712
My supervisor gives supportive supervision to employees while she or he maintains mutual working relationship.	3.43	1.021
The supervisor gives timely feedback that is correctional that determines and affects performance	3.69	0.896
FKF doing enough to promote performance of football clubs in Kenya	3.58	1.196

Regression Analysis

The study investigated the contribution of leadership styles on performance of premier league football club. The study established that leadership styles contributes to 45% to performance of premier league football club. This is as indicated by R.673, indicating a strong positive correlation and R².453 as shown in table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Model Summary for Leadership Styles

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.673	0.453	.429	.101316

ANOVA for Leadership Styles

In this study, the research tested the linearity between leadership styles and performance of premier league football club. Based on the output, account reporting had a value Significance of 0.009 which is much less than 0.05. Thus, we can conclude that there was linear relationship between the leadership styles and performance of premier league football club.

Table 4.2: ANOVA for Leadership Styles

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	.067	1	.067	16.105	.009
	Residual	.370	89	0.00416		
	Total	.436	90			

Model Summary

The study establishes that there was significant relationship between leadership styles and performance of premier league football clubs (sig=.009, sig <0.05). The results presented in table 4.7 show that the influence Leadership styles on performance of premier league football club was significant (F=16.105, p <0.05).

To show correlation between the study variables and their findings the study used the Karl Pearson's coefficient of correlation (r). From the findings, it was clear that there was a positive correlation between leadership styles and performance of premier league football clubs as shown by a correlation figure of 0.523.

Table 4.3: Karl Pearson's Coefficient of Correlation

		Performance of	KPL clubs	Leadership styles
Performance of Premier League Football clubs	Pearson Correlation	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)			
Leadership styles	Pearson Correlation	.523		1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.0032		

Multiple regression analysis was conducted to determine the relationship between leadership styles and performance of KPL footballs clubs. As per the SPSS generated the equation is:

$$Y = 1.308 + 0.558X_1$$

Table 4.4: Regression Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	1.308	0.342		1.623	3.57-02
Leadership styles	0.558	0.310	0.172	4.342	2.76-02

The regression equation above established that, taking all factors constant at zero, club productivity adopted will be 1.308. The findings presented also shows that taking all other variables at zero, a unit increase leadership styles will lead to a 0.558 increase of performance of KPL footballs clubs

Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

Summary of Study Results

The effect of leadership styles on performance of premier league football clubs, the study found out that transformational leadership style affect performance of football clubs to a very large extent. The supervisor gives timely feedback that is correctional determines and affects performance of clubs in Kenya and that FKF is doing enough to promote performance of clubs.

On performance of Premier League Football clubs, the study established that points gained by team, skills of players, previous games won and trophy awarded are the main indicators of performance of premier league football clubs. Many respondents were more inclined to offer positive feedback to the top performing teams in the league.

Conclusion

The study concluded that transformational leadership style affect performance of football clubs to a very large extent. The supervisor gives timely feedback that is correctional determines and affects performance of football clubs in Kenya and that FKF is doing enough to promote performance of football clubs.

Transformational leaders are able to derive more insight and feedback from their teams and thus are able to get information and foresight in what is required to perform better.

Leadership is key to drive performance in clubs and the stakeholders need to look keenly at the quality and style of leaders they put into office.

On performance of Premier League Football clubs, the study concludes that points gained by team, skills of players, previous games won and trophy awarded are the main indicators of performance of premier league football clubs.

Recommendations

The Ministry of Sports, Culture and Arts should establish training programmes and facilitate the training of personnel for football clubs so as to enhance their performance in Premier League.

Leadership training across the league is critical especially considering the competitiveness of the sport globally. Therefore, the Kenyan Premier League Ltd as well as Football Kenya Federation need to invest in developing transformational leaders who will be instrumental in driving the football industry into the future.

At the club level, the various individuals and institutions involved in running these teams should put emphasis on the leadership capabilities of the managers to drive success.

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