INFLUENCE OF AFFILIATIVE LEADERSHIP STYLE ON ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE OF COMMERCIAL STATE CORPORATIONS IN KENYA

John Gatithi Wachira, Dr. Kabare Karanja and Prof. Mike Iravo

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[1*]John Gatithi Wachira

[1]Postgraduate student: Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology

[*]Corresponding Author's Email: JWachira@kplc.co.ke

[2]Dr. Kabare Karanja and [3]Prof. Mike Iravo

Lecturers: Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology

Abstract

Purpose: The purpose of this study was to determine the influence of affiliative leadership style on organizational performance of commercial state corporations in Kenya.

Methodology: The study adopted Cross sectional survey research design. The target respondents were 35729 middle level staff in the 20 commercial state corporations in Kenya. Stratified sampling was used to select 384 respondents for the study. This study used primary data which was collected through use of structured questionnaires. Data from the questionnaires were analysed using Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS) to derive descriptive results. Pilot study was conducted to measure the reliability and validity of the questionnaires. The reliability of the instrument was tested using the Cronbach Alpha method.

Results: revealed that there was a positive and significant relationship between affiliative leadership and organizational performance (r=0.316, p=0.000). This was supported by a calculated t-statistic of 11.524 which is larger than the critical t-statistic of 1.96 (Kothari, 2011) and a p value of less than the conventional 0.05.

Unique contribution to theory, practice and policy: Based on the finding that affiliative leadership positively affect organizational performance, the study recommends that the management should ensure that there is a strong bond across the teams and provide regular positive feedback which can have a powerful impact on performance

Keywords: A*ffiliative leadership, performance*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The performance of state corporations has been a matter of on-going concern in an environment of resource scarcity and mounting needs. In 2011/12, eleven commercial State Corporations made losses, compared to twelve in 2010/11 and sixteen in 2009/10. This represents 21%, 23% and 31% respectively of all commercial oriented government owned entities. The pattern of stock of publicly guaranteed debt to state corporations in Kenya shows a decline in 2007 from 2006, but has been on an upward trend since then. Current Performance of State Corporations (Presidential task force on Parastatal reforms, 2013).

As currently described, state corporations performance has been mixed, characterized by notable successes, but also significant failures. Poor governance has led to resource loss and burdening the public purse which has also contributed to failure to provide strategic direction, facilitating their emasculation. It is also important to observe that there are notable failures and missed opportunities in the history of State Corporations in Kenya. The Kenya Railways, Kenya Airways, Kenya Meat Commission, Mumias Sugar company and Uchumi supermarkets Limited, to mention but a few, are some of the commercial based state corporations which are a shell of their former self, despite their significant role in creation of and realization of the nation of Kenya. The lack of strategic vision of what these entities could and should do has led to selection of sub-optimal choices that have cascaded negative effects into the wider economy. The Kenya Meat Commission represents another missed opportunity for transforming the livestock industry in Kenya. The sad story that is the mismanagement of state corporations has meant that Kenya has lost opportunities to other countries in the region and the world. This has worked to the detriment of the economy and the people of Kenya in terms of lost wealth creation opportunities (Presidential task force on Parastatal reforms, 2013).

To address the challenges facing commercial based state corporations in Kenya, the Presidential Taskforce on Parastatal Reforms of 2013 made some recommendations, geared at transforming the operations and performance of the corporations to ensure that they generate value for money expended as well as reduce dependence on the Exchequer. Among the recommendations was Undertake culture and attitude change training given that institutions are as good as the people who manage them.

Previous studies conducted in Kenya on State corporations did not focus on the influence of affiliative on the performance of these state corporations. Wekesa *et al* (2015) carried out a study on the influence of visioning on organizational commitment in Kenyan State Corporations. Linyiru *et al* (2015) undertook a study on influence of corporate entrepreneurship on performance of state corporations in Kenya. Koech *et al* (2012) conducted a study on effect of leadership styles on organizational performance at State Corporations in Kenya. Njoroge (2012) sought to determine talent management practices in commercial state corporations in Kenya. Miring'u (2011) conducted a research on an analysis of the effect of corporate governance on performance of commercial state corporations in Kenya while Minja (2010) carried out a study on leadership practices: a case of selected corporate institutions in Kenya.

It is against this background that this study was conducted to address the research gap, and also provide a better understanding through empirical evidence of the influence of affiliative

leadership on organizational performance of state corporations from a Kenyan context. The study thus seeks to determine the influence of affiliative leadership style on organizational performance of commercial state corporations in Kenya.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Framework

The Trait theory of leadership focuses on identifying different personality traits and characteristics that are linked to successful leadership across a variety of situations. This line of research emerged as one of the earliest types of investigations into the nature of effective leadership and is tied to the "great man" theory of leadership first proposed by Thomas Carlyle in the mid-1800s. According to Carlyle, history is shaped by extraordinary leaders. According to the trait theory of leadership, a successful leader is one who possesses certain traits or qualities. These qualities can be deducted by analyzing the personality of successful leaders in different walks of life

This ability to lead was something that people were simply born with, Carlyle believed, and not something that could be developed. Carlyle's ideas inspired early research on leadership, which almost entirely focused on inheritable traits. Some of the implications of the trait theory of leadership are that: Certain traits produce certain patterns of behavior: These patterns are consistent across different situations and people are born with these leadership traits

According to Shriberg and Shriberg (2011) the trait theory of leadership is generally considered the first modern theory of leadership became popular during the second half of the twentieth century and, despite scholarly criticism, has continued to be popular. The theory states that certain innate traits are common to leaders. Although the identified traits vary, the most common are intelligence, self-confidence, determination, integrity, and sociability."

Early studies on leadership focused on the differences between leaders and followers with the assumption that people in leadership positions would display more "leadership traits" than those in subordinate positions. What researchers found, however, was that there were relatively few traits that could be used to distinguish between leaders and followers. For example, leaders tended to be higher in things such as extroversion, self-confidence, and height, but these differences tended to be small.

There has been important research on trait theory of leadership: Melvin (1948) studies suggest that leadership is the result of the interaction between the individual and the social situation and not the result of a predefined set of traits. Stodgill (1974) conducted additional studies which find that both traits and situational variables contribute to leadership. Kouzes and Posner (1997) surveyed more than 1,500 managers and found that the top four traits associated with good leadership are being honest, forward looking, inspiring, and competent. Stogdill's (1974) review of leadership traits identified qualities that included: intelligence, knowledge, integrity, control, social skills, self-confidence and responsibility

2.2 Literature Review

First described by Goleman (2002), the affiliative leader promotes harmony among followers, and helps to solve conflict. By making sure followers feel connected to each other, this leader is adept at building teams. Followers can expect to receive a lot of praise from this style; unfortunately, poor performance may go unchecked. Goleman (2002) believed that certain leadership styles were more effective under certain conditions. This is known as situational leadership. The affiliative style is thought to be most effective when morale is low due to stress, and teambuilding is needed. For example, when a department reorganizes itself, this type of leader will help the followers understand how they fit together in the new organization.

An affiliative leader promotes harmony among his or her followers and helps to solve any connected to each other. Typically the followers will receive much praise from this style of leader, however poor performance tends to go unchecked (Goleman, 2002). In affiliative leadership, the leader creates people connections and thus harmony within the organization.

It is a very collaborative style which focuses on emotional needs over work needs. Done well, it is often used alongside visionary leadership. It is best used for healing rifts and getting through stressful situations. It has a positive impact on climate.

In affiliative style of leadership, there is a focus on people, teambuilding, bonding and forging alliances. This style is useful in creating teams or for healing dysfunctional relationships: the affiliative leadership style is highly focused on team building, teamwork and increasing trust. The emphasis lies on the functioning and achievements of the group, not of the individual. Affiliative leaders value harmony and good relationships above tangible results. They ensure that there is a strong bond across the team and provide regular positive feedback which can have a powerful impact on performance. This is a very nurturing and non-confrontational leadership style. An affiliative leader creates harmony and builds emotional bonds. "People come first" is the slogan of this leadership style. The affiliative style should be used when leaders try to build team harmony, increase morale, improve communication, or repair broken trust (Goleman, 2013).However, this style should not be used alone since it may allow poor performance to go uncorrected as well as affiliative general, and the affiliative style has positive impacts to the organization.

Leaders who practice this style of leadership focus on group dynamics. Their goal is to create strong teams that work well together. This style focuses on lowering stress levels and creating good relationships between members of the team. This type of leadership is especially effective when there have been problems within the organization and morale and trust is low. New leaders coming in to an organization after a catastrophe will find this style of leadership especially effective. It provides a strong foundation of trust and helps meet people's need to be understood and valued. In most situations leaders will benefit from making use of the affiliate leadership style in addition to other styles. The affiliate leader is renowned for building teams; for putting employees first. Employees can expect a great deal of praise and feedback and there is normally a good sense of interconnection with the team. This style is most effective when there are situations of low morale and poor teamwork. Utilizing this method will, in the longer term, create good team bonding and heightened team performance. The negative aspect can be that

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poor performance will go by without feedback as the Leader may feel that conflict will upset the balance. In this instance, one must be mindful to adjust their style to suit positive feedback when necessary (Bennis, 2007).

Affiliative leadership style emphasizes the importance of team work, and creates harmony in a group by connecting people to each other. Goleman (2002) argues this approach is particularly valuable "when trying to heighten team harmony, increase morale, improve communication or repair broken trust in an organization." But he warns against using it alone, since its emphasis on group praise can allow poor performance to go uncorrected. "Employees may perceive," he writes, "that mediocrity is tolerated. "The affiliative leader works to create emotional bonds that bring a feeling of bonding and belonging to the organization. If this style were summed up in one phrase, it would be "People come first." The affiliative style works best in times of stress, when teammates need to heal from a trauma, or when the team needs to rebuild trust. This style should not be used exclusively, because a sole reliance on praise and nurturing can foster mediocre performance and a lack of direction.

The affiliative leader wants everybody to get along. Keen to be seen as 'just like one of us', he or she strives to create harmony within the team by focusing on people rather than tasks. Affiliative leaders trust that if they treat their employees well, they will be rewarded with loyalty and high performance. This style tends to have a positive impact on team performance and is used by the best leaders in conjunction with authoritative and coaching, to create high performing climates. Affiliative leadership style is used when managing a group of high performers or expert. The affiliative style can help ensure that they get on and work well together. It's also useful when providing support to a team member experiencing difficulties. It recognizes individuals' emotional needs (Goleman, 2013). Affiliative leadership focuses on the emotional needs of the team and the people in it. Affiliative leaders often value people's feelings and emotions more than the completion of the task itself. They are perceptive and sensitive to the emotional undercurrents in the team and use their skills to help the team create positive relationships based on mutual trust, respect and support. The affiliative style is appropriate when there are rifts in a team, and when motivation is needed at stressful times or when connections between people or divisions need to be strengthened. Affiliative leaders are good at connecting people to each other and as such they create a positive climate in which to work.

Affiliative leadership promotes collaboration and relationships which indirectly drive better performance, loyalty and commitment. Affiliative leadership can be used to help participant conflicts or used as a guiding principle to form positive inclusive team relationships by making sure followers feel connected to each other. This style is also very useful for team building. Leaders who practice this style of leadership focus on group dynamics. Their goal is to create strong teams that work well together. This style focuses on lowering stress levels and creating good relationship between members of the team. This type of leadership is especially effective when there have been problems with trust and helps meet people's need to be understood and valued. In most situations leaders will benefit from making use of the affiliate leadership style in addition to other styles.

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study adopted Cross sectional survey research design. The target respondents were 35729 middle level staff in the 20 commercial state corporations in Kenya. Stratified sampling was used to select 384 respondents for the study. This study used primary data which was collected through use of structured questionnaires. Data from the questionnaires were analysed using Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS) to derive descriptive results. Pilot study was conducted to measure the reliability and validity of the questionnaires. The reliability of the instrument was tested using the Cronbanch Alpha method.

4.0 RESULTS

4.1 Descriptives

The third objective was to determine the effect of affiliative leadership and organizational performance. The respondents were asked to indicate in their opinion the extent to which affiliative leadership in the organization affect performance. The findings are as shown in table 1.

Table 1: Extent of Democratic Leadership Influence on Performance

Extent	Frequency	Percent
Low extent	35	12
Moderate extent	40	13
Large extent	213	75
Total	**288**	**100**

From the findings 75% of the respondents indicated that affiliative leadership influences organizational performance to a large extent, followed by 13% who indicated that affiliative leadership influences organizational performance to a moderate extent and 12% who indicated that affiliative leadership influences organizational performance to a low extent.

Descriptive analysis was conducted on affiliative leadership. For interpretation purposes, strongly agree and agree were grouped together to be agree, strongly disagree and disagree were grouped together as disagree. The results were presented in percentages, means and standard deviations as shown in table 2 below.

Table 2: Affiliative Leadership and Organizational Performance

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean	Standard Deviation
The top management focuses on emotional needs of employees over other needs	0.69%	5.90%	15.97%	50.35%	27.08%	3.97	0.85
The executive focuses on	0.69%	4.17%	20.14%	48.61%	26.39%	3.96	0.83

empathy, building relationships, and communication with employees							
The executive works on healing rifts in a team to motivate people during stressful circumstances	0.00%	4.51%	14.58%	53.47%	27.43%	4.04	0.78
The executive 's slogan is "People come first" when serving the organization	1.39%	5.56%	13.19%	53.82%	26.04%	3.98	0.86
The top management focuses on building teams that makes sure their followers feel connected to each other	0.69%	4.86%	13.54%	56.60%	24.31%	3.99	0.8
The executive focuses on group dynamic and team work	1.04%	6.60%	14.58%	47.22%	30.56%	4	0.9
The executive creates and promotes harmony, building emotional bonds and helps resolve conflict	0.35%	5.21%	22.92%	46.88%	24.65%	3.9	0.84
The top management values harmony and good relationships above tangible results	0.35%	4.86%	19.44%	47.92%	27.43%	3.97	0.83
Average						**3.98**	**0.84**

Results in Table 2 indicated that majority of the respondents who were 77.43% (50.35%+27.08%) agreed with the statement that The top management focuses on emotional needs of employees over other needs. The statement had a mean score 3.97 and a standard deviation of 0.85. This implies that most of the respondents were agreeing to the statement and response variation was very low.

The results also showed that majority of the respondents 75% (48.61%+26.39%) agreed to the statement that the executive focuses on empathy, building relationships, and communication with employees. The statement had a mean score of 3.96 and a standard deviation of 0.83. This implies that most of the respondents were agreeing to the statement and the variation in response was very low.

Further, the results indicated that majority of the respondents 80.90% (53.47%+27.43%) agreed to the statement that The executive works on healing rifts in a team to motivate people during stressful circumstances. The response had a mean score of 4.04 and standard deviation of 0.78. This indicated that most of the respondents were agreeing to the statement and that the response variation was low. These results are supported by those of Ochieng and Prince (2010) who highlighted that effective communication, robust conflict resolution mechanisms and a unified team are essential in creating an organizational culture that would be characterized by high performance.

Furthermore, the results showed that majority of the respondents who were 79.86% (53.82%+26.04%) agreed with the statement that the executive's slogan is "People come first" when serving the organization. The statement response had a mean of 3.98 and a standard deviation of 0.86. This indicates that most of the respondents were agreeing to the statement and the response variation was very low.

Additionally, the results indicated that majority of the respondents who were 80.91% (56.60%+24.31%) agreed that The top management focuses on building teams that makes sure their followers feel connected to each other. The statement had a mean of 3.99 and a standard deviation of 0.8. This indicated that most of the respondents were agreeing with the statement and the variations in responses were low. Bennis (2007) observed that affiliative leadership style is most effective when there are situations of low morale and poor teamwork. Utilizing this method will, in the longer term, create good team bonding and heightened team performance.

In addition, results indicated that majority of the 77.78% (47.22%+30.56%) agreed with the statement The executive focuses on group dynamic and team work. The statement had a mean of 4.00 and a standard deviation of 0.90. This is indicative that most of the respondents were agreeing to the statement and the variation in response was very low.

The results also showed that majority of the respondents who were 71.53% (46.88%+24.65%) agreed that the executive creates and promotes harmony, builds emotional bonds and helps resolve conflict. The statement had a mean score of 3.90 and a standard deviation of 0.84 which implies that most of the respondents were agreeing to the statement and that the variation in responses was low. These results concur with that of Fiedler (2013) who found that leaders are either relationship motivated or task motivated. Relationship motivation leaders are those who are highly concerned with the interpersonal relationships between leader and followers. Successful performance of the task is of secondary importance to this type of leaders.

Finally, the results revealed that majority of the respondents who were 75.35% (47.92%+27.43%) agreed to the statement that the top management values harmony and good relationships above tangible results. The statement had a mean of 3.97 and a standard deviation of 0.83 which indicates that most of the respondents were agreeing to the statement and that the variation in response was low.

Overall, the average mean of the responses was 3.98 which means that majority of the respondents were agreeing to the statements in the questionnaire on visionary leadership. The standard deviation was 0.84 meaning that the responses were clustered around the mean response.

4.2 Inferential Analysis

Table 3 presents the model fitness for used for regression model in explaining the study phenomena.

Table 3: Model Fitness

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate

.344[a]	0.11	0.09	0.41023

Affiliative leadership was found to be satisfactory in explaining organizational performance of commercial state corporations in Kenya. This is supported by coefficient of determination also known as the R square of 11%. This means that affiliative explains 11 % of the variations in the dependent variable which is organizational performance. Bennis (2007) observed that affiliative leadership style is most effective when there are situations of low morale and poor teamwork. Utilizing this method will, in the longer term, create good team bonding and heightened team performance.

Table 4: Analysis of Variance

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	2.477	8	0.31	4.584	.000
Residual	46.952	279	0.168		
Total	49.429	287			

Table 4 provides the results on the analysis of the variance (ANOVA). The results indicate that the overall model was statistically significant. Further, the results imply that the independent variable which is affiliative leadership is a good predictor of organizational performance. This was supported by an F statistic of 4.584 and the reported p value (0.000) which was less than the conventional probability of 0.05 significance level. Goleman (2012) found a direct relationship between affiliative leadership and organizational performance

Table 5: Regression of Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	3.064	.260		11.789	.000
The top management focuses on emotional needs of employees over other needs	-.004	.036	-.009	-.117	.907
The executive focuses on empathy, building relationships, and communication with employees	.065	.029	.130	2.199	.029
The executive works on healing rifts in a team to motivate people during stressful circumstances	.017	.032	.032	.541	.019

The executive 's slogan is "People come first" when serving the organization	-.017	.033	-.035	-.525	.600
The top management focuses on building teams that makes sure their followers feel connected to each other	.056	.041	.011	.191	.028
The executive focuses on group dynamic and team work	.066	.033	.144	2.021	.044
The executive creates and promotes harmony, building emotional bonds and helps resolve conflict	.031	.029	.064	1.076	.283
The top management values harmony and good relationships above tangible results	.033	.030	.067	1.120	.264

Regression of coefficients results in table 5 showed that management's focus on emotional needs of employees and organizational performance had a negative and insignificant relationship (r=-0.004, p=0.048). The results also revealed that empathy, building relationships, and communication and organizational performance had a positive and significant relationship (r= 0.065, p=0.029). The results also revealed that healing rifts in a team to motivate people and organizational performance had a positive and significant relationship (r=0.017, p=0.019). The results also revealed that 'People come first' slogan and organizational performance had a negative and insignificant relationship (r= -0.017, p=0.60). The results also showed that building teams and organizational performance had a positive and significant relationship (r=0.056, p=0.028). In addition, the results showed that team work and organizational performance has a positive and significant relationship (r= 0.066, p=0.044). The results also revealed that promoting harmony, building emotional bonds and organizational performance has a positive and insignificant relationship (r= 0. 031, p=0.283). Lastly, valuing harmony and organizational performance had a positive and insignificant relationship (r=0 .033, p=0.264).

Table 6: Optimal Model for Affiliative Leadership

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.612	.227		11.524	.000
	Affiliative Leadership	.316	.058	.308	5.484	.000

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Regression coefficients in Table 6, revealed that there was a positive and significant relationship between affiliative leadership and organizational performance (r=0.316, p=0.000). This was supported by a calculated t-statistic of 11.524 which is larger than the critical t-statistic of 1.96 (Kothari, 2011). These results match with Goleman (2013) that this style tends to have a positive impact on team performance and is used by the best leaders in conjunction with authoritative and coaching, to create high performing climates.

The model for affiliative leadership is:

$Y=2.612+0.316X_1$

Where;

Y=Organizational Performance

X_1= Affiliative Leadership

5.0 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMENDATION

5.1 Summary of Findings

The findings revealed that affiliative leadership were satisfactory in explaining project performance. The analysis of the variance (ANOVA) results indicated that the overall model was statistically significant. Further, the results implied that the independent variable which is affiliative leadership is a good predictor of project performance.

Regression of coefficients showed that management's focus on emotional needs of employees and organizational performance had a negative and insignificant relationship (r= -0.004, p=0.048). The results also revealed that empathy, building relationships, communication and organizational performance had a positive and significant relationship (r= 0.065, p=0.029). The results also revealed that healing rifts in a team to motivate people and organizational performance had a positive and significant relationship (r= 0.017, p=0.019). The results also revealed that 'People come first' slogan and organizational performance had a negative and insignificant relationship (r= -0.017, p=0.60). The results also showed that building teams and organizational performance had a positive and significant relationship (r=0.056, p=0.028). In addition, the results showed that team work and organizational performance has a positive and significant relationship (r=.066, p=0.044). The results also revealed that promoting harmony, building emotional bonds and organizational performance has a positive and insignificant relationship (r= 0. 031, p=0.283). Lastly, valuing harmony and organizational performance had a positive and insignificant relationship (r=0 .033, p=0.264). Overall findings indicated that there was a positive and significant relationship between affiliative leadership and organizational performance.

5.2 Conclusion

The study concluded that affiliative leadership and organizational performance have a positive and significant relationship. Focusing on empathy, building relationships and communication with employees encourages them towards achieving the organizational goals. Team building for the employees helps in creating harmony thus providing a conducive work environment. Supportive communication also improves the performance of the employees.

5.3 Recommendation

Based on the conclusion that affiliative leadership positively affect organizational performance, the study recommends that, the management should ensure that there is a strong bond across the teams and provide regular positive feedback which can have a powerful impact on performance.

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