

Influence of Principals' Supportive Leadership Style on Tutors' Support for Implementation of Performance Appraisal of Tutors in Public Primary Teachers Training Colleges in Kenya

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ABSTRACT

The study objectives sought; to establish the influence of principals' supportive leadership style on tutors' support for implementation of performance appraisal in public primary teachers training colleges in Kenya. The study employed descriptive research design. The target population comprised of 840 tutors and 21 principals drawn from the 21 public teachers training colleges in Kenya as of 2021. Stratified proportionate random sampling was used to select 271 tutors in teachers' training colleges in Kenya. Census was used to select all the 21 principals of training colleges in Kenya. Primary data were collected using questionnaire for tutors and interview guide for the 21 Principals. The study findings demonstrated that supportive leadership style of principals showed a significant positive effect on tutors' support for performance appraisal ($\beta = 0.386$, $p < 0.001$). The study concluded that principals' leadership styles supportive is critical determinants in enhancing tutors' engagement and commitment to the appraisal process. There is need for the college management to provide the necessary teaching and training materials to support the effective implementation of performance appraisal programmes. There is also need for tutors to present their past output so that it can inform supportive principal what is necessary for a better working environment. The study also recommends that the MoE, alongside college management, prioritize the creation of policies that promote a supportive and safe working environment. This could include mentorship programs for tutors, flexible scheduling, and recognition and reward systems to acknowledge tutors' professional growth and accomplishments.

Key Words: Supportive Leadership Style , Tutors' Support, Implementation, Performance Appraisal, Public Primary Teachers Training Colleges

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Leadership plays a critical role in the success of any organization, including Teacher Training Colleges (TTCs), where the type of leadership employed significantly influences the level of support principals receive from teaching staff (Hunde, 2019; Mshelia & Olukayode, 2023). The leadership style adopted by principals is crucial in shaping the implementation of performance appraisals for tutors, which is essential for maintaining high-quality education standards. As educational institutions strive to meet international quality benchmarks, principals' leadership styles are becoming increasingly important in gaining and maintaining accreditation, directly impacting the appraisal processes within TTCs (Parrish, 2015).

Globally, inclusivity and equity in educational settings are of paramount importance. Principals who adopt leadership styles that foster inclusive environments are more likely to support performance appraisals that align with modern educational requirements. This inclusivity extends to the needs of all students, including those with special requirements, and directly influences the effectiveness of performance appraisals within TTCs (Sahlin & Eriksson-Zetterquist, 2016; Mwangi, 2013). The evolving demands of 21st-century education, such as the need for critical thinking, problem-solving, and digital literacy, also necessitate leadership styles that support these skills among tutors, further influencing performance appraisals (Shields & Hesbol, 2020).

Teacher Training Colleges play an essential role in shaping the future of education by preparing qualified and motivated teachers who directly influence the quality of primary education. The leadership within these colleges impacts not only the preparation of aspiring educators but also sets the standards for teaching and learning across the educational spectrum. The effectiveness of performance appraisals is closely tied to the leadership styles employed, as supportive leaders create conducive environments that enhance tutor engagement with the appraisal process (Al-Sada, Al-Esmael & Faisal, 2017).

However, the implementation of performance appraisals in TTCs has faced significant challenges, primarily due to a lack of support from tutors. Studies indicate that tutors often feel excluded from the appraisal process, citing issues such as unfairness, lack of feedback, and perceived unjust treatment by principals (Dal Corso et al., 2019; Maharaj, 2019). The failure of principals to adopt supportive leadership styles that involve tutors in setting appraisal targets and providing constructive feedback has led to demotivation, declining tutor performance, and ultimately, poor outcomes for TTCs (Muthuri, Momanyi & Nduku, 2019).

In Kenya, the leadership styles of principals are crucial in shaping the effectiveness of performance appraisals within TTCs. Principals are expected to monitor and evaluate the performance appraisal process, reporting their findings to relevant authorities. The supportive leadership style, characterized by respect, emotional support, and genuine concern for tutors, has been linked to greater job satisfaction and improved support for performance appraisal processes (Darling-Hammond & Cook-Harvey, 2018; Thuku, Kalai & Tanui, 2019). Despite this, many principals fail to meet these expectations, resulting in a disconnect between leadership practices and the needs of tutors in supporting performance appraisals.

Statement of the Problem

Despite its implementation since 2012, the revised performance appraisal system for teachers in Kenya has been shrouded in controversy and uncertainty. While intended to enhance teacher effectiveness, research by Wesaya (2019) paints a stark picture of teacher dissatisfaction and concerns. The system, they allege, focuses primarily on tangible elements like classrooms and lesson plans, neglecting the crucial aspect of student learning outcomes. This raises critical questions about the system's design and, more importantly, its true impact on teacher development. In this context, principals emerge as powerful figures whose leadership styles can significantly influence the success or failure of the appraisal system within Teacher Training Colleges (TTCs). Here, where lecturers mould future educators responsible for equipping Kenya's youth with vital skills, the stakes are even higher. Yet, a disturbing reality persists. As highlighted by the Teachers Service Commission (2016), current leadership structures within Kenyan educational administration prioritize control over fostering effective leadership. This neglect of leadership development translates into principals adopting styles that fall short of meeting the needs of their faculty, as argued by Muga et al. (2017). In TTCs specifically, where performance appraisal plays a central role in shaping future educators, the impact of inappropriate leadership styles is particularly detrimental. Despite initiatives like KEMIs' leadership training programs (2016), tutors continue to express dissatisfaction and concerns about the appraisal system, perceiving it as unfair and ineffective.

However, the current body of research offers only fragmented insights into this complex landscape. While existing studies have explored both principals' leadership styles and teacher performance appraisal in isolation, none have delved into the crucial interrelationship between these two elements within the context of TTCs. Research on leadership styles primarily focuses on their impact on tutor job satisfaction or retention, while studies on performance appraisal tend to analyse it through the lens of tutor perception and performance. This leaves a critical gap in our understanding of how different leadership styles influence tutors' attitudes and engagement with the appraisal process in TTCs.

Therefore, this study aimed to bridge this gap by addressing the following fundamental question: How do principals' leadership styles influence tutors' support on implementation of performance appraisal in public primary Teacher Training Colleges in Kenya?

Objectives of the Study

- i) To determine the extent to which principals' supportive leadership style influences tutors' support for implementation of performance appraisal of tutors in public primary teachers training colleges in Kenya.

Research Hypothesis

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between Principals' supportive leadership style and tutors' support for implementation of performance appraisal in public primary teachers training colleges in Kenya

LITERATURE REVIEW

Concept of Performance Appraisal

Performance appraisal (PA) is a systematic process that evaluates the job performance of tutors, assessing their overall contribution to the college, including lesson organization, class control, instructional activities, and professional conduct (Bednall, Sanders & Runhaar, 2014; Gruman & Saks, 2015). The PA process involves several stages: performance planning, ongoing feedback, employee input, performance evaluation, and performance review. Performance planning sets expectations, ongoing feedback provides continuous guidance, employee input includes self-assessment, performance evaluation compares achievements against targets, and performance review synthesizes these elements to guide future improvements (Pulakos, 2014).

In Teacher Training Colleges (TTCs), PA assesses various aspects of tutors' roles, such as teaching quality, time management, and professional conduct. The principal plays a key oversight role, monitoring the appraisal process and reporting on its effectiveness. The outcomes of PA influence critical management decisions, including training, promotion, and assignment of tutors (Odhiambo, 2016). Despite its benefits, PA faces challenges like subjectivity, bias, and vague performance standards, which can lead to dissatisfaction and inconsistencies (Niven & Lamorte, 2016; Armstrong & Landers, 2018).

Best practices in PA emphasize setting clear, measurable objectives, frequent feedback, self-evaluation, and the inclusion of diverse feedback sources, such as 360-degree feedback, which enhances the appraisal's credibility and utility (Aguinis, 2019; Tee & Ahmed, 2014). The integration of technology further streamlines the PA process, making it more efficient and transparent (Kassen, 2022). PA serves as a developmental tool, identifying areas where tutors need further support, and encouraging a growth mindset by framing appraisal as an opportunity for professional development rather than mere evaluation (DeNisi & Murphy, 2017).

Effective feedback is crucial in the PA process, helping tutors improve their teaching practices. The feedback should be specific, actionable, and foster a two-way communication process between tutors and appraisers (Harris, Brown & Harnett, 2014). Motivation also plays a key role, as goal setting within the appraisal process aligns tutors' professional aspirations with their performance targets, enhancing their drive to excel (Cook & Artino Jr, 2016). PA also promotes accountability, holding tutors responsible for their teaching performance and contributions to student outcomes (Bryson, Crosby & Bloomberg, 2014).

The effectiveness of PA relies heavily on training those who conduct appraisals, ensuring that they are equipped to provide fair, accurate, and constructive assessments (Mone, London & Mone, 2018). Fairness and transparency in PA foster trust and satisfaction among tutors, contributing to their professional growth and commitment to improving teaching quality (Vangrieken, Meredith, Packer & Kyndt, 2017). By aligning PA with goals of inclusivity, equity, and professional development, TTCs can enhance educational quality and better prepare tutors to meet diverse classroom needs (Elliot, 2015; Haug, 2017).

Principals' Use of Supportive Leadership Style and Implementation of Performance Appraisal by Tutors

A leadership style that is supportive goes beyond traditional management strategies and instead delves deeper into the realms of human relations and empathy. According to Sergiovanni (2015), supportive leadership is

built on the notion that employees, or in this context teachers, are not simply cogs in an organizational wheel but rather people who have feelings, aspirations, and problems to overcome. This is the understanding that underpins supportive leadership. Therefore, the leaders give priority to the health and happiness of their team members rather than simply concentrating on the work at hand.

Establishing trust is one of the most important components of supportive leadership. According to the findings of Malanski and Póvoa (2021), the cultivation of trust inside an organization through supporting actions functions as a lubricant that makes the gears of the organization run more smoothly. When principals use a leadership style that is supportive of their employees, it helps to cultivate an atmosphere of trust, which, in turn, boosts the efficiency of procedures such as performance evaluation. The logic behind this is straightforward: when tutors trust the source, they are more responsive to criticism and appraisal from the student.

The field of education, particularly in the modern world, is fraught with a plethora of obstacles, such as the need to adjust to shifting technology landscapes and the management of varied student populations in the classroom. According to Gu (2014), a supportive leadership style is one of the most important factors in the development of resilience in educators. The effects of pressures in the workplace can be considerably mitigated by having a principle that comprehends, empathizes with, and supports their employees.

Inclusivity in decision-making processes is one of the defining characteristics of leadership that is helpful. In their study, Macmillan (2014) underlined that supportive leadership is not about making decisions unilaterally but rather about building forums where tutors may communicate their thoughts, concerns, and suggestions. This was one of the main takeaways from their research. Not only does this kind of inclusiveness improve the overall quality of judgments, but it also helps to foster a sense of ownership among the tutors.

Although offering direction and assistance is the primary focus of supportive leadership, it is equally essential to maintain a balance between delegation and individual initiative. According to Breevaart et al. (2014), one of the mistakes that some leaders make is that they provide an excessive amount of support to their team. They think that the most important aspect of supportive leadership is having the awareness to know when to jump in and when to step back and let the instructors take control. This equilibrium means that, in addition to the feeling of support they receive, teachers also have the freedom to create and explore in their fields.

According to Eva et al. (2019), the trajectory of supportive leadership in the future ought to take a more holistic approach. This indicates that principals should infuse supportive leadership throughout the culture of their organizations rather than just incorporating it in discrete processes like performance evaluation. The spirit of support ought to pervade all aspect of the organization, from employee recruiting to training, and from day-to-day interactions to meetings on strategic planning.

In their study, Thuku, Kalai and Tanui (2018), investigated the practices employed in supportive leadership by head teachers in an attempt to ensure job satisfaction of teachers. The study was conducted in Nakuru County, Kenya, from a random sample of 348 primary school teachers. A research questionnaire was administered and interview scheduled. Afterwards, the study employed the correlation design, while the Spearman's coefficient correlation analysis was employed to give the relationship between the variables, but subjected to hypotheses test. The purpose of the study was to investigate the relationship between the supportive leadership style of head teachers and the job satisfaction of primary school teachers. The study found that head teachers' supportive leadership style and teachers' job satisfaction were significantly positive. The research discovered that there was a direct correlation between the supportive leadership style practice employed by head teachers, and the job satisfaction of teachers.

Barath, Nazir and Andrea (2016) studied the role of supportive leadership practices in guaranteeing both health and wellness of law enforcement employees and their organizations. Furthermore, the results of the study clarified that for a leader to be considered supportive, they must exercise overall job competence, situational leadership skills, emotional intelligence, and great communication. Gonzalez and Sutton, (2013) established that supportive leadership style is vital for employee performance. The findings revealed that there is a direct relationship between supportive leadership style and employee performance in policing organization. It is due

to the fact that employees replicate the support accorded to them by supporting the mechanism of appraisal put in place by the organization.

Jakuback (2017), conducted a study in Catholic diocese of Baton Rouge, Louisiana parochial colleges where he assessed tutors' perceptions that affected their overall job satisfaction, willingness to participate in PA and retention decisions. The study concluded that the satisfaction of teachers in their jobs was highly influenced by the collaborative support they received from their schools' principals. Hence, support for implementation of performance appraisal is directly related to existence of a collaborative leadership style.

In the study conducted by Watson (2013), it was employees' personal feelings need be considering by top executives before they acting. They should first see to it that employees' interests are considered and also ensure consensus in decision making and behave in thoughtful way towards the needs of their employees. The study also revealed that there was a positive and significant impact of supportive leadership on satisfaction of employees. Hence as per the above it is important to see supportive leadership as a friendship wanting style which needs the leader to be caring, friendly, and approachable. Leaders need to show genuine care for the personal needs and general well-being of their subordinates. Similarly, they should create a climate that is supportive to employees' emotions. The supportive leadership s however not effective where employees do not have self-confidence and the work environment is stressful and dissatisfying.

The findings of a study that was conducted in the field of organizational psychology by Anitha (2014) highlight the significant influence that supportive leadership has in increasing employee engagement. Leaders who are supportive establish a culture in the workplace in which workers feel linked to their responsibilities and are encouraged to provide their best efforts because of this connection. This idea works very well when applied to the educational setting, as enthusiastic instructors are more likely to take an active role in the performance review procedure. Leaders that are encouraging and supportive can instil a sense of purpose and dedication in tutors, which helps match the tutors' goals with the goals of the evaluation.

According to the findings of Koohang, Paliszkiwicz and Goluchowski (2017), who conducted study on the topic of trust in various organizational situations, trust is one of the fundamental components of effective leadership. By being approachable and showing concern for their employees, supportive leaders are more likely to earn the respect and loyalty of those they supervise. For performance appraisal to be successfully implemented in educational institutions, trust is an absolutely necessary component. When employees believe that their supervisors have their best interests at heart and will make constructive use of appraisal results for professional development, they are more likely to embrace the process of performance evaluation.

According to Lievens and Vlerick (2014), transformational leadership frequently incorporates aspects of supportive leadership. The followers of transformational leaders are inspired and motivated by the supporting and nurturing environment that is created by these leaders. It has been discovered that this particular type of leadership has a favourable effect on employee performance as well as work satisfaction across a variety of different industries. In the context of colleges that provide teacher education, transformational leadership behaviours that place an emphasis on support, mentoring, and individual development might improve tutors' impressions of the evaluation process, hence increasing the likelihood that they will actively participate in the process.

Leadership behaviours have a significant impact on a crucial outcome that may be defined as an employee's level of dedication to their employer. This outcome is referred to as organizational commitment. Eliyana and Ma'arif (2019) conducted research that investigated the concept of organizational commitment and the link that concept has with leadership styles. Research has shown a correlation between supportive leadership behaviours and increased levels of organizational commitment on the part of workers. Tutors in colleges that prepare teachers are more likely to support and participate in performance appraisal if they have a strong commitment to the institution. This is because they recognize the important role that performance appraisal plays in the overall growth and success of the college.

The health and happiness of employees is becoming an increasingly important focus for businesses in a wide range of industries. Zhang et al. (2014) have conducted research that investigates the topic of job engagement

and its connection to different leadership styles. There is a correlation between supportive leadership and higher levels of employee engagement in the workplace, which occurs when individuals experience a sense of passion and dedication toward their work. There is a possibility that engaged tutors at teacher training institutions will view performance evaluation as a chance for personal and professional development. This will contribute to the tutors' overall sense of well-being and job satisfaction.

A culture of open communication and the encouragement of constructive criticism is essential to the success of performance reviews. The importance of feedback-seeking behaviour in companies is investigated in research carried out by Crans et al. (2022). To foster an environment in which tutors actively seek advice and information on their performance, supportive leaders can encourage feedback-seeking behaviours among their mentees and create a feedback culture in the workplace. This culture is congruent with the objectives of the performance review, which make feedback a primary focus, and it helps to cultivate an atmosphere in which tutors are open to receiving criticism that is connected to the performance review.

Empowering employees is providing them with the freedom and authority to make decisions on their job on their own, which is a concept that is closely tied to the concept of supportive leadership. According to Abou Elnaga and Imran (2014), empowering employees so that they experience a feeling of ownership and responsibility for their positions results in higher job satisfaction and motivation for the employee. A sense of ownership can be fostered within the framework of teacher training colleges by means of supportive leaders who enable tutors to have a say in the performance evaluation process. This results in tutors becoming more engaged in the performance appraisal efforts and providing support for such activities.

Bakker (2015) conducted research that investigated the notion of job resources. Job resources are features of a job that might assist employees in achieving their work goals and decrease the impact of working demands. Positive leaders have the potential to be recognized as important job resources in their own right. The fact that they are approachable, that they are prepared to listen, and that they offer emotional support can be invaluable resources for tutors who are attempting to fulfil the requirements of their roles, particularly the requirements of performance evaluation. It is more probable that tutors will have a good attitude toward evaluation procedures if they believe that the leaders of their organizations are supportive employment resources.

A crucial characteristic for overcoming obstacles is resilience, which can be defined as the capacity to overcome setbacks successfully. According to findings from research conducted by Nguyen et al. (2016), supportive leadership behaviours have the potential to increase employee resilience. Employees are provided with a safety net by leaders who are supportive, which assists those employees in coping with the pressures of their jobs and the challenges they face. In the context of performance evaluation, which may be a cause of stress for tutors, encouraging leaders can play an important role in assisting tutors in navigating the challenges and failures connected with the appraisal process. The appraisal feedback that is given to resilient tutors could be viewed more as a chance for improvement than as criticism.

The term "employee well-being" refers to a person's state of health in all areas of their life, including the physical, the psychological, and the social. According to Rahiman and Kodikal (2017), an employee's level of happiness at work can be affected by a variety of job-related elements, one of which is leadership. It is possible for supportive leadership practices to contribute to the overall well-being of employees. Some examples of these strategies include giving emotional support and promoting work-life balance. It is crucial that tutors feel safe and supported in teacher training institutes since they play an important part in determining the direction education will go in the future. Tutors are more likely to interact positively with performance appraisal and recognize its significance in their professional development if they work in an atmosphere that has been created by leaders who are supportive and who have a priority on the well-being of their employees.

Conflict is an inevitable aspect of any working environment, and the manner in which it is managed can have a considerable influence on the attitudes and behaviours of staff members. Saiti (2015) conduct research in which they investigate the function of leadership in the resolution of conflicts. Leaders that are supportive typically use constructive conflict resolution tactics, which helps to establish an environment that is conducive to collaboration and problem-solving. In the context of performance evaluation, where there may be differences in opinion or feedback, supportive leaders can help foster positive talks and responses to the issues

that occur. It's possible that tutors will be more likely to participate in appraisal-related conversations if they believe the leaders of their organization are adept in conflict resolution.

Trust may be easily damaged, and when it does, leaders play an essential part in mending the trust that has been broken. Restoring trust with one's subordinates requires one to have a supportive leader who is willing to admit and accept responsibility for any errors or breaches in confidence that may have occurred (Barath, Nazir & Andrea, 2016). In the context of performance appraisal, where trust in the process and its fairness is essential, supportive leaders who specialize in trust restoration can reduce any trust-related worries among tutors, guaranteeing that they will maintain their support for appraisal activities. In this way, trust in the process and its fairness can be restored.

Employees' willingness to participate in activities relevant to their jobs is directly correlated to their levels of motivation. According to the findings of a research by Osborne & Hammoud (2017), the relevance of individuals' intrinsic drive, which stems from their own internal goals and values, cannot be overstated. The provision of autonomy, the acknowledgment of achievements, and the provision of support can all be used by supportive leaders to build intrinsic motivation. Tutors who are intrinsically driven may be more proactive in their participation in performance appraisals because they may regard the process as a chance for personal growth and development rather than as a required chore.

The term "psychological safety" relates to an individual's sense that they are able to openly express their thoughts, ideas, and worries without worrying that they would suffer any adverse effects as a result of doing so. The findings of a study conducted by Edmondson (2018) show the significance of psychological safety in the promotion of innovation and learning inside businesses. During performance appraisal conversations, encouraging leaders foster an environment of psychological safety in which employees feel at ease discussing their own work, asking for clarification, or voicing concerns. This secure setting stimulates open and honest conversation, which is absolutely necessary for the efficiency of the evaluation processes.

The notion of job embeddedness investigates the extent to which workers are tied to the organizations in which they work as well as the occupations themselves. According to the findings of research conducted by Akgunduz and Sanli (2017), supportive leadership may be able to improve employees' feelings of job embeddedness. Leaders that are supportive cultivate robust interpersonal relationships and connections with their employees, which allows those individuals to feel valued and incorporated into the firm. Tutors in colleges that provide teacher education who have a sense of job embedding are more likely to support and participate in performance appraisal because they understand the important role it plays in their ongoing professional development within the institution.

The term "employee voice" refers to the degree to which employees are encouraged to share their thoughts, ideas, and proposals inside a business and feel that they can do so in an uninhibited manner. According to the findings of research conducted by Duan et al. (2017), the role of leadership in promoting employee voice is extremely important. Leaders that are supportive of their employees aggressively seek the input of their subordinates, value the perspectives of their employees, and establish channels for open communication. In the context of performance evaluation, tutors are more likely to actively participate and contribute to the process's progress if they believe that their superiors are responsive to their input and suggestions regarding the appraisal process.

Organizations that are undergoing transitions or launching new projects absolutely need their employees to be ready for change. Bakari, Hunjra and Niazi (2017) conducted research to investigate the elements that influence employees' readiness for organizational change. The ability of supportive leadership to provide emotional support, clear communication, and guidance during change processes can have a substantial impact on an organization's preparation for change. Supportive leaders can help tutors manage this transition and ensure that they are ready to accept the changes that are occurring in teacher training institutes when the introduction or adjustment of performance rating methods might be deemed a transformation.

A healthy balance between work and personal life is critical to the well-being and contentment of an employee. Research conducted by Aruldoss, Kowalski and Parayitam (2021) highlights the significance of maintaining a

healthy work-life balance in order to lower levels of stress and improve overall job satisfaction. Having leaders who are encouraging and who support a healthy work-life balance can have a good influence on the attitudes of tutors toward their work and the performance evaluation process. Performance evaluation is more likely to be seen as a manageable and helpful component of professional development by tutors who believe that their leaders value their personal lives and well-being. Tutors who feel that their leaders value these aspects of their lives are also more likely to feel that they are valued by their employers.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework guiding this research is the Path-Goal Theory, initially proposed by Robert House in 1971. This theory provides a comprehensive structure for understanding how various leadership behaviors employed by principals influence the motivation and support of tutors in performance appraisal processes. According to the Path-Goal Theory, effective leaders offer guidance and support to their subordinates, steering them toward achieving both individual and organizational goals. The theory emphasizes that different leadership actions result in varied outcomes and levels of motivation among subordinates, making it highly relevant for this study (Bans-Akutey, 2021).

The Path-Goal Theory establishes a direct link between leadership styles and critical outcomes such as job satisfaction and work performance, making it an ideal foundation for this research. It highlights the cause-and-effect relationships between leadership actions and their impact on subordinates, which is particularly significant in educational settings where strong leadership can greatly affect both teachers and students. The theory's predictive nature aligns with the study's goals, providing a robust framework for exploring the dynamics of leadership in teacher training institutions (Steenkamp & Ziaei, 2021).

This theory is especially pertinent in the context of Teacher Training Colleges (TTCs), where the effectiveness of tutors and their motivation directly influence the quality of education provided to student teachers. The Path-Goal Theory allows for an in-depth exploration of how principals' leadership behaviors affect tutors' attitudes and actions, particularly regarding performance appraisal. It offers valuable insights into how principals' actions can either facilitate or hinder the implementation of performance appraisal initiatives, thereby affecting tutor support and overall job satisfaction (Bans-Akutey, 2021).

Moreover, the Path-Goal Theory emphasizes selecting the appropriate leadership style based on the specific needs and characteristics of subordinates, aligning with the study's objective to identify which leadership styles are most effective in securing tutor support for performance appraisal. It also underscores the role of motivation as a mediating factor, acknowledging that leadership behavior directly impacts employee motivation, which is crucial for understanding how different leadership styles influence tutors' support for performance appraisal (Steenkamp & Ziaei, 2021).

Despite its strengths, the Path-Goal Theory has limitations, including its complexity and lack of detailed explanation of the specific mechanisms through which leadership behaviors influence followers. However, the theory's broad applicability and structured approach make it a valuable tool for examining leadership dynamics within educational institutions, providing a comprehensive framework for understanding how leadership styles impact tutor motivation and performance appraisal support (Steenkamp & Ziaei, 2021).

Conceptual Framework

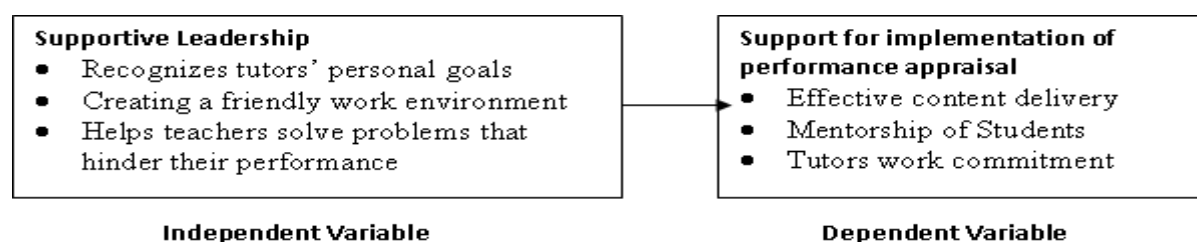


Figure 2. 1: Conceptual Framework

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A descriptive survey design was adopted for this study as it was best suited to address the research objectives and questions. In this study, the target population was 840 tutors from public primary teachers training colleges and 21 principals in the 21 public teachers training colleges in Kenya (KNEC Portal, 2020). A stratified random sampling technique was used to select the tutors' sample. The tutor population was first stratified into two strata - those training kindergarten teachers and those training specialist teachers. Proportionate stratified random sampling was then used to select participants from each stratum based on their representation in the population. The sample size was determined using Yamane's formula. Therefore, the sample size for tutors was 271. For principals, census sampling was used to include all 21 principals from the teachers' training colleges. Two instruments were used for data collection questionnaires for tutors and interview guides for principals.

The quantitative data from the tutors' questionnaires was analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 24. The closed-ended responses were coded and entered into SPSS. The data was checked for any errors or missing values. Descriptive statistics including frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations were computed to summarize the demographic attributes and responses on leadership styles and appraisals. Inferential statistics were applied to address the study objectives. Regression was used to determine if there was a significant relationship in appraisal implementation support between principals exhibiting a particular leadership style versus those who do not. The significance of the study was tested at 5% level of significance. Qualitative data from open-ended survey responses and interviews was analysed using thematic content analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Principals' Use of Supportive Leadership Style and Implementation of Performance Appraisal by Tutors

Descriptive Analysis for Principals' Supportive Leadership Style

The objective was to determine the extent to which the influence of principals' supportive leadership style to support the implementation of the performance appraisal of tutors in public primary teachers training colleges in Kenya. Tutors were asked to respond on statements regarding ad principals' supportive leadership style. The responses were rated on a five Likert scale as (5 – strongly agree, 4 – agree, 3 – neutral, 2 – disagree, 1 – strongly disagree). The descriptive results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Descriptive results for principals' supportive leadership style

The principal	SD		D		N		A		SA		Mean	SD
	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	F		
is usually careful not to hurt tutors' personal feelings	3.7	8	15.9	34	8.4	18	44.4	95	27.6	59	3.76	1.13
Solves problems that hinder their performance	2.3	5	12.1	26	8.4	18	54.2	116	22.9	49	3.83	0.99
Maintains a friendly working relationship with tutors.	1.9	4	16.4	35	5.6	12	50.9	109	25.2	54	3.81	1.05
Is considerate of teachers' personal needs.	2.8	6	16.4	35	7.0	15	51.9	111	22.0	47	3.74	1.06

Engages in celebrating tutor's special occasions.	1.9	4	15.4	33	5.1	11	52.3	112	25.2	54	3.84	1.03
Shows patience with the all the tutors	3.7	8	13.6	29	6.5	14	55.1	118	21.0	5	3.76	1.05
Recognize tutor' personal goals.	4.2	9	13.1	28	4.7	10	50.5	108	27.6	59	3.84	1.10
Gives special treats to tutors.	3.3	7	16.4	35	5.1	11	46.7	100	28.5	61	3.81	1.12

From the results in table 4.10, Supportive leadership best enhanced when a leader understands the needs of their constituents. Many of the tutors are in support that a principal should be careful not to hurt tutors' personal feelings during their day-to-day conversations as depicted by the mean of 3.76 and standard deviation of 1.13. The standard deviation of 1.13 implied that many of the responses from the tutors clustered around the mean. Problem solving is critical element of leadership. When tutors were asked about the ability of the principal to solve problems that hinder their performance, many of the tutors were in consensus that the principal has been part of the team that helped them to solve problems that hinder their performance as indicated by the mean of 3.83 and standard deviation of 0.99. The standard deviation of 0.99 implied that many of the responses clustered around the mean. Watson (2013) pointed out management consider employees' feelings through prioritizing their interest. Prioritization of employees by management is strategic in building a cohesive team that is likely to have consensus on decision-making. Supportive leadership is paramount in networking among employees especially establishing friendly ties that is approachable and easier in solving work related problems. Conducive working environment is critical in teamwork and overall performance of tutors. Majority of the tutors agreed that principal has maintained a friendly working relationship with tutors as shown by the mean of 3.81 and standard deviation of 1.05. The standard deviation of 1.05 implied that the responses clustered around the mean. Employees will value management that is sensitive to their personal needs. When tutors were asked on the principal willingness to their personal need, many of the tutors were in support that the principal has been considerate on tutors' personal needs as backed by the mean of 3.74 and standard deviation of 1.06. The standard deviation of 1.06 implied that the responses clustered around the mean. Jakuback (2017) noted that the satisfaction of teachers in their jobs was highly influenced by the collaborative support they received from their schools' principal.

Recognition of employee special occasion is appealing to their self-worth and contributions they give in the work place. Many of the employees were in consensus that the principal engages in celebrating tutor's special occasions as indicated by the mean of 3.84 and standard deviation of 1.03. The standard deviation of 1.03 implied that the responses clustered around the mean. Tutors' performance might not be instant and patience in leadership is necessary. When tutors were asked about the patience on all tutors, many of the tutors agreed that principal exhibits patience among all tutors as shown by the mean of 3.76 and standard deviation of 1.05. The standard deviation of 1.05 implied that more of the responses gathered around the mean. Gonzalez and Sutton, (2013) established that employees replicate the support accorded to them by supporting the mechanism of appraisal put in place by the organization. Appreciation of tutors in their special occasion reciprocated with desirable performance because tutors will feel appreciated and valued by management.

Employees' personal goals such as career progression is core to the performance of an institution. When tutors were asked about recognition of their personal goals by principal, many of the tutors agreed that the principal recognize their personal goals as indicated by the mean of 3.84 and standard deviation of 1.10. The standard deviation of 1.10 depicted that many of the responses gathered around the mean. Treating employees differently and more so in a special way is core in motivating them to completing their tasks. Upon enquiring if the principal treats tutors in a special way, many of the tutors agreed that principal gives them special treatment as depicted by the mean of 3.81 and standard deviation of 1.12. The standard deviation of 1.12 implied that the responses clustered around the mean. Thuku, Kalai and Tanui (2018) pointed out that tutors seemed to like support from the leader and ultimately attaining job satisfaction in their working environment. This could also entrench that teachers may not achieve intended goals without motivation. Tutors' workload

made more challenging and interesting too to eliminate routine that is always associated with boredom. Tutors should be encouraged all manner of method that is readily available but sustainable too in order to reach maximum excellence of the teaching goal prescribed by the employer and schools.

This implies that principal supportive leadership style influences performance appraisal of tutors in public primary schools. In an interview with key informant interview 3,

“Through supportive leadership style, employee performance in policing organization replicates the support accorded to them by supporting the mechanism of appraisal put in place by the organization. Supportive leadership style is also vital for employee performance”. [KII3, June 2022]

Pearson correlation analysis

The present study used Pearson correlation analysis to determine the strength of association between independent variables (principals’ supportive leadership style) and the dependent variable (tutors’ support for implementation of performance appraisal in public primary teachers training colleges in Kenya) dependent variable. Pearson correlation coefficient range between zero and one, where by the strength of association increase with increase in the value of the correlation coefficients. The current study employed Taylor (2018) correlation coefficient ratings where by 0.80 to 1.00 depicts a very strong relationship, 0.60 to 0.79 depicts strong, 0.40 to 0.59 depicts moderate, 0.20 to 0.39 depicts weak.

Table 2: Correlation Coefficients for Supportive Leadership Style on Tutors’ Support

		Implementation of Performance Appraisal	Supportive Leadership Style
Implementation of Performance Appraisal	Pearson Correlation	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		
	N	227	
Supportive Leadership Style	Pearson Correlation	.845**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	227	227

The results revealed that there is a very strong relationship between principals’ supportive leadership style and tutors’ support for implementation of performance appraisal in public primary teachers training colleges in Kenya ($r = 0.845$, p value =0.001). The relationship was significant since the p value 0.001 was less than 0.05 (significant level). The findings conform to the findings of Malanski and Póvoa (2021) that there is a very strong relationship between principals’ supportive leadership style and organization performance. The study results are also supported by the findings of Breevaart et al. (2018), who revealed that supportive leadership significantly influenced teachers' attitudes towards performance appraisals.

Test for Hypothesis

The objective of the study was to determine the extent to which principals’ supportive leadership style influences tutors’ support for implementation of performance appraisal of tutors in public primary teachers training colleges in Kenya. The corresponding hypothesis was:

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between Principals’ supportive leadership style and tutors’ support for implementation of performance appraisal in public primary teachers training colleges in Kenya. A univariate analysis was therefore conducted to test the null hypothesis. From the model summary findings in Table 3, the r -squared for the relationship between Principals’ supportive leadership style and tutors’ support for

implementation of performance appraisal in public primary teachers training colleges in Kenya was 0.269; this is an indication that at 95% confidence interval, 26.9% variation in tutors’ support for implementation of performance appraisal in public primary teachers training colleges in Kenya can be attributed to changes in Principals’ supportive leadership style. Therefore, Principals’ supportive leadership style can be used to explain 26.9% change in tutors’ support for implementation of performance appraisal in public primary teachers training colleges in Kenya. However, the remaining 73.1% variation in tutors’ support for implementation of performance appraisal in public primary teachers training colleges in Kenya suggests that there are other factors other than Principals’ supportive leadership style that explain tutors’ support for implementation of performance appraisal in public primary teachers training colleges in Kenya. The study results are in line with those of Macmillan (2018) who found that supportive leadership led to improved teacher performance and professional growth, which is essential for the successful implementation of performance appraisal systems. In addition, Eva et al. (2019) established that supportive leadership in schools led to higher teacher morale and a greater willingness to participate in school-wide initiatives, including performance appraisals.

Table 3: Model Summary for Principals’ supportive leadership style

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.519 ^a	.269	.267	.68365

a. Predictors: (Constant), Principals’ supportive leadership style

The analysis of variance was used to determine whether the regression model is a good fit for the data. From the analysis of variance (ANOVA) findings in Table 4, the study found out that $Prob > F_{1,225} = 0.000$ was less than the selected 0.05 level of significance. This suggests that the model as constituted was fit to predict tutors’ support for implementation of performance appraisal in public primary teachers training colleges in Kenya. Further, the F-calculated, from the table (506.52) was greater than the F-critical, from f-distribution tables (3.883) supporting the findings that Principals’ supportive leadership style can be used to predict tutors’ support for implementation of performance appraisal in public primary teachers training colleges in Kenya. The results are supported by Thuku, Kalai and Tanui (2018) who revealed that supportive leadership in schools contributed to a more positive school culture, which in turn facilitated the acceptance and effective implementation of performance appraisals. Barath, Nazir and Andrea (2016) established that teachers in supportive environments were more open to feedback and professional development.

Table 4: ANOVA for Principals’ supportive leadership style

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	51.159	1	51.159	506.52	.000 ^b
	Residual	22.816	225	0.101		
	Total	73.975	226			

a. Dependent Variable: Tutors’ support for implementation of performance appraisal

b. Predictors: (Constant), Principals’ supportive leadership style

From the results in table 5, the following regression model was fitted.

$$Y = 0.292 + 0.476 X_2$$

(X_2 is Principals’ supportive leadership style)

The coefficient results showed that the constant had a coefficient of 0.292 suggesting that if Principals’ supportive leadership style was held constant at zero, tutors’ support for implementation of performance appraisal in public primary teachers training colleges in Kenya would be at 0.292 units. In addition, results showed that Principals’ supportive leadership style coefficient was 0.476 indicating that a unit increase in Principals’ supportive leadership style would result in a 0.476 increase in tutors’ support for implementation of performance appraisal in public primary teachers training colleges in Kenya. It was also noted that the P-value for Principals’ supportive leadership style coefficient was 0.000 which is less than the set 0.05 significance level indicating that Principals’ supportive leadership style was significant. Based on these results, the study rejected the null hypothesis and accepted the alternative that Principals’ supportive leadership style has a positive and significant influence on tutors’ support for implementation of performance appraisal in public primary teachers training colleges in Kenya. These results are supported by the findings of Jakuback (2017) who established that supportive leadership significantly enhances employee well-being and organizational commitment. This increased commitment is crucial for the successful implementation of performance appraisal systems, as employees are more likely to engage positively with processes they perceive as supportive. In addition, Malanski and Póvoa (2021) found that there is a very strong relationship between principals’ supportive leadership style and organization performance

Table 5: Beta Coefficients for Principals’ supportive leadership style

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	0.292	.067		4.358	.000
	Principals’ supportive leadership style	.476	.099	.481	4.808	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Tutors’ support for implementation of performance appraisal

Summary of the study

The second objective of this study was to determine the extent to which principals’ supportive leadership style influences support for implementation of performance appraisal of tutors in public primary teachers training colleges in Kenya. The study revealed that there is a very strong relationship between principals’ supportive leadership style and tutors’ support for implementation of performance appraisal in public primary teachers training colleges in Kenya ($r = 0.845$, $p \text{ value} = 0.001$). In addition, results showed that Principals’ supportive leadership style coefficient was 0.476 indicating that a unit increase in Principals’ supportive leadership style would result in a 0.476 increase in tutors’ support for implementation of performance appraisal in public primary teachers training colleges in Kenya. It was also noted that the P-value for Principals’ supportive leadership style coefficient was 0.000 which is less than the set 0.05 significance level indicating that Principals’ supportive leadership style was significant. Based on these results, the study rejected the null hypothesis and accepted the alternative that Principals’ supportive leadership style has a positive and significant influence on tutors’ support for implementation of performance appraisal in public primary teachers training colleges in Kenya.

CONCLUSIONS

Principals’ supportive leadership style influences the implementation of performance appraisal of tutors. Supportive leadership contribute significantly in a work environment that is boring and stressful. A stressful tutor is likely to underperform and supportive leadership style is required to motive and boost confidence in order to reduce the negative aspect of the working environment. Therefore, based on the findings, the study concludes that there is statistically significant positive relationship between Principals’ supportive leadership style and tutors’ support for implementation of performance appraisal in public primary teachers training colleges in Kenya.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Principals' supportive leadership style had a positive and significant effect on the implementation of performance appraisal of tutors in primary teachers training colleges. There is need for the college management to provide the necessary teaching and training materials to support the effective implementation of performance appraisal programmes. There is also need for tutors to present their past output so that it can inform supportive principal what is necessary for a better working environment. The study also recommends that the MoE, alongside college management, prioritize the creation of policies that promote a supportive and safe working environment. This could include mentorship programs for tutors, flexible scheduling, and recognition and reward systems to acknowledge tutors' professional growth and accomplishments. It also urges the MoE and BoM to allocate sufficient resources, including teaching materials and training aids, to support the practical implementation of performance appraisals.

Suggestions for Further Research

The study largely viewed that principal' leadership styles as one of the critical components in the implementation of the performance appraisal of tutors in TTCs, in Kenya. However, other key players that might influence the implementation of the performance appraisal of tutors in TTCs. For instance, government regulations should be part of the study variables because it plays significant role in the implementation of performance appraisal in Teachers Training Colleges across public institutions. Future studies may include these aspects in implementing the performance appraisal of tutors in colleges because it's significance cannot be underestimated.

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