Effect of Creativity and Accountability on the on the Performance of East-Central Africa Division Office of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church

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Abstract

The objectives of this study were to establish the effect of creativity and instilling accountability, on the performance of East-Central Africa Division Office of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Literature review was done considering; strategic leadership, the characteristics of strategic leaders, performance indicators, strategic leadership and performance. The study was anchored on Contingency leadership theory. A conceptual framework showing the relationships between the independent and dependent variables of the study was projected with a summary of the operationalization of the variables. The researcher used a quantitative survey design. The target population of the study was forty (40) leaders in various levels of the ECD and it was a census study. The response rate was 100%. Data was collected using a questionnaire which was validated and its reliability tested using the Cronbach alpha. Data was analysed by use of descriptive statistics and hypothesis tested by correlation coefficient and regression analysis. The findings of the study show that creativity and accountability has moderate effect on performance. The findings greatly inform future studies on the influence of strategic leaders' characteristics on performance in faith based organizations and finally it will be of great help to the General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and many other Christian based institutions policy makers, when they review and come up with their working policies. The following are the recommendations; the

top leadership of ECD should focus on ensuring that accountability is implanted in the organization's culture. The researcher recommends that it is good to try to support creativity of leaders and employees at large. Finally, the organization may consider increasing the number of female leaders in all levels.

Keywords: *Creativity, Accountability, Performance & Seventh-Day Adventist.*

1.1 Introduction

Strategic leadership is concerned with the management of organizations and the development of the entire organization together with its fluctuating goals and competencies (Selznic, 1984). Therefore, strategic leadership ought to have the ability to match the organization's goals with the ever changing environment. According to Boal and Hooijberg (2001), strategic leadership focuses on individuals who take complete accountability of the organisation, like the head of an organisation and members of the top management team. Hambrick and Pettigrew (2001) point out that leadership denotes to leaders at any level in the organisation but strategic leadership relates to the leadership at the highest corporate level of an organisation. Strategic leadership centres on executives who have overall accountability of an organisation based on the principle that they will ultimately account for what happens to the organisation (Hambrick, 1989).
From the Christian perspective, Haskins (2004) brings out strategic leadership as referring to the top executives of an organization who are called and equipped by God to lead the entire organization and its resources from a Christian biblical worldview to the glory of God. The Bible is the first manual to be used in all the leadership styles that can be applied in running the organization.

According to Paul (2012), it is significant to note that organizations are ever responding to unanticipated external changes and the ever-evolving environments by altering their practices to develop more responsive and flexible networks while upholding effective processes amongst these continuous changes. Strategic leaders help organizations to stay on the path in order to realize their long time goals while concurrently negotiating the day in day out encounters that might impact the firm's ultimate success. Hence, it is important for strategic leaders to have characteristics that positively affect the success of the organisation (Robert, 2016).

Performance represents a set of financial and non-financial pointers which offer information on the level of attainment or otherwise of the set goals and outcomes (Lebans & Euske, 2006). Whether at the individual level or organisational level, performance has to be measured. Performance measurement approximates the limitations under which agendas, capitals, and achievements are attaining the agreed results (Perez *et al*., 2015). According to Kaplan and Norton (2001) most performance measures can be clustered into one of the following six general categories. First is effectiveness: a process characteristic indicating the degree to which the process output conforms to requirements. Second is efficiency: the degree to which the process produces the required output at minimum resource cost. The third is quality: the extent to which a product or service meets customer requirements and expectation. Fourth is timeliness: a measure of whether or not a unit of work was done correctly and on time. Fifth is productivity: the value added by the process divided by the value of the labour and capital consumed; safety: the overall health of the organisation and the working environment of its employees.

According to Helen *et al*. (2008) performance in faith based institutions is linked to obedience rather than outcomes. Measuring performance can lead to ungodly motives. To support their

aversion to performance, the faith based institutions instruct spiritual leaders to stop using the world's metrics in measuring the performance of their organizations. On the other hand, Anna *et al*. (2008) state that, performance needs to be managed well if success has to be obtained. This can be achieved by a standardized set of processes and systems used to create clear goals, track and coach employee progress efficiently and effectively in order to realize the organizational performance is achieved. The overall goal of the performance management of a church organization is to ensure that all its employee, departments and ministries are working together synergistically and in optimum fashion to achieve the mission, vision, objectives and goals of the organization.

According to the General Conference (GC) Office of Archives, Statistics and Research (2016) the Seventh-day Adventist Church is a global Protestant Christian denomination well-known by its observance of Saturday as the holy day of worship. Saturday is the seventh day of the week in the Christian calendar. They believe in the second coming of Jesus Christ which is known as 'the Advent'. Much of the doctrine of the Seventh-day Adventist Church agrees to that of the Protestant Christian teachings such as the trinity and the soundness of the Holy Scripture. The GC governs the world church with smaller regions administered by the division, union conferences/missions and local conferences/fields.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church is global and therefore all its administrative structures worldwide follow a standard outline. The administration is centralised with the General Conference being the highest in the rank, based in Silver Spring - Maryland (USA) (Year Book, 2016). The GC is headed by a president, eight (8) General Vice Presidents, Executive Secretary, one (1) under-secretary, nine (9) Associate Executive Secretaries, Treasurer, one (1) under Treasurer and five (5) Associate Treasurers. The General Conference is further divided into thirteen (13) divisions (Year Book, 2016).

1.2 Statement of the problem

The effect of strategic leadership on performance has been argued to be critical to organisational effectiveness. Pearce and Robinson (2011) indicate that strategic leadership effect on performance is all about willpower, temperament, characteristics and essential abilities at the right time for a specific condition. David (2009) further states that it is all about setting goals and not just responding to agendas, detecting problems and spear heading change that makes considerable development rather than supervising change. This is a multifunctional task that involves managing through others and managing the entire organisation rather than a functional sub-unit of the organisation. It's critical importance can therefore not be gainsaid (Pearce & Robinson, 2011).

From a review of empirical studies, the researcher discovered that many previous studies have concentrated on the effects of strategic leadership on the performance of organisations in corporate and business settings. Jacob (2010) deliberated on the impact of strategic leadership on the operational strategy and performance. Katee (2010) studied the effect of strategic leadership on the performance of commercial and financial state corporations in Kenya. Juliana *et al.* (2016) considered the effect of organisational leadership on strategy implementation in Kenya's tourism industry and Suzanne and Charles (2013) took a study on strategic leadership regarding values, styles and organisational performance. Furthermore, these studies concentrated on financial indicators as a measure of performance yet there are other indicators of measuring performance other than finances.

Ulmer (2002) carried out a study on tools for effective local church management where the study focused more on the ways to manage the church finances and strongly recommended that church organizations should always have internal and external audit of the church finances. The study further recommended that all faith based organizations should have an investment policy. Brady and Dail (2010) in their study exploring organizational culture and performance of Christian churches discovered that the comparative strength of organizational culture levels influences the performance of church institutions. Therefore, the study recommends that for those leaders who may desire to improve the performance measure of their church organizations should consider focusing on strengthening a good culture scope related to performance.

Several studies have confirmed that faith based organizations tend to rely more on volunteers for their day to day running of businesses which highly affects their performance. Being used to free labour has hindered them from contracting professional manpower to run the organization's affairs. This has greatly hampered their performances (Steve, 2012). Further, Chao and Muhittin (2005) found out that the most unfortunate thing is that many church organizations have poor working policies, processes and practices in running organizational affairs. Organizational guidelines to performance are not always observed. Many at times when these guidelines have been breached no one takes the responsibility of ensuring that order has been restored. Assumptions are quietly made and this has led to many faith based organizations fail to hit their expected performance levels.

A thorough review of previous studies detailed above, indicate that the performance of faith based organization remain unsatisfactory. Moreover, previous studies linking strategic leadership to performance have concentrated in corporate settings and specifically targeted financial performance. The current study therefore sought to address the existing gaps by examining how strategic leaders' characteristics affect performance in a faith-based institution, specifically (East-Central Africa Division office of the Seventh-day Adventist Church).

The study further sought to measure performance using other indicators like customer satisfaction and internal business processes that have not been utilized in the previous studies to the best of the researcher's knowledge. Faith based institutions in many cases are not profit making organisations and therefore it is difficult to measure their performance using the finance indicator. The Bible is their main guidance in leadership issues; they tend to lean on a top-to-bottom way of leadership thus not factoring in the other workers in matters pertaining to decision making and general running of the organization.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

 i.   To establish the effect of creativity on the performance of ECD
 ii.   To determine the effect of instilling accountability on the performance of ECD

1.4 Hypotheses

H_1: Creativity does not significantly influence performance of ECD

H_2: Accountability does not significantly influence performance of ECD

2.1 Literature Review

2.1.1 Theoretical framework: Contingency Leadership Theory

This theory was founded by Fred Fielder in 1950. The emphasis of this theory is the integration of the leader, the follower and situational characteristics in choosing the kind of leadership to be used. According to Ellyson *et al*. (2012), contingency theory also known as the situational theory was primarily supported by those who started thinking about leadership in relation to the situation. Fred Fielder was the first to introduce contingency leadership, and later many others contributed to the field. His model was the first leadership research to integrate leader, follower and situational characteristics.

Contingency theory focuses on variables related to the environment that influences the type of leadership style that is appropriate in particular working situations. According to Charry (2012), there is no particular leadership style adequate in all situations. Therefore, it is usually ideal for a strategic leader to have a couple of different leadership styles to successfully lead an organization to higher levels of success. Contingency theory states that real leadership rests on the point of fit between a leader's potentials and the leadership style that is needed for a specific condition (Lamb, 2013).

This theory foresees that those leaders who are more focused on relationship are more effective in average situational regulation and that those who are more job oriented are more effective in high and low control situations (Ellyson *et al.,* 2012). If the leader's alignment agrees with the situation at hand, he is projected to likely perform more effectively and vice versa. Fielder was certainly a pioneer in taking leadership research beyond the pure trait or purely situational viewpoints that heralded his input (Vroom & Jago, 2007).

Contingency theory tries to match a specific leadership style to a specific situation or occurrence, and it underlies the theme of one type of leadership being more effective in one situation over the other (Sims et al. 2009). The leader's capacity to efficiently assess workers is serious because individual development is not stationary nor is the level of personal development steady from employee to employee. According to Northouse (2010), workers are likely to move both frontward and backwards along the development scale. Assuming that a leader is able to appraise his workers and measure their degree of capability and commitment, the situational method suggests that effective leadership will happen when a leader can precisely analyse a condition and then tie his leadership style to it. Situational leadership is well-known and is frequently used for training leaders within organizations. Grint (2013) states that situational leadership concept proposes that effective leadership needs a balanced understanding of the condition and an appropriate response rather than a charismatic leader with a large group of devoted supporters.

This model brings out the concept of multiple leadership styles for various situations dependent on the situation at hand. For any organization to realize the expected performance, strategic leadership ought to have more than one leadership style in their day-in-day-out leadership roles. This has a wide range of advantages in ensuring that each aspect of the organization's operation is handled with the duly required attention. The Church situation is unique as compared to other organizations thereby the use of situational leadership model is many at times ideal.

2.2 Empirical review

2.2.1 Creativity and Performance

A knowledge-based organisation holds a special benefit that permits movement of intelligence and creativity towards the enhancement of working conditions. This leads to high yields for the organisation (Metaxiotis *et al*., 2005). The influence of creativity has been associated with the increase in multifactor of output that replicates the growth in the overall effectiveness of the organisation. Creativity enables fast growth and an increase in market share due to skill enhancement and labour effectiveness (Andrews & Criscuolo, 2013). Anderson *et al*., (2004) suggest that it is difficult to forecast organisational progress without creativity which is crucial to innovation. In additional to that, development has shown that effectiveness has become an important driver portraying that creativity is essential for the future growth of an organisation.

According to Applet *et al*. (2015) personnel can easily generate new thoughts which are well-matched with organizational structure and in their work places that improve organisational performance. Further, Bayes (2009) states that creation of new thoughts supports robust and well-organized inventive dispersion of knowledge to all personnel in the organization. Innovation founded on precise information-creativity tackles a variety of obstacles to innovation. This makes creativity an outcome of dialogue (Buckingham *et al*., 2013). On the other hand, organizing work around strong teams has developed an element of organizational life. Organizations are using team-oriented work to achieve their goals (Hills, 2007). Garrison *et al*. (2007) state that organizations which remain dependent on teams within the workplace usually realize goals over task performance and vice versa. Achievably, it can be explained that teams have multiplied because they are central to organisational success (Martin & Bal, 2006).

Strong work groups and teams have been well-known to be organisational building blocks (Van, 2003). Practical teams in this phase of technological advantage are growing in number and significance globally. Employees work in teams that potentially make it easier to increase and apply knowledge to serious tasks in organisations (Sole, 2002). According to Phil (2004), well-assimilated and high-performing teams certainly do not lose vision of their goals and are mainly self-sustaining. As a matter of fact, they appear to carry on a life of their own, and it all comes down to the leadership in place. Sharing a clear vision of where the team should be heading and inspiring the group members to make it a reality, is major to the team's success. This takes significant determination on the portion of a leader and so it is important for the leader to reflect on why it is meaningful to take that direction. The leader should continually visualize a positive result and communicate the same to group members (Phil, 2004).

2.2.2 Instilling Accountability and Performance

Joe and Keith (2012) state that developing a culture of employees owning responsibility is a key focus area for nearly every organization. Unfortunately, there is no magic in creating a culture of accountability for performance. Joe and Keith (2012) further state that instilling accountability is the ability to delegate responsibility, reassigning, restructuring and reallocation of significant organisational resources as needed. Further, it is capacity to ensure that priorities are met for initiatives within the area of responsibility, and long-range standards of performance are met. Doing these basics well is the foundation of any effort to change the existing culture of accountability to the best culture. This means that leaders must ensure that clear direction exists at all levels and the performance cycle managed properly (Joe & Keith, 2012).

According to Chen, Tang, Jin, Xie, & Li (2014), creating higher levels of responsibility in an organization seems to be a topic on every organization's agenda. This defines the mutual expectations of a leader and other employees. Many organizations can draw a connection between the results they are achieving now and the level of responsibility currently manifested throughout the organization. Studies support the notion that leaders who are accountable have a higher chance of enhancing the performance of their organizations as opposed to leaders who are not accountable (Burch & Guarana, 2014; Caldwell, 2011).

Accountability needs to go beyond the leader to facets of the organization to enhance success (Chen, Tang, Jin, Xie, & Li, 2014). Joe and Keith (2012) further say that knowing how to create and sustain a culture of responsibility for many organizations is the greatest challenge, but strategic leadership ought to work hard to attain it. Constant checking of the scope of responsibilities of the leader and others should be done. It has to be put in memory always that monitoring day to day performance and taking remedial action when need be, will ensure that high performance is realized. Organizations that function with an elevated level of accountability outline their results, create alignment around those results, check assumptions about mutual expectations and clarify standards of overall performance (Burch & Guarana, 2014).

2.3 Conceptual Framework

From the literature review, it is evident that the characteristics of strategic leaders can affect the performance of an organization. The model in Figure 1 shows how individual strategic leadership characteristic affects performance in East-Central Africa Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The independent variables are as follows; creativity and ability to instill accountability. The dependent variables, on the other hand, consist of satisfaction of its Unions and the internal business processes.
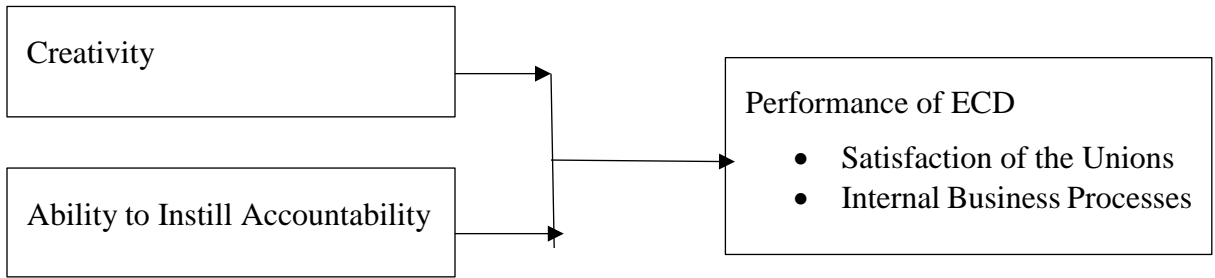
Figure 1: Conceptual Framework Model

3.1 Methodology

The study used a quantitative approach seeking to understand the organization in depth both contextually and holistically. This study used three types of quantitative design as follows; descriptive, correlational and a quasi-experimental design. The targeted population consisted of all individuals who are regular employees in various leadership levels the lowest leadership level inclusive. The lay representatives to the ECD Board were also considered in the study. According to the ECD Secretariat office, there was a total of forty (40) members who fit in this category as

follows; administration, secretariat, treasury, human resource, procurement and lay representatives. Data was collected using a questionnaire on a 5 point Likert scale. The SPSS software was used to calculate the mean and standard deviation, frequencies and percentage of the collected data. Inferential statistics were analysed using correlation coefficient and regression analysis for the results interpretation.

4.1 Results and Findings

4.2 Descriptive Statistics

4.2.1 Descriptive Statistics on creativity and accountability

This study took into consideration four characteristics of strategic leaders namely; creativity and accountability to establish their influence on performance. Descriptive statements were offered on the two characteristics to the respondents on a 5 point Likert scale for them to indicate the extent to which the statements applied to their organization. The findings are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics on creativity and accountability

Statements of Creativity	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Top leadership encourage strong working groups and assist in their formation	40	3.75	1.565
Top leaders embrace employees' generation of new ideas/thoughts	40	3.53	1.281
Top leaders encourage innovativeness on the part of employees	40	3.60	1.172
Top leaders reward the efforts of innovativeness	40	2.25	1.056
Top leaders encourage dialogue with their employee on job related issues	40	1.85	1.210
Top leadership encourages trying again even after failure in coming up with viable new ideas	40	2.73	1.281
The top leadership frequently calls for meetings to sensitize employees on new ideas	40	2.52	.784
Statements on Accountability			
Top leadership delegate and accept responsibility of their behaviour in regard to their duties	40	1.78	.423
They encourage employees to accept responsibility of their behaviour in regard to their duties	40	1.80	.464
Top leaders always assign and reassign employees' duties according to the organizational raising needs and capabilities	40	1.82	.385
Top leaders are keen to restructure the organization's operational structure as need arise in order to help them remain relevant in the fast changing environment	40	1.85	.362
Top leaders know the expected results to be achieved and they endeavour to meet priorities	40	1.77	.423
Top leadership exhibit integrity in their daily practice because it is the right thing to do	40	1.80	.405
The top leaders create and sustain the integrity culture within the organization	40	1.40	.496
Top leadership willingly admit limitations to their knowledge and mistakes whenever there is any	40	1.33	.474

From Table 1 the maximum mean of 3.75 was presented by the statement indicating that the top leadership encourage strong working groups and assist in their formation. This is found under the category of creativity. On the other measurement of standard deviation from Table 1, the highest standard deviation was 1.565 presented by this statement; top leadership encourage strong working groups and assist in their formation. This statement is found in the creativity section. The lowest standard deviation recorded was 0.221 representing the statement; the top leadership is able to draw interpretations and proper conclusions on organizational issues

4.2.2 Descriptive Statistics on Performance

This study sought to establish the level of performance. Statements were presented which respondents were required to indicate the extent to which they applied in their organization. According to the 5 point Likert scale presented to them Table 2 presents the findings.

Table 2: Performance Analyses

Statements on Customer (Union) Satisfaction	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
The organization is able to create strong customer relationship systems	40	3.88	1.265
The organization responds to customer complaints promptly	40	3.10	1.630
The organization has a positive customer interaction	40	1.77	.423
The organization has increased and retained high value customers	40	2.55	.504
The organization has the ability to focus on the customer's problem and have laid down strategies to do so	40	1.92	.474
The organization has the ability to achieve and retain win-win partner relations with its customers	40	1.78	.423
The organization has a customer rewarding system	40	1.35	.483
The organization has the ability to align customer objectives with respective initiatives	40	1.82	.385
Statements on Internal Business Procedures			
The organization is able to decrease operational costs as much as possible	40	2.23	.733
The organization encourages high productivity standards of quality in every sector of operation	40	2.30	.464
The organization observes timely delivery on tasks	40	2.32	.656
The organization upholds efficiency of information systems	40	2.18	.594
The organization has a continuous re-engineering of internal processes to meet customer expectations in the fast changing environment	40	3.85	1.460
The organization encourages labour productivity growth	40	3.93	1.328
The organization has a proper asset management system	40	2.50	.506
The organization recognizes employee skills and learning	40	2.13	.516
The organization's processes are documented into procedure manuals	40	1.85	.362
The cost incurred in completing internal business processes has been reduced significantly in the organization	40	1.77	.423

Source: Field Data (2017)

The results in Table 2 clearly show that the highest mean of 3.88 is in the statement; the organization is able to create strong customer relationship systems under satisfaction category. On the other hand, the lowest mean of 1.35 is clearly shown in the statement; the organization has a

customer reward system represented in the customer satisfaction category. In regard to the standard deviation from Table 2, the highest SD of 1.630 with this statement; the organization responds to customer complaints promptly, was realized. This statement falls under customer satisfaction category. The lowest SD of 0.362 was realized on this statement; the organization's processes are documented into procedure manuals represented under the internal business processes category. The highest standard deviation could likely imply that some customers' complaints are responded to promptly, others not so promptly while other customers are not responded to. On the lowest standard deviation, it appears ECD's processes are documented into procedure manuals making work easy even for the new employees on board.

4.3 Inferential Statistics

Test of Hypotheses

This section of the study focused on the testing of the different hypotheses to understand whether strategic leadership influences performance of ECD. This section paid attention to the use of correlation tests that helped to effectively point out whether there exists any relationship among the different variables. On the other hand, the regression tests effectively helped in pointing out the causal relationships among the study variables. This was proved through the tests of the hypotheses.

H1; Creativity does not Significantly Influences Performance of ECD

This hypothesis sought to understand whether there existed a significant relationship and influence between creativity and performance. A simple regression test was run to find out whether there existed any influence and to what extent creativity influences performance of ECD. The findings of the analyses are as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Independent Effects of Creativity on Performance

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.159[a]	.025	.000	9.92132

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	97.538	1	97.538	.991	.326[b]
	Residual	3740.437	38	98.433		
	Total	3837.975	39			

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	57.943	6.552		8.844	.000
	Creativity	.313	.315	.159	.995	.326

a. Dependent Variable: Performance
b. Predictors: (Constant), Creativity

Source: Field Data (2017)

A simple regression analysis was carried out to find out whether creativity had an impact on performance of ECD. Table 3 explains various results as follows; correlation coefficient (R) had a value of 0.159[a] which implies that there is a weak positive linear relationship. The regression analysis (R^2) shows a 2.5 percent of variance in performance which was found to be a bit weak. On the other hand, $F(1,38) = .991$, $P<.001$, N=40 found out that the analysis of the variance was moderately significant. Finally, the coefficients present an inspection of the predictor variable which revealed that creativity was a moderate significant predictor of performance (Beta=.159, p>.326). This means that creativity was a moderate significant predictor of organizational performance in the context of the study.

Generally, it can be concluded that creativity has a moderate relationship with performance. It can also be concluded that there is a very moderate influence of 2.5% of creativity on performance in ECD.

H₂; Accountability does not Significantly Influences Performance of ECD

This hypothesis sought to understand whether there was a significant influence and relationship between accountability and performance. A simple regression test was run to find out whether there was any influence and to what extent accountability influences performance in ECD. The findings of the analyses are as shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Independent Effects of Accountability on Performance

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.520[a]	.176	.154	9.12185

ANOVAᵃ						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	676.065	1	676.065	8.125	.007[b]
	Residual	3161.910	38	83.208		
	Total	3837.975	39			

Coefficientsᵃ						
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
1	(Constant)	36.153	9.971		3.626	.001
	Accountability	1.835	.644	.520	2.850	.007

a. Dependent Variable: Performance
b. Predictors: (Constant), Accountability

Source: Field Data (2017)

A simple regression analysis was carried out to find out whether accountability had an impact on performance. Table 4 explains various results as follows; the correlation coefficient (R) had a value of .520[a] which implies that there is a moderate positive linear relationship of accountability and

performance. The regression analysis (R^2) shows a 17.6 percent of variance of accountability in performance which was found to be statistically significant. This means that accountability affects performance with 17.6% which is a moderate significance. On the other hand, $F_{(1,38)} = 8.125$, $P<.007$, $N=40$ found out that the analysis of the variance was significant. Finally, an inspection of the predictor variable revealed that accountability was a significant predictor of performance (Beta=.420, p>.007).

Largely, this means that there exists a moderate positive relationship between accountability and performance. The higher levels of accountability were associated with higher levels of overall performance in the organization with a presentation of 17.6% which indicates a moderately high influence of performance.

5.1 Conclusions

Strategic leadership remains an important approach of leadership used in many organizations. This kind of leadership has been linked to enhanced performance of the firm in different markets. However, previous studies have not properly brought out this relationship and hence the need for this study. Four measures of strategic leadership were used to test their relationship and influence of these measures with performance. The findings of the analysis found all measures for strategic leadership: creativity and accountability have a significant positive impact on performance of the ECD.

These findings are important because they provide an important perspective of the influence of this strategic leadership approach on organizational performance especially in faith based organizations. Considering their conservative nature, many times they shy off from buying in new ideas for the fear of the unknown. From this study, it is suggested that the top leadership of the faith based institutions should open up and welcome new ideas that can greatly improve organization performance. The empirical evidence therefore points to the strong influence of strategic leaders' characteristics on performance which is an aspect that remains consistent with previous studies on the influence of strategic leaders' characteristics on organization's performance.

The discussion of the findings points to the important role played by strategic leadership in organizations as this study has been able to find that previous studies support the role played by the four strategic leaders' characteristics in influencing organizational performance. From these findings, it is suggested that it would be important for ECD to consider the implementation of this kind of leadership if it seeks to continue enhancing performance. However, the focus should be more on accountability. Creativity could be included since other studies support the relationship in as much as in this study the characteristic's relationship was found to be moderate and the significant equally moderate.

6.1 Recommendations

The study recommends that it is good to support creativity of leaders and employees at large since the current study proved its influence and from previous studies there is strong support of creativity influencing an organization's performance positively. The organization's leadership should encourage generation of new ideas and improved ways of doing things to cope-up with the ever changing environment.

The study further recommended that top leadership of ECD should focus on ensuring that accountability is implanted in the organization's culture. Accountability should not just be exercised on the part of the leader only but ought to extend beyond the leader to holding other individuals within the organization to account for their actions and decisions. This will lead to improvements in organizational performance over the long term.

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