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INFLUENCE OF LEADERSHIP STYLE ON ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE OF THE KAJIADO COUNTY GOVERNMENT, KENYA

Naomi Wanjiku Thuo, ¹ Dr. Julius Kahuthia, PhD ² & George Gachuru ³

¹MBA Student, School of Business and Leadership Studies, St. Paul's University, Kenya
 ² Lecturer, School of Business and Leadership Studies, St. Paul's University, Kenya
 ³ Lecturer, School of Business and Leadership Studies, St. Paul's University, Kenya

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ABSTRACT

Organizational performance is widely recognized as a critical issue in today's highly competitive landscape, where organizations across sectors strive to achieve optimal results. Despite its importance, many challenges hinder the attainment of peak performance. This study aimed to assess the influence of leadership style on organizational performance of the Kajiado County Government, Kenya. The study was grounded on Goal Setting Theory, and adopted explanatory research design approach. The study surveyed 280 employees from Kajiado County Government, with a sample of 165 selected through proportionate stratified sampling. Data collection utilized questionnaires, and analysis employed SPSS version 24, encompassing descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, mean, and standard deviation) and inferential statistics, notably multiple regression analysis to uncover relationships between variables. The findings showed that leadership style significantly influenced organizational performance within Kajiado County Government (B = 0.195, p < 0.001). Effective leadership was associated with demonstrated skills, employee empowerment, and inclusive decision-making processes. Based on the findings, the study recommends that Kajiado County Government invest in leadership development to nurture a supportive leadership culture.

Key words: Organizational performance Leadership styles, Kajiado County Government

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INTRODUCTION

The role of a leader has always been highlighted as being a key driver of organisation performance. A leader who has genuine commitment to the organisation's survival and growth strive to outperform their rivals, innovate, and adapt to changing market dynamics to maintain their relevance and viability (Farida & Setiawan, 2022). According to El-Kassar and Singh (2019)organizational performance can be seen from the managerial lenses by focusing on quality of output that is linked to everyday decisions or theoretical lenses focusing on how effective the strategies are in influencing performance levels or empirical framework where the different constructs are used to capture the performance.

Leading effectively requires competence, skill and suitable leadership styles. Leadership is viewed as the process of influencing, motivating and enabling others to understand and agree to contribute collectively to the effectiveness and success of the organization's shared objectives of which they are members (Huang et al., 2022). Leadership Style therefore, is the manner and approach of providing direction, implementing plans, and motivating people; the combination of traits, characteristics, skills and behaviors that leaders use when interacting with their subordinates (Kilani, 2016). Without positive daily interactions with members of staff, or the human side of the work, the other aspects of a leader's responsibilities will suffer (Rahmadani et al., 2020).

One of the major responsibilities of a leader in bringing about change is to own the company's vision, inspire representatives to embrace it, and assist staff members in sharing it. When powerful management motivates their teams to achieve this goal, hierarchical transformation can be achieved. Effective authority is essential for providing a methodology-engaged connection that, in the end, helps to comprehend the ideal objective. This implies that the degree and type of power exhibited by individuals holding administrative positions affects the efficient implementation of a chosen

procedure inside a company. Thus, it suggests that the level of advancement in the application of technique has a direct bearing on critical authority. As a result, the leader of an establishment would have to encourage change within the association and implement strategies for maximizing the cycle's useful life (Kimotho & Mwasiaji, 2019).

A number of studies have explored the relationship between leadership and organizational performance (Farida & Setiawan, 2022; Huang et al., 2022; Kimotho & Mwasiaji, 2019). However, there is still a lack of empirical studies to explain the nature and confirm the existence of a relationship between leadership style and organizational performance in Kajiado County government context and across various organizations. This study assessed the influence of leadership style on organizational performance of the Kajiado County Government, Kenya.

Objectives of the Study

The objective of study was to assess the influence of leadership style on organizational performance of the Kajiado County Government.

Statement of the Problem

Effective strategy implementation play a crucial role in influencing organizational performance of County Governments. Despite its importance in service delivery enhancing and operational efficiency, numerous challenges hinder effectiveness. These obstacles have a tangible impact on the county's ability to deliver essential services and achieve its strategic goals. For instance, challenges in strategy implementation have affected the delivery of critical social amenities such as healthcare and water services, which are essential for the economic well-being and quality of life of Kajiado County residents (Farida & Setiawan, 2022). As highlighted by Odinda (2014), the inefficiencies and challenges faced by Kajiado County Government in these areas hinder its overall performance and the effective realization of its strategic priorities. Research by Desroches et al. (2014) show that over 90% of organizations fail to meet their strategic goals due to ineffective

performance management systems and poor implementation strategies. Kaplan and Norton (2005) further emphasize this issue by noting that while many organizations are committed to achieving performance success, their focus on strategic execution is often lacking. They cite that 85% of leadership teams spend less than one hour per month on strategic planning, and 50% do not allocate any time to it. These statistics highlight a pervasive issue: inadequate attention to strategy and performance management. Furthermore, previous studies have predominantly concentrated on strategy formulation, leaving a dearth of understanding regarding the impact of strategy implementation on organizational performance (Shamila et al., 2016; Nnamaniet al., 2015; Akinyele & Fasogbon, 2007; Moloi & Marwala, 2021). Katoo (2018) found that the Constituency Development Fund of Kajiado South Constituency face significant strategy implementation challenges, including slow decision-making, inadequate resources, and lack of stakeholder involvement. On the other hand, Makokha (2018) found that strategic management practices, including strategic planning, leadership, and implementation, significantly influence service delivery in Nairobi City County. The review shows that there is insufficient focus on the impact of strategy implementation on organizational performance, as most previous studies have concentrated on strategy formulation. indicates a need for further research specifically addressing how effective strategy implementation can enhance performance outcomes in various organizational settings. This study investigated the influence of implementation of strategy on organizational performance in Kajiado County. The study adopted a methodological approach that combined quantitative analysis with qualitative insights from key stakeholders in Kajiado County.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Goal Setting Theory

This study was grounded on Goal Setting Theory formulated by Edwin Locke in 1968. This theory posits an intrinsic connection between setting

specific goals and taking action. It emphasizes that more specific and challenging goals, when supported by constructive feedback, lead to enhanced task performance. Employees motivated to continuously pursue their objectives, raising their performance bar or modifying their goals if they are not met (Han, 2018). The theory underscores that motivation and performance improvement stem from the desire to strive towards well-defined, challenging goals. Clear, specific, and difficult goals, as opposed to vague and easy ones, are inherently more motivating. Precise, measurable goals with unambiguous deadlines lead to increased productivity and superior performance. Honest feedback instrumental in guiding individuals towards their goals, enhancing job satisfaction and performance.

According to Ahmed et al., (2019) the goal-setting theory had evolved to emphasize the importance of participation in goal-setting and its effects on one's efficiency and goal commitment. Personal efficacy is the belief in one's ability to complete task, impacting the level of effort exerted on challenging tasks. Goal commitment is influenced by open and honest goal communication and the act of setting goals for oneself, rather than for others. Proponents of the Goal Setting Theory argue that it provides a structured framework for improving motivation, performance and job satisfaction.

Critics contend that this theory may oversimplify the factors influencing human behavior and performance, overlooking the role of external influences (Chen, 2023). However, the theory is relevant to this study as it explains how goal setting and motivation are intrinsically linked to task performance and job satisfaction. In the context of Kajiado County Government, understanding how specific, challenging goals, supported by honest feedback, can enhance organizational performance is crucial. This theory provides insights into how organizational objectives become more acceptable when employees participate in the process of setting goals and how self-efficacy and goal

commitment influence performance. By applying the Goal Setting Theory, this study aims to elucidate how goal setting enhances organizational performance within Kajiado County Government, offering valuable guidance in optimizing goal setting processes for improved outcomes.

Empirical Review

Yahong and Kok Loang (2023) conducted a study focusing on the role of leadership styles in organizational performance and employee satisfaction. Their research revealed that elements hierarchical execution, such value-based administration, and change leadership significantly influence the level of satisfaction expressed by an organization's employees regarding individual positions. To gather data for their review; the researchers employed a quantitative methodology, administering a survey to 100 participants. The survey was designed to elicit substantive responses, ensuring that modest or ambiguous responses were not considered. The reliability test conducted on the data indicated a significant association between the independent variables (leadership styles) and the dependent variable (employee satisfaction). Furthermore, the results of the regression analysis suggested that organizational performance emerged as the most influential variable affecting the level of satisfaction employees feel towards their employers. This finding highlights the critical role played by organizational performance in shaping employee satisfaction and underscores the importance of effective leadership styles in fostering a positive work environment.

EH Al Khajeh (2018) in Ghana studied the impact of leadership styles on organizational performance. The researcher believes that leadership style is an important factor affecting the success or failure of an organization and influences individual behavior or motivation in achieving the organization's goals. This study examined the impact of various leadership styles on organizational performance, focusing on six main types: transformational, transactional, autocratic, charismatic, bureaucratic, and democratic. This study provides a better

understanding of these leadership styles. The study determined that democratic, transformative, bureaucratic, and autocratic leadership styles have a positive impact on organizational performance. Charismatic and transactional leadership styles have negative impact on the organization's performance because they can independently limit employees' opportunities and freedom. Primary and secondary data were used in this study. The primary research utilized a quantitative approach, employing a survey instrument to collect data. Secondary research involves reviewing existing literature to achieve research objectives.

Other findings by EH Al Khajeh (2018) revealed that charismatic, bureaucratic, and transactional leadership styles have a negative impact on organizational performance, while transformative, autocratic, and democratic leadership styles exhibit a positive relationship. The study recommended that organizations adopt leadership styles that enhance the capabilities and potentials of individuals within the organization.

Neba et al., (2024) focused on leadership styles and organizational performance in Cameroon: The Case of Small Businesses in the Buea Municipality. The study examined the impact of authoritarian leadership style on organizational performance, the effect of democratic leadership organizational performance and the effect of transformational leadership style on organizational performance. Utilizing a causal examination plan, the exploration chose 100 representatives in little and medium size associations through purposive testing strategy. Expressive and inferential insights were utilized through SPSS rendition 25 to investigate information. Discoveries uncover that there is a positive and critical connection between administration styles and hierarchical execution in private ventures contemplated. Results further uncover that majority rule initiative styles don't decidedly affect hierarchical execution while dictator and groundbreaking initiative essentially affects authoritative execution. It was recommended that managers in small and medium

size organizations use authoritarian and transformational leadership styles in order to increase performance.

Lumumba et al., (2021) focused on influence of leadership style on organizational performance of primary teachers training colleges in the Lake Victoria Region of Kenya. Free factors involved Free enterprise and imperious administration styles, while the reliant variable was hierarchical execution. The review utilized a quantitative strategy approach with polls as the instruments for information assortment. The objective populace for this study was 245 guides and 9 administrators in the 5 public and 4 confidential essential educators' trade schools. The review test was 225 guides and the 9 administrators. Authority styles were estimated utilizing the adjusted rendition of the Multifaceted Initiative Style Survey. The investigation discovered that both Free enterprise and despotic administration styles were less shown by chiefs of PTTCs in Lake Victoria District of Kenya. Free enterprise authority style was least shown. The study also revealed that both Laissez faire and autocratic leadership styles negatively influenced the organizational performance of PTTCs. Lastly demographic characteristics did statistically significant influence on organizational performance of PTTCs in the Lake Victoria Region of Kenya.

In Kenya, Ongige (2018) examined the relationship between transactional leadership and devolution implementation at Kisii County. The research's objectives were to ascertain whether,

transactional, transformational, and participative servant leadership led to devolution and implementation. Devolution implementation consisted of examination of operational efficiency, service quality and improvement of services. The review looked to achieve these goals by applying a clear exploration worldview where a populace comprising of 285 administration and staff workers from Kisii County was utilized. Discoveries from the review delineated impact of conditional initiative as being both positive and critical just like the relationship with groundbreaking, worker and participative authority. The review demonstrated that functional effectiveness, administration quality and improvement of administrations were completely impacted emphatically by the examined authority styles. To achieve every one of these, the respondents affirmed that they required some investment to grasp the singular interests of subordinates. The study gave for further studies by County governments to investigate how leadership styles could further lead to desirable outcomes for citizens. The study focused on the public sector but its main focus was on County governments while aimed at investigating strategy this study implementation at the national government.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a descriptive research. The target population comprises top and middle management staff across various departments within the Kajiado County Government, totaling 280 employees as shown in Table 1.

Table 1 *Target Population*

Department	Number of Top and Middle Management Employees
Agricultural, Livestock, Fisheries and Irrigation	30
Finance and Economic Planning	25
Medical Services and Public Health	35
Education, Vocational Training, Youth and Sports	40
Lands, Physical Planning, Urban Development, Housing and Municipalities	20
Roads Public Works, Transport and Energy	30
Trade, Investments and Enterprise Development	25
Water, Environment, Natural Resources and Climate Change	35
Public Service, Administration, Social Services, Citizen Participation and	40
Inspectorate Services	
Total	280

A sample size of 165 was determined using Slovin's Formula, employing a stratified sampling strategy based on departmental proportions to

ensure representation across different organizational units.

Table 2Sample Size Distribution

	Department	Target Population	Proportion	Sample Size
1	Agricultural, Livestock, Fisheries and Irrigation	30	30/280×165	17
2	Finance and Economic Planning	25	25/280×165	15
3	Medical Services and Public Health	35	35/280×165	21
4	Education, Vocational Training, Youth and Sports	40	40/280×165	24
5	Lands, Physical Planning, Urban Development, Housing and Municipalities	20	20/280×165	12
6	Roads Public Works, Transport and Energy	30	30/280×165	18
7	Trade, Investments and Enterprise Development	25	25/280×165	15
8	Water, Environment, Natural Resources and Climate Change	35	35/280×165	21
9	Public Service, Administration, Social Services, Citizen Participation and Inspectorate Services	40	40/280×165	24
	Total	280		165

Structured questionnaires were used to collect data, incorporating Likert-scale questions and openended questions. Validity was ensured through face and content validity checks, incorporating feedback from experts and a pilot study. Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient during a pre-test stage with a subset of respondents. Questionnaires were distributed electronically to

enhance accessibility and participation among Kajiado County Government employees, ensuring comprehensive data collection. Quantitative data were analyzed using statistical tools such as ANOVA and multiple regressions to examine relationships between dependent and independent variables. Qualitative data were thematically analyzed and presented descriptively with relevant quotes.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Response Rate

A total of 120 participants out of 165 respondents completed and returned the questionnaires, making the overall response rate of 72.73% for this study.

Duration the Respondent has Been Working at the County Government

Table 3 presents the duration in years that the respondents have been working in the county government. The majority of the respondents, 90

(75%), have been working in the county government for 3 to 5 years. This can be attributed to the fact that the current county government came into office after the 2022 general elections, and a significant turnover of top-level personnel occurs with each change in political leadership (governors). Respondents who worked for 6 to 10 years in the county government were 20 (16.67%), likely holding positions such as deputy directors and assistant directors who are less directly affected by changes in political leadership. Those who worked for less than 2 years were 10 (8.33%).

Table 3Duration the Respondent has Been Working at the County Government

Duration in County Governments	Number of Respondents	%
3 to 5 years	90	75
6 to 10 years	20	16.67
Less than 2 years	10	8.33
Total	120	100

Descriptive Statistics for Leadership Style

The study sought to assess the influence of leadership style on organizational performance of

the Kajiado County Government. The results are presented in Table 4.

 Table 4

 Influence of Leadership Style on Organizational Performance

	Statements	Min Score	Max Score	Mean	Std Deviation
1	The county leadership demonstrates adequate leadership skills	1	5	4.16	0.747
2	All the leaders in the county government are actively involved in strategy implementation	1	5	3.07	0.622
3	The county leadership has imparted a clear, compelling vision for strategy implementation	1	5	3.9	0.752
4	Employees are fully empowered by the county leadership to successfully implement various strategies	1	5	3.79	0.772
5	The county leadership encourages active participation of employees in decision making	1	5	3.83	0.751
	Variable aggregate	1	5	3.75	0.731

According to Table 4, the majority of respondents thought the county leadership exhibited sufficient leadership abilities (Mean = 4.16, SD = 0.747). There was a moderate consensus

(Mean = 3.07, SD = 0.622) that every county government leaders actively participates in the implementation of the strategy. The respondents (Mean = 3.90, SD = 0.752) concurred that the

county leadership had communicated a compelling and unambiguous vision for the strategy's execution. The county leadership fully empowers staff members to carry out different plans with success (Mean = 3.79, SD = 0.772). The leadership of the county promotes employees' active involvement in decision-making (Mean = 3.83, SD = 0.751). The results point to a favorable opinion of leadership styles in the county government.

Results from open-ended questions about the dominant leadership style and its impact on the Kajiado County Government's overall performance revealed that many participants emphasized the significance of transformational leadership, stressing its function in inspiring and motivating staff members toward accomplishing strategic goals. To this end, one of the participants said:

"Leadership here has been visionary and collaborative, focusing on empowering teams and fostering innovation" (Respondent One). In order to improve organizational performance, transformational leadership places a strong emphasis on vision, empowerment, and innovation. According to Akerele (2023), this approach improves service delivery, motivates employees, and aligns corporate objectives with community needs.

The respondents also observed that establishing specific goals and creating a feeling of direction within the county administration have been made possible by visionary leadership. To this end, of the respondents opined: "Visionary leadership plays a critical role in organizational success by setting clear goals and providing direction" (Respondent Two). In the context of Kajiado County Government, this leadership style emphasizes long-term strategic planning, fostering a sense of purpose among employees, and aligning efforts with community needs. On the other hand, some participants voiced

apprehensions over certain facets of the leadership style in Kajiado county government. One of the respondents said: "The leadership emphasizes task completion through rewards and punishments based on performance. We need participatory decision-making processes and empowerment" (Respondent Three).

According to Young et al. (2020) such type of leadership style is transactional leadership. It often emphasizes task completion through rewards and punishments based on performance. While effective in certain contexts, it may lead to a focus on short-term goals and transactional exchanges rather than long-term organizational development and employee engagement. Participants' concerns suggest a desire for more participatory decisionmaking processes and empowerment, which are central to fostering a collaborative environment. Thus, a greater focus on collaborative decision-making and staff empowerment could improve both operational efficiency and job contentment. These results are consistent with those of Yahong et al. (2023), who discovered that good work environments can be fostered through styles. successful leadership Wang (2023)contended that an employee's attitudes and behaviors may be influenced by the leadership style exhibited in the workplace. In order to overcome organizational difficulties resulting from subpar leadership in both public and commercial companies, it may be important to consider the relationship between leadership style and the capacity to leverage effective staff performance

Descriptive Statistics for Organizational Performance

The dependent variable was organizational performance of the Kajiado County Government. The results are presented in Table 5.

Table5Organizational Performance

No.	Statements	Min Score	Max Score	Mean	Std Deviation
1	The leadership of the County provides employees with adequate resources to support strategy implementation.	1	5	3.69	0.699
2	The financial resources allocated to the strategic implementation by the county are efficient.	1	5	3.48	0.692
3	Organizational resources contribute to achievement of county strategic objectives.	1	5	3.39	0.729
4	The county government has a sound framework to monitor usage of all resources.	1	5	3.51	0.814
5	The county government ensures that there is increased accountability and transparency in the use of resources.	1	5	3.73	0.717
	Variable aggregate	1	5	3.56	0.732

Source: Author (2024)

Table 5 provides the answers given to the statements that were used to gauge the performance of the organization. The consensus among respondents was that the leadership offers sufficient resources to facilitate the execution of the strategy (Mean = 3.69, SD = 0.699). The county's financial resources for strategic execution are effective (Mean = 3.48, SD = 0.692). The county's strategic objectives are achieved in part through organizational resources (Mean = 3.39, SD = 0.729). The county government's sound structure for keeping an eye on the use of all resources was acknowledged (Mean = 3.51, SD = 0.814). Increased accountability and transparency in the allocation of guaranteed by the county resources are administration (Mean = 3.73, SD = 0.717).

Furthermore, the findings show that the respondents' perceptions of organizational performance are generally good. The majority of the respondents noted that leadership style is important in shaping organizational performance within the Kajiado County Government. To this end, one of the respondents opined: "Effective leadership and a clear vision are crucial factors for organizational performance. Good leaders motivate employees and propel organisational goals" (Respondents Eight). The results are in line with

those of Wang (2018), who discovered a positive relationship between transformative leadership and the accomplishment of plan execution in public sector companies. This shows that transformational leaders tend to lead firms that have higher degrees of success in putting their strategy into practice. These leaders are renowned for their capacity to encourage creativity, excite and motivate their groups, and establish a common goal, all of which support the successful implementation of strategic projects. Performance within the context of strategy implementation represents a pivotal outcome and a focal point in organizational management. According to Rothaermel (2012) a well-defined vision functions as a compass, directing decision-making and resource distribution towards objectives that optimize effectiveness and influence. In addition, proficient leadership cultivates cooperation and inclusiveness, permitting varied viewpoints to participate in strategic projects and community involvement endeavors.

Inferential Analysis

The study tested the interaction between leadership style and organisational performance.

Multiple Regression Analysis

Multiple regression analysis was conducted at a 95% confidence level (α =0.005) to investigate the

possible direct association between strategy implementation variables and organizational performance.

Model Summary

Model summary gives an overview of the key components and performance metrics of the

Table 6
Model Summary

statistical model used. It includes details on the model's fit, explanatory variables, and the overall effectiveness in predicting the outcomes of interest based on the gathered data. The results are shown in Table 6.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Estimato	Error of e	the
1	.836ª	.698	.692	1. 359		

a. Predictors: (Constant), Leadership Styles

Table 6 reveals that the coefficient of determination (R Square) is 0.698, implying that the variable accounts for about 69.8% of the variance in organizational performance. This finding highlights the important role that leadership styles, in determining and predicting organizational success and effectiveness.

Analysis of variance (ANOVA)

The researcher conducted analysis of variance (ANOVA) across the independent variables, assessing the significance of their impact on the dependent variable. The results are presented in Table 7.

Table 7 *Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)*

ANOVA ^{a,b}					
Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	850.670	4	212.667	105.334	.000°
Residual	382.560	216	1.772		
Total	1233.230	220			

a. Dependent Variable: Organizational Performance

The results in Table 7 show that there is a strong correlation between organizational performance and leadership styles. The significant level (p < 0.001) and the high F-value (105.334) of the model suggest that this factor account for a significant amount of the variance in organizational performance. This implies that enhancements in

this domain may result in superior organizational outcomes.

Summary of Regression Coefficients

Furthermore, the coefficients derived from the regression analysis, highlighting their respective impacts on the model's outcomes are presented in Table 8.

b. Weighted Least Squares Regression - Weighted by weight

c. Predictors: (Constant), Leadership Styles

Table 8Summary of regression coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	t-value	Sig. (p- value)
	В	Std. Error	Beta	
(Constant)	1.015	0.145		0.000
Leadership Styles	0.195	0.04	0.298	0.0001

- a. Dependent Variable: Organisational performance
- b. Weighted Least Squares Regression Weighted by weight

Table 8 indicates that the intercept, representing the expected organisational performance when the predictor is zero, is statistically significant with a p-value of 0.000. Leadership Styles significantly impact Kajiado County government, as shown by coefficient (0.195) and low p-values (0.0001). This finding highlights the importance of leadership styles in predicting County performance.

The hypothesized moderation model was confirmed to be:

Y=1.015 + 0.195Leadership Styles

This model provides highlights the critical role of leadership styles in enhancing organisational performance. This finding is consistent with the findings of Fiaz et al. (2017), who discovered that leadership style is a critical predictor of an organization's success or failure. Leadership style inspires people to complete certain objectives, and they additionally motivate subordinates. Toptier leadership is required to achieve the goal and

vision while also dealing with external changes (Chhotray, 2018).

CONCLUSION AND **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The study sought to assess the influence of leadership style on organizational performance of the Kajiado County Government. The results indicate a significant positive influence of leadership style on the organizational performance of the Kajiado County Government (B = 0.195, p < 0.001). The study therefore concludes that effective leadership practices can lead to improved organizational outcomes.

Considering the substantial impact of leadership styles on the functioning of organizations, the Kajiado county government is advised to make investments in ongoing leadership development initiatives. These training programs ought to emphasize on leaders' capacity for adaptive leadership, encouraging strategic visioning, and establishing an accountability-focused culture.

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