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Leadership Strategies and Sustainable Performance of the Aviation
Industry in Kenya



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Leadership Strategies and Sustainable Performance of the Aviation Industry in Kenya



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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The general objective of the study was to assess the influence of leadership strategies on sustainable performance of the aviation industry in Kenya. Specifically, the study sought to establish the effect of transformational leadership on sustainable performance of the aviation industry in Kenya and to assess the effect of adaptive leadership on sustainable performance of the aviation industry in Kenya.

Methodology: This study used descriptive research design. This study targeted management employees working in these companies. According to the Kenya airports authority (2024) annual report, there are 408 management employees working with the 8 aviation companies in Kenya. The researcher used stratified sampling. The sample size of 202 respondents was determined using the formula suggested by Yamane (1967). This study relied on primary data which was collected through use of questionnaires. Quantitative data collected was analysed by the use of descriptive statistics which include percentages, means, standard deviations and frequencies. This study also conducted inferential statistics through correlation analysis and regression analysis. Pearson correlation analysis was used to test the strength and the direction of the relationship between the independent and the dependent variables.

Findings: The study found that transformational leadership has a positive and significant effect on sustainable performance of the aviation industry in Kenya. Further, the study found that adaptive leadership has a positive and significant effect on sustainable performance of the aviation industry in Kenya.

Unique Contribution to Theory, Practice and Policy: Based on the findings, the study recommends that the management of aviation industry in Kenya should actively adopt adaptive leadership practices that emphasize flexibility, continuous learning, and rapid response to change in order to enhance sustainable performance. Adaptive leaders who encourage experimentation, stakeholder collaboration, and data-driven decision-making can effectively respond to dynamic challenges.

Key Words: *Leadership Strategies, Transformational Leadership, Adaptive Leadership, Aviation Industry*

Background of the Study

The aviation industry is a vital engine for economic and social development within a county, acting as a catalyst for trade, tourism, investment, and employment (Haule, & Mushi, 2022). According to the International Air Transport Association (IATA), air transport supported approximately 87.7 million jobs globally and contributed about \$3.5 trillion to global GDP in 2019—roughly 4.1% of total global economic output. Of this, 11.3 million were direct jobs within the industry, such as in airlines, airports, and aircraft manufacturing. The remaining jobs were indirect (18 million), induced (4.3 million), and tourism-related (54.2 million), reflecting the industry's widespread impact. In Africa, the aviation sector contributed \$63 billion to the continent's GDP and supported around 7.7 million jobs prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. For individual counties, the presence of a commercial airport often brings significant advantages: increased tourism inflows, improved access to markets, and greater attractiveness for foreign direct investment (FDI). For example, counties near major airports like Nairobi's Jomo Kenyatta International Airport or Mombasa's Moi International Airport benefit from heightened international connectivity, leading to stronger trade volumes and service sector growth. Additionally, counties with growing aviation infrastructure often report higher rates of urbanization and investment in transport-related services, reinforcing the aviation industry's multiplier effect on regional economies (Al Khajeh, 2022).

Leadership plays a critical role in determining organizational success and long-term sustainability across all sectors. Effective leadership strategies enable organizations to set clear goals, inspire and motivate employees, foster innovation, and respond proactively to internal and external challenges (Musafiri, Mulyungi & Rukia, 2022). Leaders guide organizational resources, shape culture, and influence performance outcomes, making leadership a key determinant of sustainable success. Leadership strategies refer to the approaches and styles used by leaders to influence and direct their teams toward achieving organizational objectives. Transformational leadership emphasizes inspiring and empowering employees to exceed expectations and embrace change. Adaptive leadership allows organizations to navigate complex and dynamic environments with flexibility and resilience (Wakhisi, 2022).

The aviation industry in Kenya is a critical pillar of the country's transport infrastructure and an important driver of economic growth (Nyong'a & Maina, 2022). Kenya's strategic geographical location in East Africa positions it as a regional aviation hub, linking Africa to Europe, Asia, and the Middle East. Jomo Kenyatta International Airport (JKIA) in Nairobi serves as the main gateway and one of the busiest airports in Africa, facilitating passenger travel, cargo movement, and international trade (Lola & Paul, 2021). Other key airports such as Moi International Airport in Mombasa, Eldoret International Airport, and Kisumu International Airport support domestic connectivity and regional integration. Kenya's aviation industry plays a vital role in supporting trade, tourism, and investment (Masetu, Mbebe & Nzioki, 2021). Air transport enables the

efficient movement of high-value and time-sensitive goods such as fresh horticultural produce, pharmaceuticals, and electronics, with air cargo exports contributing significantly to foreign exchange earnings (Wakhisi, 2022). Tourism, a major sector of the Kenyan economy, relies heavily on air transport to connect international visitors to beach destinations, national parks, and conference facilities. As a result, the performance of the aviation industry directly affects employment creation, revenue generation, and overall economic development (Kitonga, Bichanga & Muema, 2021).

The industry is regulated and coordinated by key institutions including the Kenya Civil Aviation Authority (KCAA), which oversees safety, security, and compliance with international aviation standards, and the Kenya Airports Authority (KAA), which manages airport infrastructure (Nyong'a & Maina, 2022). Kenya Airways, the national flag carrier, plays a central role in regional and international connectivity, while several domestic and regional airlines support internal mobility and cross-border travel. Kenya's adherence to International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) standards has enhanced safety oversight and strengthened confidence among international carriers and investors (Lola & Paul, 2021). Despite its importance, the aviation industry in Kenya faces several challenges. These include high operational costs driven by fuel prices, taxes, and maintenance expenses, as well as infrastructure congestion at major airports such as JKIA (Masetu, Mbebe & Nzioki, 2021). The industry is also vulnerable to external shocks such as global economic downturns, pandemics, and geopolitical instability, which can significantly reduce passenger numbers and revenues. Additionally, competition from other regional hubs has increased pressure on Kenyan airlines to improve efficiency, service quality, and cost management (Wakhisi, 2022).

Statement of the Problem

The aviation industry is a vital pillar of Kenya's economic development, acting as a key driver of employment, trade, tourism, and foreign investment. According to the International Air Transport Association (IATA), the sector supports over 620,000 direct and indirect jobs and contributes approximately Ksh330 billion (about \$3.2 billion) to the national economy equivalent to 5.1% of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Jomo Kenyatta International Airport (JKIA), the region's busiest hub, handles more than 7 million passengers and over 300,000 metric tonnes of cargo annually, enabling Kenya's position as a regional logistics and connectivity hub. The aviation sector also facilitates over \$10 billion in exports annually, particularly for high-value perishables like flowers and vegetables, making Kenya the fourth-largest exporter of cut flowers globally. Furthermore, the sector is instrumental in supporting the tourism industry, with international tourist arrivals reaching 1.9 million in 2023 and generating Ksh352 billion in revenue, much of it dependent on air travel. The industry's strategic role is further underscored by its impact on foreign direct investment, with air connectivity helping attract over \$4.4 billion in FDI, supported by ongoing infrastructure developments such as

airport expansions and modernization projects. Collectively, these contributions position the aviation industry as an indispensable enabler of Kenya's economic transformation and regional integration.

Despite its pivotal role in Kenya's economy, the aviation industry faces significant challenges undermining its sustainable performance. Kenya Airways (KQ), the national carrier, declared a net profit of Ksh5.4 billion in 2024 the first since 2013 primarily due to foreign-exchange gains of Ksh10.55 billion, following a 20% appreciation of the Kenyan shilling against the U.S. dollar . While operating profit improved to Ksh16.62 billion, the airline remains in a negative equity position, highlighting ongoing financial instability. Concurrently, KQ's market share has been declining, with a 4% drop between 2015 and 2018, as regional competitors like Ethiopian Airlines and RwandAir expanded theirs by 20% and 22%, respectively. These rivals are enhancing their competitiveness through strategic investments, such as Qatar Airways' planned 49% stake in RwandAir and a 60% investment in Rwanda's new Bugesera International Airport

Leadership strategies play a pivotal role in shaping the sustainable performance of organizations in the aviation industry by influencing decision-making, resource allocation, innovation, employee engagement, and customer satisfaction. Effective leadership can foster a culture of accountability, adaptability, and resilience traits that are critical in an industry characterized by rapid technological change, high operational costs, and global competition. However, in Kenya's aviation sector, strategic leadership remains inconsistent and often reactive rather than proactive.

Objectives of the Study

General Objective of the Study

The general objective of the study was to assess the influence of leadership strategies on sustainable performance of the aviation industry in Kenya

Specific Objectives of the Study

The study was guided by the following specific objectives;

- i. To establish the effect of transformational leadership on sustainable performance of the aviation industry in Kenya
- ii. To assess the effect of adaptive leadership on sustainable performance of the aviation industry in Kenya

Theoretical Review

Self-Determination Theory (SDT)

Self-Determination Theory (SDT) is a well-established psychological framework that focuses on understanding human motivation and behavior. Developed by psychologists Edward Deci and Richard Ryan (1985), SDT posits that individuals are motivated by a set of innate psychological

needs that drive their behavior, growth, and well-being (Islam, *et al*, 2025). The theory primarily emphasizes three core needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Autonomy refers to the desire to make choices and control one's own actions; competence is the need to feel capable and effective in one's activities; and relatedness reflects the desire for meaningful connections with others (Etomes, *et al*, 2025). SDT suggests that when these needs are met, individuals experience intrinsic motivation, engaging in activities for their inherent satisfaction, while their psychological well-being and performance improve (Shiferaw, 2021)

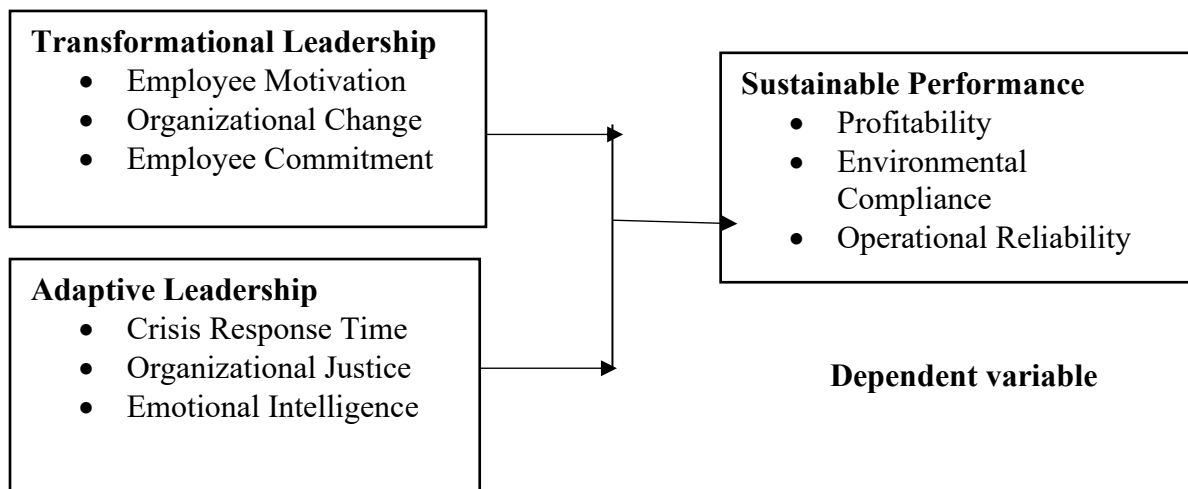
At the heart of SDT is the idea that there are two main types of motivation: intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic motivation involves engaging in an activity because it is inherently enjoyable or interesting, while extrinsic motivation involves doing something to attain an external reward or avoid a punishment (Marienga, Korir & Ochieng, 2022). SDT posits that people are more likely to thrive when they are intrinsically motivated, as this leads to greater creativity, persistence, and psychological well-being. However, extrinsic rewards, when they undermine an individual's autonomy or when they are perceived as controlling, can diminish intrinsic motivation and lead to negative outcomes, such as lower satisfaction and disengagement (Khisu & Kyule, 2020). SDT emphasizes that the social environment plays a crucial role in supporting or hindering the satisfaction of the three basic needs, influencing whether individuals experience intrinsic or extrinsic motivation (Islam, *et al*, 2025). This theory is relevant in establishing the effect of transformational leadership on sustainable performance of the aviation industry in Kenya.

Complexity Leadership Theory

Complexity Leadership Theory (CLT) developed by Mary Uhl-Bien, Russ Marion and Bill McKelvey (2001) is a contemporary leadership framework that emphasizes the dynamic, adaptive, and emergent nature of leadership within complex organizational systems (Northouse & Wang, 2023). Unlike traditional leadership models that focus primarily on individual traits or formal hierarchical roles, CLT views leadership as a process that arises from the interactions and relationships among individuals within an organization (Amah & Dike, 2024). It acknowledges that organizations are complex adaptive systems where change and innovation are often unpredictable, requiring leaders to foster environments that encourage collaboration, learning, and adaptability. The theory identifies three interrelated types of leadership: operational leadership, adaptive leadership, and enabling leadership (Barasa & Otieno, 2023). Operational leadership focuses on maintaining day-to-day organizational functions, ensuring efficiency, structure, and stability (Wamburu, Nyambegera & Kibet, 2020). Adaptive leadership, on the other hand, emerges from informal networks and interactions within the organization and is critical for driving innovation, problem-solving, and responding to dynamic challenges. Enabling leadership acts as a bridge, facilitating conditions that allow adaptive leadership to flourish while balancing the demands of operational leadership (Oketch, Koshal & Musebe, 2025).

Complexity Leadership Theory emphasizes that leadership is not confined to formal authority but is distributed across networks of individuals who collectively influence organizational outcomes (Northouse & Wang, 2023). This perspective encourages leaders to shift from a command-and-control mindset to one of facilitation, empowerment, and the nurturing of emergent solutions. By focusing on the interplay between structure and adaptability, CLT helps organizations remain resilient in the face of uncertainty and complexity, fostering sustainable performance through continuous learning and collaborative problem-solving (Amah & Dike, 2024). This theory was used to assess the effect of adaptive leadership on sustainable performance of the aviation industry in Kenya.

Conceptual Framework



Independent Variables

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Empirical Review

Transformational Leadership and Sustainable Performance

Islam, *et al* (2025) researched on green human capital and firms' sustainable performance: a moderated mediation model of green transformational leadership and green competitive advantage. The study employed a quantitative survey design involving 271 employees of garment firms in Bangladesh. The study found that green human capital significantly predicts sustainable performance, with green competitive advantage mediating this relationship, and green transformational leadership moderating the link between human capital and sustainable performance. The study concluded that green transformational leadership enhances sustainable performance outcomes by leveraging human capital and competitive advantage.

Etomes, *et al* (2025) conducted a study titled transformational leadership for sustainable productivity in higher education institutions of Cameroon. The study used a quantitative survey of teachers in both state and private higher education institutions. The study found that transformational leadership dimensions, particularly intellectual stimulation and inspirational motivation, positively and significantly influence sustainable productivity in higher education institutions. The study concluded that transformational leadership is essential for enhancing sustainable productivity in higher education institutions in Cameroon.

Shiferaw (2021) examined the effect of transformational leadership on sustainable performance. The study employed a quantitative survey design targeting employees in manufacturing and service firms. The findings indicated that green transformational leadership significantly improves environmental performance and green creativity, which are key components of sustainable performance. The study concluded that green transformational leadership creates conditions favorable for sustainable outcomes by promoting innovation and environmental initiatives.

Marienga, Korir and Ochieng (2022) carried out research on the effect of transformational leadership on sustainability performance of manufacturing firms in Kenya. The study employed a descriptive quantitative survey design targeting 120 employees in manufacturing firms in Kenya. The study found that transformational leadership dimensions significantly predict sustainability performance outcomes, including environmental initiatives, operational efficiency, and stakeholder engagement. The study concluded that transformational leadership significantly improves sustainability performance in Kenyan manufacturing firms.

Khisa and Kyule (2020) investigated on transformational leadership and employee performance of community conservancies in Kenya. The study used a descriptive cross-sectional survey with 115 managers of community conservancies. The study found that transformational leadership traits, including individualized consideration and inspirational motivation, are positively and significantly related to employee performance, a key driver of sustainable conservation outcomes. The study concluded that transformational leadership enhances employee performance and supports the sustainability of community-based conservation initiatives in Kenya.

Adaptive Leadership and Sustainable Performance

Northouse and Wang (2023) investigated on adaptive leadership and organizational sustainability in technology firms in the United States. The study used a quantitative survey design targeting 312 managers and employees in U.S. technology companies. Findings indicated that adaptive leadership behaviors including situational adjustment, learning orientation, and stakeholder engagement significantly enhance organizational sustainability outcomes such as innovation, resilience, and long-term performance. The study concluded that adaptive leadership is a critical driver of sustainable organizational outcomes in dynamic environments.

Amah and Dike (2024) conducted a study on adaptive leadership and sustainable performance in Nigerian manufacturing firms. Using a descriptive survey design, data were collected from 200 managers across multiple manufacturing firms. The findings revealed that adaptive leadership practices particularly fostering flexibility, participative decision-making, and problem-solving orientation positively influence sustainable performance measures, including productivity, environmental initiatives, and stakeholder engagement. The study concluded that implementing adaptive leadership in manufacturing firms enhances sustainability and competitiveness in volatile markets.

Barasa and Otieno (2023) examined on adaptive leadership and performance of public institutions in Uganda. The research employed a cross-sectional survey design with 156 managers in public institutions. The study found that adaptive leadership dimensions particularly crisis responsiveness, flexibility, and team engagement significantly improved organizational performance outcomes such as efficiency, service delivery quality, and institutional sustainability. The study concluded that adaptive leadership is vital for enhancing performance and long-term sustainability of public institutions in Uganda.

Wamburu, Nyambegera and Kibet (2020) assessed the influence of adaptive leadership safe environment dimension on organizational performance in Kenya's insurance companies. The study used a positivist descriptive survey design, sampling 311 senior and middle managers from licensed insurance firms. Findings showed that the safe environment dimension of adaptive leadership positively and significantly affects organizational performance, promoting employee motivation and long-term operational sustainability. The study concluded that fostering a safe work environment a key adaptive leadership practice improves organizational performance in Kenyan insurance companies.

Oketch, Koshal and Musebe (2025) researched on the significance of employee engagement dimension of adaptive leadership on the performance of commercial banks in Kenya. A mixed-methods descriptive research design was used, surveying 394 top-level managers. The findings revealed that adaptive leadership through employee engagement significantly enhances performance outcomes and supports sustainable organizational transformation in commercial banks. The study concluded that adaptive leadership is crucial for fostering employee engagement and sustaining performance in Kenyan financial institutions.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study used descriptive research design. Descriptive research design deals with gathering distributed information to represent a large area of study (Orodhe, 2019). The study focused on the aviation industry in Kenya. According to Kenya airports authority (2024) there are 8 domestic airline companies in Kenya. These domestic airline companies in Kenya include; Kenya Airways, Jambojet, Fly540, Safarilink, Skyward Express, Bluesky Aviation, Jetways

Airlines and Renegade Air. According to the Kenya airports authority (2024) annual report, there are 408 management employees working with the 8 aviation companies in Kenya

Table 1: Target Population

Category	Target Population
Top Managers	24
Middle Managers	64
Lower Managers	320
Total	408

The researcher used Stratified sampling. The sample size was determined using the formula suggested by Yamane (1967).

The formula is as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where, n= Sample size N= Population size

e= Margin of error

Therefore, the sample size for the respondents will be:

$$n = 408 / 1 + 408 (0.05)^2$$

$$n = 202 \text{ respondents}$$

Therefore, a sample size of 202 respondents participated in the study

Table 2: Sample Size

Category	Target Population	Sample Size
Top Managers	24	12
Middle Managers	64	32
Lower Managers	320	158
Total	408	202

This study relied on primary data which was collected through use of questionnaires. A pilot test was conducted to determine validity and reliability of the data collection instrument. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2017) the pretest sample should be between 1% and 10% depending on the sample size. In this study, the pilot group was 20 individuals representing 10% of the total study sample size. Quantitative data collected was analysed by the use of descriptive statistics which include percentages, means, standard deviations and frequencies. The information was displayed by use of tables, bar charts, graphs and pie charts. This study also conducted inferential statistics through correlation analysis and regression analysis. Pearson correlation analysis was

used to test the strength and the direction of the relationship between the independent and the dependent variables. The research model that guided this study was:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \varepsilon$$

Where:

Y= Sustainable Performance of the Aviation Industry in Kenya

β_0 = Constant

β_{1-2} = Beta coefficients

X_1 = Transformational Leadership

X_2 = Adaptive Leadership

ε = Error term

PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

Descriptive Statistics

Transformational Leadership and Sustainable Performance

The first specific objective of the study was to establish the effect of transformational leadership on sustainable performance of the aviation industry in Kenya. The respondents were requested to indicate their level of agreement on various statements related to transformational leadership and sustainable performance of the aviation industry in Kenya. The results were as shown Table 3.

From the results, the respondents agreed that team members are inspired to achieve higher performance levels ($M=3.831$, $SD=0.774$). In addition, the respondents agreed that employees are encouraged to take initiative and explore creative solutions ($M=3.820$, $SD=0.807$). Further, the respondents agreed that the purpose and benefits of organizational changes are clearly communicated to the team ($M=3.817$, $SD=0.613$).

From the results, the respondents agreed that a culture that embraces innovation and continuous improvement is promoted within the department ($M=3.809$, $SD=0.749$). In addition, the respondents agreed that employees are encouraged to go beyond their basic job responsibilities ($M=3.792$, $SD=0.555$). Further, the respondents agreed that team members understand and align with the organization's long-term objectives ($M=3.788$, $SD=0.906$).

Table 3: Transformational Leadership and Sustainable Performance

	MeanStd. Deviation
Team members are inspired to achieve higher performance levels.	3.831 0.774
Employees are encouraged to take initiative and explore creative solutions.	3.820 0.807
The purpose and benefits of organizational changes are clearly communicated to the team.	3.817 0.613
A culture that embraces innovation and continuous improvement is promoted within the department.	3.809 0.749
Employees are encouraged to go beyond their basic job responsibilities.	3.792 0.555
Team members understand and align with the organization's long-term objectives.	3.788 0.906
Aggregate	3.810 0.734

Adaptive Leadership and Sustainable Performance

The second specific objective of the study was to assess the effect of adaptive leadership on sustainable performance of the aviation industry in Kenya. The respondents were requested to determine their level of agreement on various statements related to adaptive leadership and sustainable performance of the aviation industry in Kenya. The results were as shown Table 4.

From the results, the respondents agreed that the organization responds promptly and effectively to emerging crises ($M=3.867$, $SD=0.533$). In addition, the respondents agreed that strategies are in place to ensure rapid decision-making during critical situations ($M=3.851$, $SD=0.784$). Further, the respondents agreed that policies and procedures are applied fairly and consistently across the organization ($M=3.840$, $SD=0.501$).

From the results, the respondents agreed that employees perceive decisions as transparent and based on objective criteria ($M=3.833$, $SD=0.677$). In addition, the respondents agreed that leaders recognize and manage their own emotions effectively in the workplace ($M=3.826$, $SD=0.898$). The respondents also agreed that leaders understand and respond appropriately to the emotions of employees ($M=3.811$, $SD=0.811$).

Table 4: Adaptive Leadership and Sustainable Performance

	Mean	Std. Deviation
The organization responds promptly and effectively to emerging crises.	3.867	0.533
Strategies are in place to ensure rapid decision-making during critical situations.	3.851	0.784
Policies and procedures are applied fairly and consistently across the organization.	3.840	0.501
Employees perceive decisions as transparent and based on objective criteria.	3.833	0.677
Leaders recognize and manage their own emotions effectively in the workplace.	3.826	0.898
Leaders understand and respond appropriately to the emotions of employees.	3.811	0.811
Aggregate	3.838	0.701

Sustainable Performance

The respondents were requested to indicate their level of agreement on various statements related to sustainable performance of the aviation industry in Kenya. The results were as shown Table 5.

From the results, the respondents agreed that the company's revenue generation meets or exceeds its operational and strategic goals ($M=3.884$, $SD=0.662$). In addition, the respondents agreed that investments in new routes, technology, or services positively contributed to profitability ($M=3.839$, $SD=0.772$). Further, the respondents agreed that the airline strictly adheres to national and international environmental regulations ($M=3.801$, $SD=0.845$).

From the results, the respondents also agreed that efforts are made to minimize the airline's carbon footprint and waste emissions ($M=3.768$, $SD=0.699$). In addition, the respondents agreed that flights are scheduled and operated with minimal delays or cancellations ($M=3.743$, $SD=0.588$). The respondents also agreed that maintenance and safety procedures ensure consistent and reliable operations ($M=3.710$, $SD=0.797$).

Table 5: Sustainable Performance

	Mean	Std. Deviation
The company's revenue generation meets or exceeds its operational and strategic goals.	3.884	0.662
Investments in new routes, technology, or services positively contributed to profitability.	3.839	0.772
The airline strictly adheres to national and international environmental regulations.	3.801	0.845
Efforts are made to minimize the airline's carbon footprint and waste emissions.	3.768	0.699
Flights are scheduled and operated with minimal delays or cancellations.	3.743	0.588
Maintenance and safety procedures ensure consistent and reliable operations.	3.710	0.797
Aggregate	3.791	0.727

Inferential Statistics**Correlation Analysis**

This research adopted Pearson correlation analysis determine how the dependent variable (sustainable performance of the aviation industry in Kenya) relates with the independent variables (transformational leadership and adaptive leadership).

Table 6: Correlation Coefficients

		Sustainable Performance	Transformational Leadership	Adaptive Leadership
Sustainable Performance	Pearson	1		
	Correlation			
	Sig. (2-tailed)			
Transformational Leadership	N	178		
	Pearson	.830**	1	
	Correlation			
Adaptive Leadership	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001		
	N	178	178	
	Pearson	.867**	.437	1
	Correlation			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.090	
	N	178	178	178

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

From the results, there was a very strong relationship between transformational leadership and sustainable performance of the aviation industry in Kenya ($r = 0.830$, p value $=0.001$). The relationship was significant since the p value 0.001 was less than 0.05 (significant level). The findings are in line with the findings of Etomes, *et al* (2025) who indicated that there is a very strong relationship between transformational leadership and sustainable performance.

Further, there was a very strong relationship between adaptive leadership and sustainable performance of the aviation industry in Kenya ($r = 0.867$, p value $=0.000$). The relationship was significant since the p value 0.000 was less than 0.05 (significant level). The findings are in line with the findings of Barasa and Otieno (2023) who indicated that there is a very strong relationship between adaptive leadership and sustainable performance.

Regression Analysis

Multivariate regression analysis was used to assess the relationship between independent variables (transformational leadership and adaptive leadership) and the dependent variable (sustainable performance of the aviation industry in Kenya).

Table 7: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.832	.692	.691	.10129

a. Predictors: (Constant), transformational leadership and adaptive leadership

The model summary was used to explain the variation in the dependent variable that could be explained by the independent variables. The r -squared for the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable was 0.692 . This implied that 69.2% of the variation in the dependent variable (sustainable performance of the aviation industry in Kenya) could be explained by independent variables (transformational leadership and adaptive leadership).

Table 8: Analysis of Variance

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	85.055	2	42.528	195.982	.002 ^b
Residual	37.912	175	.217		
Total	122.967	177			

a. Dependent Variable: sustainable performance of the aviation industry in Kenya

b. Predictors: (Constant), transformational leadership and adaptive leadership

The ANOVA was used to determine whether the model was a good fit for the data. F calculated was 195.982 while the F critical was 3.048 . The p value was 0.002 . Since the F -calculated was greater than the F -critical and the p value 0.002 was less than 0.05 , the model was considered as a good fit for the data. Therefore, the model can be used to predict the influence of

transformational leadership and adaptive leadership on sustainable performance of the aviation industry in Kenya.

Table 9: Regression Coefficients

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	0.291	0.075		3.880	0.000
transformational leadership	0.333	0.086	0.332	3.872	0.001
adaptive leadership	0.370	0.095	0.371	3.895	0.000

a Dependent Variable: sustainable performance of the aviation industry in Kenya

The regression model was as follows:

$$Y = 0.291 + 0.333X_2 + 0.370X_3 + \varepsilon$$

According to the results, transformational leadership has a significant effect on sustainable performance of the aviation industry in Kenya ($\beta_1=0.333$, p value= 0.001). The relationship was considered significant since the p value 0.001 was less than the significant level of 0.05. The findings are in line with the findings of Etomes, *et al* (2025) who indicated that there is a very strong relationship between transformational leadership and sustainable performance

Furthermore, the results revealed that adaptive leadership has a significant effect on sustainable performance of the aviation industry in Kenya ($\beta_1=0.370$, p value= 0.000). The relationship was considered significant since the p value 0.000 was less than the significant level of 0.05. The findings are in line with the findings of Barasa and Otieno (2023) who indicated that there is a very strong relationship between adaptive leadership and sustainable performance.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

The study concludes that transformational leadership has a positive and significant effect on sustainable performance of the aviation industry in Kenya. Findings revealed that employee motivation, organizational change and employee commitment influences sustainable performance of the aviation industry in Kenya. Further, the study concludes that adaptive leadership has a positive and significant effect on sustainable performance of the aviation industry in Kenya. Findings revealed that crisis response time, organizational justice and emotional intelligence influences sustainable performance of the aviation industry in Kenya.

Recommendations

The study recommends that the management of aviation industry in Kenya should promote transformational leadership by training leaders to inspire, motivate, and empower employees toward sustainability-oriented goals. Transformational leaders who encourage innovation,

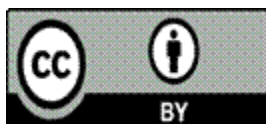
provide intellectual stimulation, and recognize employee contributions can foster a strong sustainability culture that supports efficient operations, environmental stewardship, and high service quality. Further, the study recommends that the management of aviation industry in Kenya should actively adopt adaptive leadership practices that emphasize flexibility, continuous learning, and rapid response to change in order to enhance sustainable performance. Adaptive leaders who encourage experimentation, stakeholder collaboration, and data-driven decision-making can effectively respond to dynamic challenges.

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