

European Journal of Business and Strategic Management (EJBSM)

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A hand in a blue suit jacket points towards a glowing, circular button labeled 'Strategy' on a keyboard. The background is dark blue with abstract light patterns and a large, curved graphic element in red, white, and blue.

Strategy

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SELF-MANAGEMENT AND EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP IN COUNTY GOVERNMENTS IN KENYA

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Abstract

Purpose: The main objective of this study was to establish the relationship between self-management and effective leadership in County Governments in Kenya.

Methods: The study adopted descriptive survey research design. The target population of the study was 3,190 County Officials. A stratified sampling technique was used to gather for proper representation of the entire population. Data collection instrument used was a questionnaire. Quantitative data was analyzed statistically yielding frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations, while inferential statistical tools such as correlation and regression were used to determine and explain variable relations by use of SPSS Version 22 program. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to test for significant differences in three categories of county officers and data were presented in the form of tables, figures and charts.

Results: The results revealed that there was a moderately strong, positive and significant association between self-management and effective leadership. These finding implied that increase in self-management positively resulted to increase in effective leadership. The findings of univariate and multivariate regression analysis further revealed that there is a significant positive relationship between self-management and effective leadership in county governments in Kenya.

Unique Contribution to Theory, Practice and Policy: The study recommended that organisations seeking the hire effective leaders should look out for individuals' self-control, conscientiousness, adaptability and innovativeness which are constructs of self-management that determines effective leadership. Institutions should design experiment during the probation stage where new recruits are evaluated on self-management before being confirmed in leadership position. The organisations should revise their recruitment policies to include self-management measures for senior leadership positions.

Key Words: *Self-management, effective leadership and County Governments*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Self-management has been defined as one's ability or capacity to make use of his or her own awareness of emotions to stay flexible and direct behaviors positively and constructively (Bradberry & Greaves, 2009; Bradberry & Su, 2006). The Self-management or Self-regulation cluster of EI includes sub variables of self-control, trustworthiness, conscientiousness, adaptability, and innovation (Goleman, (1998). Bradberry and Su, (2006), argue that the Goleman's Model of EI is still the best on matters of leadership development. According to Goleman's Model, self-management dimension of EI has six personal competencies of self-control, trustworthiness, conscientiousness, adaptability, achievement orientation, and initiative. People with strong self-management skills are able to withstand demanding situations (Goleman, 2000) and are flexible with new challenges and with changing or demanding priorities (Nwokah & Ahiauzu, 2010).

Leaders with high self-management skills are able to keep disruptive emotions or impulses under control and direct them to constructive use and are known for honesty, integrity and keeping promises (Bradberry & Greaves, 2009). Batool (2013) claims that leaders with high self-management competences are to regulate themselves effectively and do not verbally attack others, make rushed or emotional decisions, stereotype people, or compromise their values.

According to Goleman (1997) the self-management element of emotional intelligence also covers a leader's flexibility and commitment to personal accountability. Copeland (2014)) suggests that effective leadership occurs when self-awareness and self-regulated positive behaviors, on the part of both leaders and followers, are present, fostered, and nurtured which stimulates positive personal growth and self-development on the part of both the leader and follower. The authors conclude that "the effective leader is confident, hopeful, optimistic, resilient, moral/ethical, future-oriented, and gives priority to developing associates to be leaders. The effective leader is true to him/herself and exhibits behavior positively, transforms or develops associates into leaders themselves" (Luthans & Avolio, 2003, p. 243).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Effective leadership has been rated as among top characteristics of high performance organizations and has led to organizations to continually seek interventions for effective leadership capabilities to enable them perform better and survive in the turbulent and competitive environments. In this context, effective leadership skills have been described to depend partly on the understanding of emotions and the abilities associated with EI (Sadri, 2013; Boyatzis, Smith & Oosten, 2013; Cavazotte, Moreno & Hickmann, 2012).

Despite much interest in relating EI to effective leadership in organizations, there are limited studies on the EI and effective leadership done in especially in Africa. Studies show that ineffective leadership challenges that are abound in most African countries is on how they deal with it (Cascio & Luthans, 2014). They claim that the challenges are addressed politically and economically and neglect psychological approach. In Kenya, the same scenario seems to be replicated following devolution to county governments where County Governments have been mandated and entrusted with enormous public resources in order to use and deliver public services to citizenry while the effectiveness of leadership available in county governments is scanty.

The Annual Financial Reports of the Auditor General for the years 2012/2013, 2013/2014, 2014/2015 and 2015/2016 depict worrying trends on county government expenditures. There is non-priority spending on unnecessary items while development matters continue to suffer. Poor and ineffective leadership have been highlighted to be the core problem which exists. To ascertain the existence of ineffectiveness in leadership in county governments, it will be prudent to ascertain emotional intelligence competences and abilities of leaders in county governments in order to gauge and embrace the finding that, emotional intelligence accounts for more than 85 percent of exceptional performance in top leaders (Palmer *et. al.*, 2001). This is despite the fact that this claim has been queried by some scholars that it is unlikely, as there has never been a psychological variable that has made any such prediction in a century of research in applied psychology and organization behavior (Mayer *et al.*, 2008).

Popular literature has highlighted the usefulness of this potential relationship, and drawn important theoretical links between EI and leadership effectiveness leading to organizational success (Mittal & Sindhu 2012). Therefore, the aim of this study was to find out whether there is relationship between emotional intelligence and effective leadership in County Governments in Kenya so that the findings regarding exactly how EI relates to effective leadership may lead to significant advances in leadership development and succession planning programs in County governments Kenya and also benefit stakeholders. Government of Kenya, county governments, organizations and scholars and researchers will benefit greatly on the findings of this study.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

The study adopted descriptive survey research design. The target population of the study was 3,190 County Officials. A stratified sampling technique was used to gather for proper representation of the entire population. Data collection instrument used was a questionnaire. Quantitative data was analyzed statistically yielding frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations, while inferential statistical tools such as correlation and regression were used to determine and explain variable relations by use of SPSS Version 22 program. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to test for significant differences in three categories of county officers and data were presented in the form of tables, figures and charts.

3.0 RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

3.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

This section presents the findings on demographic characteristics of the respondents. The demographic characteristics include age, gender, level of education, job position and lastly the professional association of the respondents.

3.1.1 Age of the Respondents

The findings in this section revealed that more than half (59.5%) of the respondents were between 46 and 55 years, 37.2% of the respondents were between 36 and 45 years while those over 56 years were 3.3%. The finding implied that majority of the CECs, Chief Office and Directors in County Government in Kenya are middle aged and this could be attributed to a requirement that County Governments should hire experienced officers to drive the

devolution and development agenda. The age of the officers correlated with the level of experience. The findings of this study concurs with those of Dokko, Wilk, and Rothbard, (2009) who found positive effect of prior related experience on task-relevant knowledge and that skill is related to higher levels of experience within well performing firms. Seniors position in government are occupied by individuals who had advanced in age since they grow within the organisation and have better experience to handle the responsibility in such position.

Table 1: Age of the Respondents

	Category	Frequency	Percent (%)
Age of the Respondents	Between 36-45	100	37.2
	Between 46-55	160	59.5
	Between 56-65	9	3.3
	Total	269	100

3.1.2 Gender of the Respondents

The study further sought to determine the gender of the respondents. The results showed that 52% of the respondents were male while 48% of the respondents were female. These findings implied that County Governments in Kenya had adhered to two third gender rule as stipulated in the Kenya constitution 2010. These finding further disagreed with authors such as Sud (2002) who in her study on gender disparities in the Kenyan labour market indicated that female labour force participation in the modern sector has remained below 30% over the last several years compared to men who hold a disproportionately larger share of the modern sector jobs. Both the Kenya constitution and United Nations goals advocate for gender inclusivity in all sectors of life. These findings are clear indication of the will by county government in Kenya to increase gender representation.

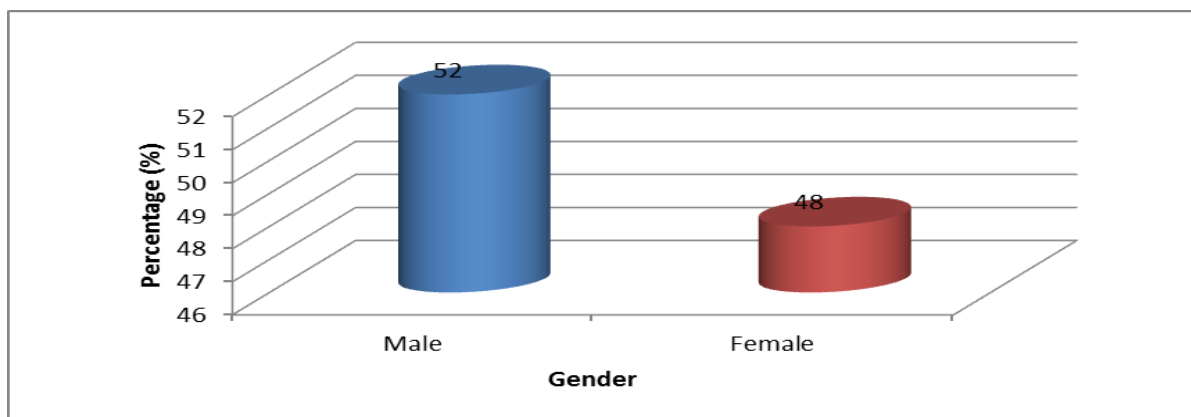


Figure 1: Gender of the Respondents

3.1.3 Job Position of the Respondents

On the job position of the respondents the study established that majority of the respondents were directors at 78%, followed by CECs at 13% and finally chief officers at 10% of the total respondents. The findings implied that the study relied on information collected from top

leadership in County Government in Kenya. Therefore respondents in this study were in good position to respond to questions regarding effective leadership and its relationship with self-management.

Table 2: Job Position of the Respondents

Job Position	Frequency	Percent
CEC	34	13%
Chief office	26	10%
Director	209	78%
Total	269	100

3.1.4 Education Level of the Respondents

The study further sought to establish the level of education of the respondents. The results on the education level of the respondents are presented using figure 4.2. The findings revealed that 79.6% of the respondents had degrees, 11.2% had masters level of education while 9.3% had diplomas. These finding implied that the respondents in this study were well educated and this could be one of the reasons they held top management positions in their respective County Governments. This proposition is supported by Raymond (2008), who posited that professionalism in any occupation relates not only to the levels of education and qualifications of the workforce but also to the professional approach in the conduct of business activities. An individual’s level of education is attributed to the level of competence ability to meet professional demands of top management positions.

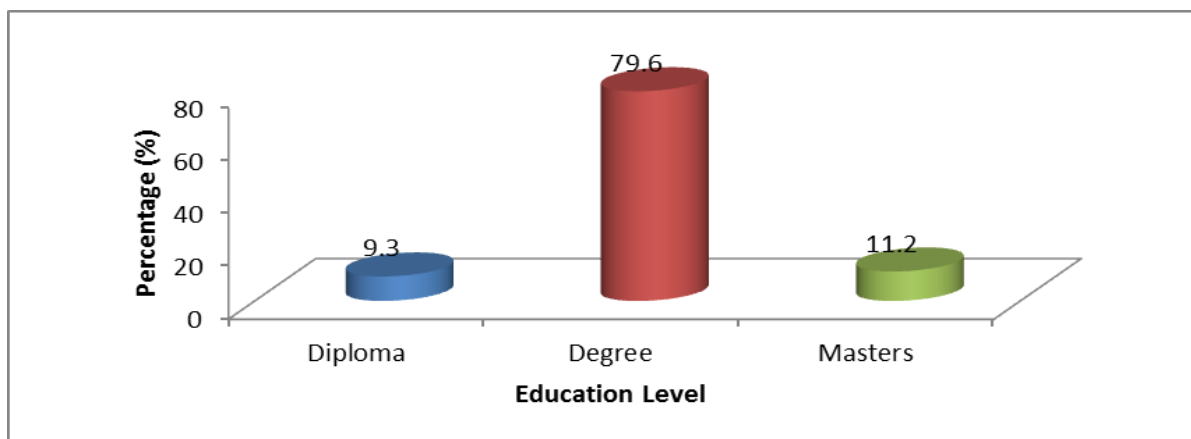


Figure 2: Education Level of the Respondents

3.1.5 Professional Body Association of the Respondents

The study further sought to establish whether the respondents had any association with professional bodies. The results revealed that 81.4% were member of professional bodies while 18.6% were none members of professional bodies. Association with professional bodies is attributed to high level of professionalism in their respective fields. These finding implied that majority of the County Government employed individuals associated with various professional bodies. The study finding agrees with Balthazard, Director and Excellence (2010) who found that association to professional bodies is a sign of high professionalism standards individuals intends to uphold. Both academic and professional

credentials are indicative of some form of achievement, and both entitle the bearer to use certain initials after their name, but beyond that they are quite different.

Table 3: Professional Body Association of the Respondents

	Membership	Frequency	Percent
Member Professional Body	Yes	219	81.4
	No	50	18.6
	Total	269	100

3.2 Descriptive Results

3.2.1 Self-Awareness

The study measured self-management using self-control, conscientiousness, adaptability and innovativeness. Table 4 presents the finding on how respondents responded to various statements on the variables on self-management.

To measure the level of self-control, the study sought to establish whether respondents managed their impulsive feelings and distressing emotions well, the results showed that 68.4% of the respondents agreed. The statement had a mean of 4 confirming that majority of the respondents agreed. The results also showed that 81.4% of the respondents agreed that they stay composed, positive, and unflappable even in trying moments. All the statement on self-control had a mean of 4 and above. These finding implied that majority of the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with statement on self-control. The findings further implied that majority of the respondents in this study had high self-control. This could be one of the reasons they held top management positions in their respective governments.

The study used three statements to measure the level of conscientiousness among the top management from the County Government in Kenya. The study sought to determine whether the respondents met commitments and keep promises, whether they were accountable for meeting their objectives and finally whether respondents were organized and careful in their work. The results presented in Table 4 revealed that majority as shown by the mean of 4 and above agreed and strongly agreed with the above statements. These findings confirmed that respondents had high level of conscientiousness.

The study further sought to establish the level of adaptability among the respondents. The study findings showed that 70.6% of the respondents agreed that they smoothly handle multiple demands, shifting priorities and rapid change, 74.0% agreed that they are flexible in how they see events and finally, 50.2% agreed that they adapt in responses and tactics to fit fluid circumstances. The results showed that the statement on adaptability had means of 4 and above confirming majority of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed. These finding implied that respondents indicated they were highly adaptable to various circumstances.

Finally, the study sought to measure the level of innovativeness among the CECs, chief officers and director of county governments in Kenya. The finding showed that 63.2% of the respondents agreed that they seek out fresh ideas from a wide variety of sources, 72.1% agreed that they entertain original solutions to problems, 52.0% and 38.7% agreed and strongly agreed respectively that they generated new ideas while 65.1% and 27.5% of the

respondents agreed and strongly agreed that they take fresh perspectives and risks in their thinking.

The finding of this study concurs with Nwokah and Ahiauzu (2010) who argued that people with strong self-management skills are able to withstand demanding situations and are flexible with new challenges and with changing or demanding priorities. The findings similarly concurs with Bradberry and Greaves (2009) posited that leaders with high self-management skills are able to keep disruptive emotions or impulses under control and direct them to constructive use and are known for honesty, integrity and keeping promises.

The results also concur with Batool (2013) also claimed that leaders with high self-management competences are to regulate themselves effectively and do not verbally attack others, make rushed or emotional decisions, stereotype people, or compromise their values. The study findings revealed that the respondents agreed that they had self- control, had high level of conscientiousness, adaptability and innovativeness. The findings implied that the respondents had high emotional intelligence in terms of high level of self-management.

Table 4: Descriptive Results for Self-Management

	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Std Dev
Self- Control							
I manage my impulsive feelings and distressing emotions well	0.0%	0.0%	27.9%	68.4%	3.7%	4	0.51
I stay composed, positive, and unflappable even in trying moments	0.0%	0.0%	9.3%	81.4%	9.3%	4	0.43
I think clearly and stay focused under pressure	0.0%	1.9%	5.6%	59.1%	33.5%	4	0.64
Trustworthiness: Maintaining standards of honesty and integrity.	0.0%	0.0%	1.9%	68.8%	29.4%	4	0.49
I consistently act ethically and am considered to be above reproach	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	66.5%	33.5%	4	0.47
I build trust by being reliable and authentic	0.0%	0.0%	3.7%	66.9%	29.4%	4	0.52
I admit my own mistakes and confront unethical actions in others	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	66.5%	33.5%	4	0.47
I take tough, principled stands even if they are unpopular	0.0%	0.0%	5.2%	68.8%	26.0%	4	0.52
Conscientiousness							
I meet commitments and keep promises	0.0%	0.0%	7.4%	53.5%	39.0%	4	0.61
I hold myself accountable for meeting my objectives	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	61.3%	38.7%	4	0.49
I am organized and careful in my work	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	64.7%	35.3%	4	0.48
Adaptability							
I smoothly handle multiple demands, shifting priorities and rapid change	0.0%	1.9%	1.9%	70.6%	25.7%	4	0.56

	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Std Dev
I am flexible in how I see events	0.0%	0.0%	7.4%	74.0%	18.6%	4	0.50
I adapt my responses and tactics to fit fluid circumstances	0.0%	0.0%	16.7%	50.2%	33.1%	4	0.69
Innovativeness							
I seek out fresh ideas from a wide variety of sources	0.0%	0.0%	7.4%	63.2%	29.4%	4	0.57
I entertain original solutions to problems	0.0%	0.0%	1.9%	72.1%	26.0%	4	0.47
I generate new ideas	0.0%	0.0%	9.3%	52.0%	38.7%	4	0.63
I take fresh perspectives and risks in my thinking	0.0%	0.0%	7.4%	65.1%	27.5%	4	0.56

3.3 Inferential Statistics

3.3.1 Correlation Results

The results further showed that there was a strong, positive and significant association between self-management and effective leadership as shown by $r=0.642$. The correlation was significant with a $p=0.0000$ which was less than 0.05. These finding concurs with those of various authors such as Dulewicz and Higgs (2015) who asserted that self-management makes a difference in predicting or explaining job performance of leaders and managers. The findings also concurred with Goleman, Boyatzis, and McKee, (2013) who posited that successful leaders resonate well with their employees emotionally. These finding implied that increase in self-management positively resulted to increase in effective leadership

Table 5: Correlation Matrix

		Self-Management	Effective Leadership			
Self-Management	Pearson Correlation	.464**				
	Sig. (2-tailed)					
Effective Leadership	Pearson Correlation	.642**				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	
	N	269	269	269	269	269

3.3.2 Model Summary

A regression model was conducted to test the joint relationship of self-management and effective leadership. Hypotheses testing were done based on the findings of multivariate regression analysis. The results indicate that $R = 0.722$ and $R = 0.521$. R value points that there is a strong relationship between self-management and effective leadership in county government in Kenya. R^2 indicates that explanatory power of the independent variables is 0.521.

This means that 52.1% of the variation in effective leadership is explained by changes in the self-management while 47.9% of the variation in effective leadership is unexplained by the

variables in the model. This finding implied that although self-management is an important predictor of effective leadership, it explains 52.1% implying there are other factors more important than self-management that determine effective leadership in government. The findings of the study concurred with those of McCarthy (2014) who highlights interpretations and understanding of leadership, constraints on autonomous action, knowledge and experience as such of the key factors in effective leadership in public sector.

Table 6 Model Summary for Multivariate Regression Analysis

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.722	0.521	0.513	0.20671

a. Predictors: (Constant) self-management Score

3.3.3 ANOVA Results

The findings of ANOVA revealed F-statistics of 71.687 with a p-value of 0.000 which was less than significance level of 0.05. The study hence concluded that the model used to link the independent variables to dependent variable had a good fitness. Similarly, F-computed of 71.687 was found to be greater than F-critical of 2.405 which further led to the conclusion that the model had good fitness. In both case the alternative hypothesis that the model had good fitness was accepted and concluded that self-management significant predicated effective leadership.

Table 7 ANOVA Results for Multivariate Regression Analysis

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
	Regression	12.252	4	3.063	71.687	0.000
1	Residual	11.280	264	.043		
	Total	23.533	268			

a. Dependent Variable: Effective Leadership Score

b. Predictors: (Constant) self-management

3.3.4 Beta Coefficients

The coefficient for self-management was $\beta = 0.297$ was also significantly different from 0 with a p-value= 0.000 which was less than 0.05. This revealed that there is a significant positive relationship between self-management and effective leadership in county governments in Kenya.

The study therefore rejected the null hypothesis H_{02} : There is no significant relationship between self-management and effective leadership in County Governments in Kenya; hence the study concludes that self-management significantly and positively influences the effective leadership in County Governments in Kenya. The study findings concurs with those of Bradberry and Greaves (2009) who posited that leaders with high self-management skills are able to keep disruptive emotions or impulses under control and direct them to constructive use and are known for honesty, integrity and keeping promises.

Table 8 Coefficients Results for Multivariate Regression Analysis

	B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
(Constant)	0.647	0.364		1.78	0.076
Self-Management	0.297	0.073	0.206	4.05	0.000

a Dependent Variable: Effective Leadership

4.0 SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Summary of Findings

These finding implied that majority of the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with statements on self-management. The findings further implied that majority of the respondents in this study had high self-management. The study findings further revealed that the respondents agreed that they had self-control, had high level of conscientiousness, adaptability and innovativeness. The findings implied that the respondents had high emotional intelligence in terms of high level of self-management.

The correlation results also revealed that that there was a moderately strong, positive and significant association between self-management and effective leadership. These finding implied that increase in self-management positively resulted to increase in effective leadership. The findings of univariate and multivariate regression analysis further revealed that there is a significant positive relationship between self-management and effective leadership in county governments in Kenya.

4.2 Conclusions

The research study concluded that self-management is as important as self-awareness aspects of emotional intelligent required for effective leadership. Through self-management individuals achieve high self-discipline which is a precedent of effective leadership. Individuals with self-management attributes lead others by example and are able to earn trust and confidence from those they lead making them effective leaders.

4.3 Recommendations

The study recommended that organisations seeking the hire effective leaders should look out for individuals' self- control, conscientiousness, adaptability and innovativeness which are constructs of self-management that determines effective leadership. Institutions should design experiment during the probation stage where new recruits are evaluated on self-management before being confirmed in leadership position. Similarly, organisations should revise their recruitment policies to include self-management measures for senior leadership positions.

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