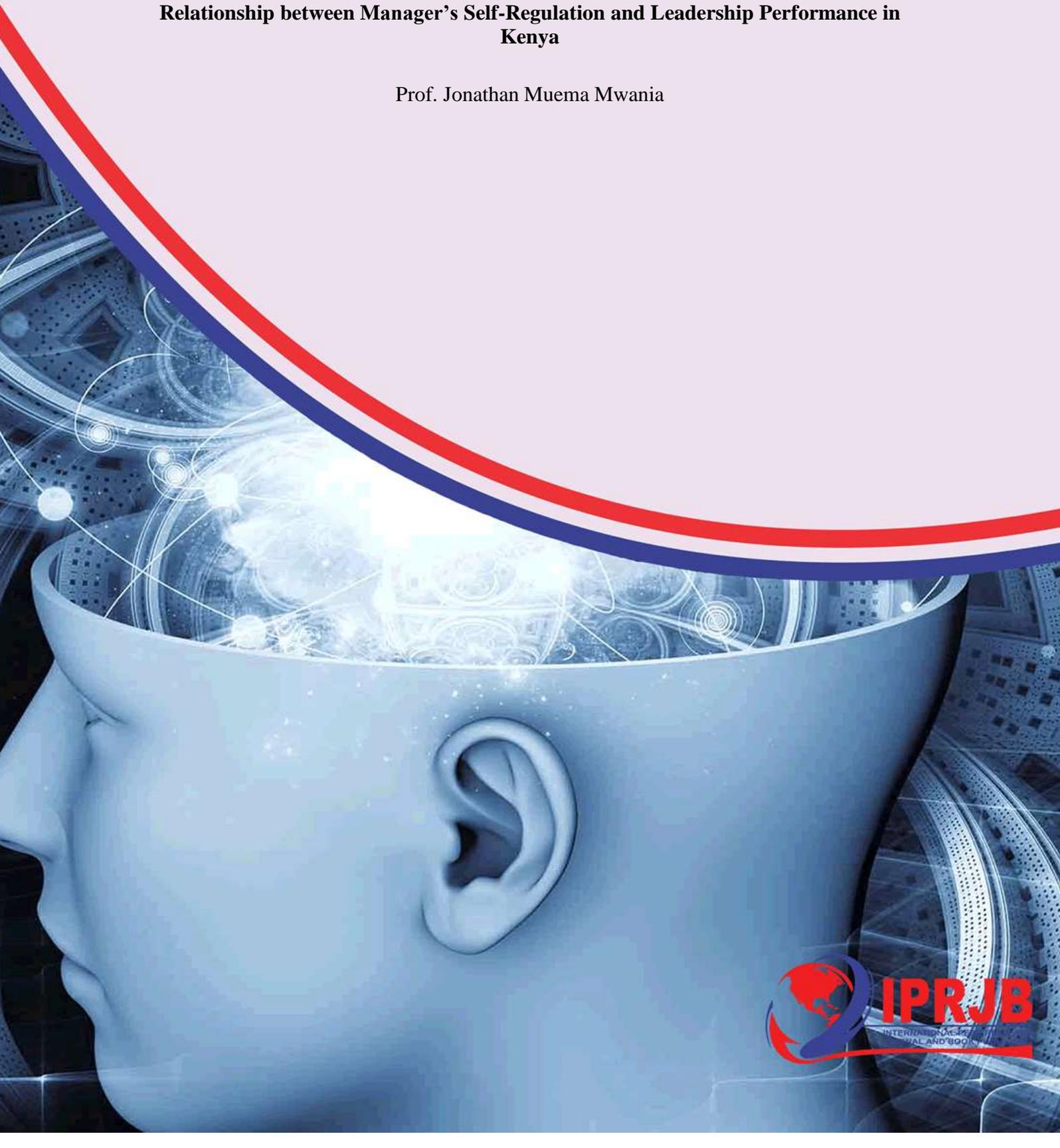


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**Relationship between Manager's Self-Regulation and Leadership Performance in
Kenya**

Prof. Jonathan Muema Mwanja



Relationship between Manager's Self-Regulation and Leadership Performance in Kenya



Prof. Jonathan Muema Mwanja
Department of Educational Psychology, South Eastern
Kenya University, Kenya
Corresponding Author's Email: jmwania@seku.ac.ke

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Abstract

Purpose: This study focused on the relationship between manager's self-regulation and leadership performance in South Eastern Kenya University, Kenya. It was conducted in South Eastern Kenya University.

Methodology: The researcher employed purposive and census sampling technique in selecting a sample of 71 respondents. The target population included all the 75 managers in South Eastern Kenya University. Data was collected through administration of structured questionnaires with the selected respondents. The questionnaire used a five-point range Likert scale to assess strategic managers' self-regulation and leadership performance. The collected data was then processed and analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics with the aid of Statistical Package of Social Science (SPSS) version 28.0 for windows. The data was presented using tables.

Findings: The findings of the study showed that there was a strong positive ($r = 0.616, p = 0.001$) relationship between Self-regulation and leadership performance.

Unique Contribution to Theory, Practice and Policy: The contribution to knowledge of this paper is that it provides a theoretical and practical contribution on the importance of helping strategic managers at the South Eastern Kenya University to attain higher levels of self-regulation. This is because self-regulation is known to have a strong influence on leadership performance. Basically, the study contributed to a theoretical enhancement of the current level of knowledge on the existing literature on self-regulation, achieved by testing empirically the managers' behaviour. In terms of the research practical contribution, the findings of the study could aid in the development of applied strategies at the work place. The findings of this study could help universities to boost the level of manager's self-regulation and this in turn may lead to the improvement in leadership performance. The study recommends that: the University administration should continually train their staff on the relationship between the managers' self-regulation and leadership Performance; they should employ personnel with high degree of self-regulation skills through conducting interviews with questionnaires that assess these attributes and invest heavily in teamwork activities so that they may have employees who have high degree of self-regulation.

Keywords: *Self-regulation, Managers, Leadership Performance*

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INTRODUCTION

Leadership performance is said to be the leader's potential to positively influence subordinates and the rest of the stakeholders to achieve the targets of the entity (Yukl & Lepsinger, 2005) while self-regulation are the skills to manage one and others' emotions (Goleman, 1998) Leadership performance is becoming very essential due to competitive working environment and globalization of the firms. The international presence of the firms creates pressure to the employees to perform and sustain it. Managers are required to meet clients' expectations and retain the employee's performance (Dobre, 2013). These managers are required to manage and solve conflicts. They should be able to identify problems, conflicts and to identify skill to resolve it (MindTools, 2020). To sustain a good environment within the organization, managers are expected to be in a position to come up with proper skills of handling their emotions and ensure harmony among employees' character and their own reactions (Barsade & O'Neill, 2016). Research has shown that good leadership has continued to be important for quickly changing entities (Yukl, 2002). This has caused concerted research efforts on leadership gaining speed of which emotional self-regulation of managers has been identified as a critical potential thing required for effective leadership to be achieved.

Many researchers have not attached importance to emotions in the past study of organizational management in the working environment. The workplace was seen as a acceptable environment where emotions would prevent the art of sound judgment. For this reason, emotions were not even seen as explanation for workplace phenomenon (Grandey, 2000).

Goleman (1998) argues that a person can possess the best education in the globe but still will not make an effective manager. According to this author, self-regulation is one of the attributes that form emotional intelligence force. Poor self-regulation is one of the key issues of the dark part of management (Austin et al., 2007). For example, it is known that in a number of occasions for managers to show high sense of urgency to realize pressing targets, but, when juniors' expectations are not taken into account, the intended purpose may not be effectively realized. This is commonly found in settings where there is need for working together and inputs across the entity (Watkins et al., 2017). Research has established that self-regulation is very important in realizing organizational targets and excelling in dynamic settings (Eby, Adams, Russell, et al. 2000). Self-regulation has become recognized as an important part of management. Several researchers have asserted that this force is a very important attribute that influence leadership performance (Jasleen & Anupam, 2019).

Several studies have been conducted globally on the relationship between self-regulation force and leadership performance. Findings indicate that there are many research gaps that need to be addressed. In the United States of America, they have been able to see a relationship between self-regulation force and effective leadership performance. O'Boyle and colleagues (2011) established that a strong relationship between work performance and self-regulation.

A study done in South Africa on self-regulation force and transformation leadership and which used Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire on 314 associates, leaders, peers and subordinates revealed positive correlation between self-regulation force and transformation leadership style (Vrba, 2007). In the developing economy setting like Africa, matters of leadership performance and self-regulation force have not attracted reasonable research attention (Mushtaq & Aashiq, 2018), and the few studies done in the African setting, Kenya included are not in the university sector.

Kenya has not lagged behind in the desire to have effective leaders with the expected qualities and attributes of good managers (CoK, 2010). The Kenyan Constitution places leadership and integrity framework in chapter six to make sure that leaders meet the expected attributes. The clause says that all state officers are servants and not rulers and that those who misuse their offices will be disqualified from ever occupying public office any other time, over and above other punishment. There is little literature available in Kenya on the relationship between self-regulation force and leadership performance. Empirical studies conducted so far are on self-regulation force and leadership styles. Mwangi, Mukulu, and Kabare (2011) argue that the use of self-regulation force is an important part of transformational leadership in Public Universities. These authors found that there is a significant link between self-regulation force and transformational leadership. For an organization to succeed in this transformation period, managers in all areas of employment should be emotionally stable to coordinate and manage dynamic employees and to promote both personal and leadership performance (Mwania, Mwakhamah & Nyamboga, 2023). This study is expected to improve the body of knowledge on leadership performance and self-regulation force. The findings may enable university leaders to improve their strategic self-regulation force which would perhaps improve performance and bring change in the area of leadership performance. Leadership performance and self-regulation force are becoming very important factors in leadership performance in that they give a competitive advantage to leaders in providing an environment where all the stakeholders are satisfied. This study focuses on the assessment of the relationship between managers' self-regulation force and leadership performance in South Eastern Kenya University.

Problem Statement

Effective leadership performance is one of the top characteristics of good performance in organizations. It enables organizations to perform better and survive in the turbulent and competitive settings. A good understanding of emotions and the abilities associated with self-regulation of leaders has been found to support successful leadership. In SEKU, there are several reported cases of managers in different sections who, are unable to manage their emotions and relate well with both the juniors and the seniors. They shout at them, refuse to talk to their colleagues, cannot solve conflicts and are always complaining of how the other employees are not supporting them. Such managers have been reported to have failed in leading their sections successfully. In some cases, the management of the university has had to do changes in leadership to prevent some sections from collapsing. Therefore, the main aim of this study was to establish whether there exists a relationship between Manager's self-regulation forces and leadership performance in South Eastern Kenya University, Kenya.

LITERATURE REVIEW

High degree of self-regulation facilitates constructive leadership performance and output of the strategic manager, while low degree promotes destructive leadership performance (Collins & Jackson, 2015) and reduces strategic manager's performance (Yeow & Martin, 2013). Self-regulation is seen as a necessity for several skills such as the ability to manage and regulate thinking, emotions and behaviors that the person utilizes to attain the targets they set (Zimmerman & Schunk, 2008). Studies based on leadership performance (Nesbit, 2012; Yeow & Martin, 2013) have put emphasis on the need for self-regulation. In this setting, this research study is seen as an important one in terms of trying to establish the self-regulation skills of the preschool pupils in terms of the emotions expressed and leadership performance skills and to

determine the relationship levels between each other. It was established that while emotion expressiveness level predicted the management skills of pupils, self-regulation acted as a mediator role in leadership performance skills. When literature on self-regulation and leadership performance was examined, the determination of self-regulation on leadership performance was emphasized in parallel with the outcomes of the investigation (Nesbit, 2012; Yeow & Martin, 2013). Yeow and Merten (2013) argued that early interventions for self-regulation served a mediator role for strategic managers in realizing the duty-related achievements. Similarly, attaining leadership performance and performing leadership skills require diverse skill-sets. Self-regulation, or the skills to actively plan, choose, and manage learning skills, is one such qualities needed to build leadership performance, and self-regulation has been to promote strategic manager's acquisition of required relevant skills, leader effectiveness, and team output (Yeow & Martin, 2013). Leadership performance does not always call for strategic managers to expand their potential, only to provide results, but leader development requires developing new interpretations out of different experiences.

Self-regulation of attention is seen as critical to emotion and behavior management in general (Posner & Rothbart 2000), at work environment (Lord et al. 2010), and in leadership performance (Collins & Jackson 2015). Confronted with challenging assignments and complex work context, how well leaders are in a position to self-regulate their limited attentional abilities-and for this reason their emotions and behaviors-has been seen to be a critical meta-competency for strategic manager to perform effectively (Yeow & Martin 2013). As Beal and others (2005) point out, attentional resources serve as "an 'engine' meant specifically for self-regulation."

Theoretical Framework

This research study was guided by Goleman's (1998) emotional intelligence theory. The model has five key components of emotional intelligence forces of which self-regulation is one of them. According to this theory, an emotional intelligence force is applied to achieve goals and targets, as well as bring about a happier and healthier working environment and culture. Emotions influence strategic manager's team. A good example is when a strategic manager experiencing mood swing, lacking self-regulation, makes negative and biased choices. A strategic manager, experiencing bad mood, with heightened self-regulation recognizes and sets apart negativity, refocusing on the work at hand. If a strategic manager has good self-regulation skills, they know and feel well and satisfied with themselves. They are able to understand their strengths and weaknesses, how they respond in certain contexts and to specific individuals. This kind of information provides them with the ability to meet targets and create a fair and all inclusive culture.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study utilized *ex-post facto* research design. This is a design in which the researcher, rather than creating the treatment, examines the effects of a naturalistically occurring treatment after that treatment has occurred (Kathuri & Pals, 1993). The researcher attempted to relate this after-the-fact treatment to an outcome or dependent measure. In this kind of a research, the treatment was included by selection rather than manipulation. For this reason, it is not always possible to assume a simple causative relation between independent and dependent variables. If the relation fails to be obtained, then it is likely that no causative relationship holds. But if the predicted relationship is obtained, this does not necessarily mean that the variables studied

are causally related. This research design was adopted because self-regulation would be obtained after a questionnaire is administered to the respondents. Leadership performance was obtained from the managers' questionnaires. In the study, self-regulation is a phenomenon in existence. Leadership performance was also in existence and so there is no manipulation of variables. Therefore, an assessment of what is already in existence was done and the cause and effect inferred.

Location of Study

The study was carried out in South Eastern Kenya University. The location was chosen because the researcher is familiar with the area since he is a lecturer in the university. The area was used as a case study for in-depth analysis of manager's self-regulation and its relationship with leadership performance.

Population and Sample Size

The target population for this study included all the managers in the 75 departments at the South Eastern Kenya University. The study targeted all the 75 managers in the 75 Departments at South Eastern Kenya University. Each of these departments is headed by one manager. 4 out of the 75 managers were used for pilot study leaving the researcher with a sample of 71. In order to ensure their different categories of the sample population are represented, the researcher employed purposive and census sampling techniques in selecting a sample of 71 respondents. A census is a study of every unit, everyone or everything, in a population (Cantwell, 2008). It is known as a complete enumeration, which means a complete count. Census method is the method of statistical enumeration where all members of the population are studied. The advantages of census are that it provides a true measure of the population (no sampling error) and that detailed information about small sub-groups within the population is more likely to be available. The study sampled all the 75 respondents where 4 were used for pilot study.

Table 1: Sample Size

Respondents	Target population	Sample population
University Managers	71	71
Total	71	71

Source: Researcher

Instrumentation

Data was collected through administration of structured questionnaires with the selected respondents. The questionnaire used a five-point range Likert scale to assess managers' self-regulation force and leadership performance. The scale sought to measure the managers' levels of agreement or disagreement with 10 statements related to their self-regulation and 30 on leadership performance.

Data Analysis

Data collected was processed, coded and analyzed to facilitate answering the research objective and hypothesis. This was done using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive analyses (percentages, frequencies, tables and cross-tabulations) were used to summarize and organize data and to describe the characteristics of the sample population. Inferential statistics was used in making deductions and generalizations about the whole population. Inferring

sample results to the population is necessary since this research deals with a sample. The more representative a sample is, the more generalizable the results are expected to be in a population. Pearson's correlation coefficient (Aronson *et al.*, 1990) was used in testing the null hypotheses. Pearson's correlation coefficient was tested at $\alpha = 0.05$ significance level. This was done with the aid of a computer programme - Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 28.0 for windows.

Ethical Considerations

Before data collection, an introductory letter was obtained from the University. On the production of introductory letter, permission to carry out research was sought from the National Commission of Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI). After getting permission letter the researcher further sought permission from the University. The researcher ensured that confidentiality is honored and information obtained used only for the purpose of this study. Informed consent was sought in acquiring participants for the study, and all participants were expected to participate willingly, and were not required to include their names in the questionnaires for confidentiality purposes. The dignity, privacy and interests of participants was respected and protected. Data obtained remained confidential and participants remained anonymous.

RESULTS

The objective for this study was to evaluate the relationship between self-regulation and leadership performance in South Eastern Kenya University, Kenya. To achieve this objective, the respondents were requested to indicate the way they feel concerning the statements given in Table 2 using a 5-point Likert Scale, with Strongly agree (S.A), Agree (A), Undecided (U), Disagree (D) and Strongly disagree (SD). The responses were presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Self-Regulation and Leadership Performance

S/N	Self-regulation	SA		A		U		D		SD		TOTAL	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
21	I am always prepared to stand out in disagreement to defend my views	22	31.0	34	47.9	4	5.6	11	15.5	0	0.0	71	100.0
22	I usually go ballistic when people let me down	2	2.8	21	29.6	8	11.3	34	47.9	6	8.2	71	100.0
23	I have always taken setbacks in my stride	8	11.3	28	39.4	16	22.5	16	22.5	19	26.8	71	100.0
24	I get irritated easily	10	14.2	11	15.5	7	9.9	35	49.3	8	11.3	71	100.0
25	I usually recover quickly from stress	18	25.4	35	49.3	2	2.8	14	19.7	2	2.8	71	100.0
26	I always take out my frustrations on other people	1	1.4	9	12.7	4	5.6	37	52.1	20	28.2	71	100.0
27	I usually work things out by talking	11	15.5	44	62.0	5	7.0	10	14.0	1	1.4	71	100.0
28	I have always been oblivious to how my emotions are affecting me	7	9.9	28	39.4	11	15.5	17	23.9	8	11.3	71	100.0
29	I deal with difficult situations calmly	7	9.9	50	70.4	3	4.2	3	4.2	3	4.2	71	100.0
30	I am reluctant to acknowledge my feelings and emotions	4	5.6	17	23.9	11	15.5	30	42.3	12.7	17.9	71	100.0

Source: Research Data

Table 2 shows that majority (70.4%) agreed that they deal with difficult situations calmly. This was followed by 62% who agreed that they usually work things out by talking. However 52.1% and 49.3% disagreed that they always take out my frustrations on other people and they get irritated easily respectively.

The researcher further sought to establish the relationship between self-regulation and leadership performance by testing H₀ below using Pearson Correlation.

H₀: There is no significant relationship between self-regulation and leadership performance in South Eastern Kenya University, Kenya.

The results were presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Relationship between Self-Regulation and Leadership Performance

		Self-regulation	Leadership performance
Self-regulation	Pearson Correlation	1	.616
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
	N	71	71
Leadership performance	Pearson Correlation	.616	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	71	71

Source: Research Data

Table 3 shows that there is a strong positive ($r = 0.616$, $p=0.001$) relationship between Self-regulation and leadership performance. Therefore the researcher fails to accept the hypothesis and conclude that there is a significant relationship between Self-regulation and leadership performance in South Eastern Kenya University, Kenya.

Table 4: Multiple Regression for Self-Regulation Indicators and Leadership Performance

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
	(Constant)	2.011	.282		7.143	.000
1	Insightful situations(x_1)	.054	.085	.096	.636	.000
	Positive outlook(x_2)	.251	.122	.242	2.066	.003

a. Dependent Variable: Leadership Performance

Source: Research Data

Table 4 shows that the multiple regression is model is;

$$y=2.011 + 0.054x_1+ 0.251x_2$$

y = Leadership performance

x_1 = Ability to manage and have insightful situations

x_2 = Ability to maintain a positive outlook despite setbacks

All the sig are less than 0.05, therefore hypothesis H_0 is rejected implying that there is a significant association between Self-regulation and leadership performance in South Eastern Kenya University, Kenya.

ANOVA Test Results

The ANOVA test was used to determine whether any of the differences between the means responses are statistically significant. This was done by comparing the p-value to the significance level to assess the null hypothesis. If the p-value level is less than the significance level of 0.05 the hypothesis is rejected.

Table 5: ANOVA for Self- Regulation

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.043	2	.021	.028	.002
Within Groups	51.844	68	.762		
Total	51.887	70			

Source: Research Data

It can be observed that all the P-value is less than 0.05 hence the hypothesis is rejected.

Discussion of the Findings

The study established that there is a significant association between Self-regulation and leadership performance in South Eastern Kenya University, Kenya. These results agree with Collins and Jackson, (2015) who argued that high levels of self-regulation promotes constructive leadership and proactivity of the leader, while low levels lead to destructive leadership and decreases leader performance. Here, majority agreed that they deal with difficult situations calmly; they usually work things out by talking, they do not always take out their frustrations on other people and that they do not get irritated easily. These results agree with Yeow and Martin (2013) who argued that, faced with challenging tasks and complex task environments, how well leaders are able to self-regulate their limited attentional capacities-and therefore their emotions and behaviors-has been argued to be a crucial meta-competency for leaders to perform effectively.

The implication here is that since high levels of self-regulation promotes constructive leadership and proactivity of the leader the organization will realize high leadership performance. It is also a necessity for many skills such as the ability to regulate thoughts, emotions and behaviors that the individual uses to achieve the goals he or she set (Zimmerman & Schunk, 2008).

Recommendations

The contribution to knowledge of this paper is that it provides a theoretical and practical contribution on the importance of helping strategic managers at the South Eastern Kenya University to attain higher levels of self-regulation. This is because self-regulation is known to have a strong influence on leadership performance. Basically, the study contributed to a theoretical enhancement of the current level of knowledge on the existing literature on self-regulation, achieved by testing empirically the managers' behaviour. In terms of the research practical contribution, the findings of the study could aid in the development of applied strategies at the work place. The University administration should continually train their staff

on the relationship between managers' self-regulation force and leadership Performance. Such training must touch on various aspects of emotional self-regulation which influence leadership performance. They should provide training on improvement of self-regulation among the staff so as to have managers that possess a high level of this skill to improve on work productivity, team work, and good problem-solving techniques among others. This will in turn bring about a positive effect on employees' performance so that universities may gain a sustainable competitive advantage in the market.

A strong positive relationship between Self-regulation and leadership performance leads the researcher to recommend that employee should be taken through life skills training and guidance and counseling. This will enable them to deal with difficult situations calmly and help them to work things out by talking. This will reduce stress levels among the employees and hence high leadership performance.

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