



Vol. 5, Iss. 1 (2024), pp 12 – 15, February 8, 2024. [www.reviewedjournals.com](http://www.reviewedjournals.com), ©Reviewed Journals

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## ASSESSMENT OF THE EFFECT OF SELF-AWARENESS LEADERSHIP COMPETENCY ON PERFORMANCE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN RWANDA

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**Accepted: December 15, 2023**

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### ABSTRACT

*The study examined the effect of self-awareness leadership competency on the performance of local government in Rwanda. The study employed a cross-sectional survey research design, and the population consisted of 30 Mayors from 30 districts in Rwanda. Due to the nature of the study population, all the population was used as sample to get a clear idea of all the districts in Rwanda. The data was collected using a self-administered questionnaire and analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics.*

*The results indicated that self-awareness leadership competency has a significant positive effect on the performance of local government in Rwanda. The findings revealed that there has been a general increase in number of self awareness trainings to more than two times between the year 2015 to 2019 which significantly increased service delivery by more than 10% as indicated by more than 50% respondents.*

*Consequently, self awareness leadership enhanced leaders' capacity to be visionary, increased managerial knowledge, ability to be goal oriented as well as increasing inquisitive nature of the leaders which, in turn, leads to better performance in their respective positions. The study thus recommended that local government authorities in Rwanda should prioritize the development of self-awareness leadership competency among their leaders by providing mentoring, training, and coaching programs that focus on self-awareness skills enhancement. This will greatly influence the overall performance of local government in Rwanda thereby leading to improved and superior service delivery to the citizens.*

**Key Words:** Leadership, Self-awareness, Management

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**CITATION:** Muhire, S. C. (2024). Assessment of the effect of self-awareness leadership competency on performance of local government in Rwanda. *Reviewed Journal International of Business Management*, 5 (1), 12 – 15.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Self-awareness is an essential leadership competency that involves an individual's ability to understand their emotions, strengths, weaknesses, values, and motives. It is particularly important for local government leaders in Rwanda, as they face complex challenges in their zest to manage diverse communities, delivering services, and driving development agendas.

It is believed that leaders with high levels of self-awareness are more effective in edification of trust, inspiring others as well as making informed decisions. They are able to be acquainted with their biases and limitations, seek other people's feedback, and are highly adaptive in their behavior to achieve their goals. As a consequence, self-awareness has a positive impact on the local government performance in Rwanda.

Successful leaders with high self-awareness can always build trust, inspire others and be in a position to make informed decisions based on their expertise and the input of others which in turn leads to improved performance in services delivery, effective resources management and enhancement of development agendas of the districts.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Over the years, there has been a growing interest in the relationship between self-awareness leadership competency and the performance of organizations. Previous studies have highlighted the significance of self-awareness in leadership development especially in African context. Bearing in mind that self-awareness is the ability to recognize one's own values, emotions, strengths, and weaknesses. It is well thought-out to be a critical competency for effective and efficient leadership. According to Sekaran, (2010) leaders who are self-aware are believed to be more effective in their communication, decision-making, and relationship building.

The conception of self-awareness has been applied in many contexts with clear emphasis on local government in several studies. For instance Karanja (2017) study on the impact of self-awareness on leadership effectiveness in local government found that there was a positive correlation between self-awareness and leadership effectiveness. Similarly, Achoch, et al (2016) study on influence of self-awareness leadership competencies on transformation of public service reform initiatives found that self-awareness was a significant predictor of leadership effectiveness since leadership competency is important in terms of both perceptions of leader effectiveness and follower satisfaction.

In the Rwandan context, several studies have explored the relationship between leadership competencies and organizational performance in local government. For example, a study by Tugizimana (2018) found that leadership competencies, including self-awareness, were positively associated with organizational performance in local government. Another study by Muhire and Kabera (2019) found that leadership competencies, including self-awareness, were significant predictors of organizational performance in local government. However, it is important to note that self-awareness is just one of many leadership competencies that contribute to effective leadership.

## **METHODOLOGY**

To investigate the effect of self-awareness leadership competency on the performance of local government in Rwanda, cross-sectional survey research design was employed with a population of 30 Mayors from 30 districts in Rwanda. Data was collected using self administered questionnaires and analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics

## **RESULTS**

The results indicated that self-awareness leadership competency has a significant positive effect on the performance of local government in Rwanda. The findings revealed that there has been a general increase in

number of self awareness trainings to more than two times between the year 2015to 2019 which significantly increased service delivery by more than 10% as indicated by more than 50% respondents.

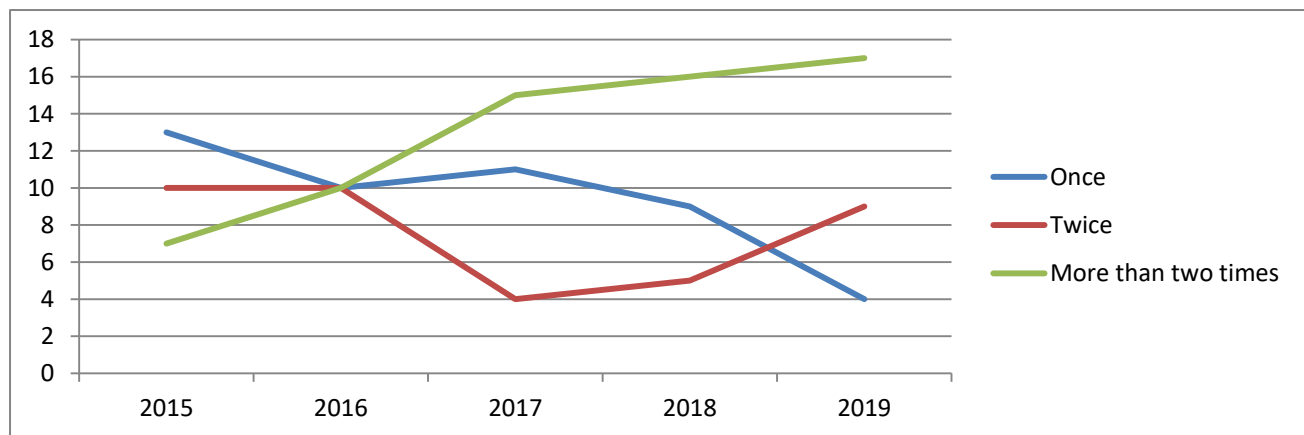


Figure 1: Trends in self-awareness trainings in Rwanda districts

Self-awareness enables leaders to understand their own strengths and weaknesses, emotions, and how their behavior impacts others. The ability to reflect on one's actions and decisions is particularly important in the public sector, where leaders are responsible for serving the needs of their constituents.

Moreover, statistical findings show a positive correlations between self-awareness leadership competency and all the predictors of performance of local government – timely implementation of government plans ( $r .905^*$ ,  $p .023 < 0.05$ ), service delivery ( $r .407^*$ ,  $p .015 < 0.05$ ), workforce development ( $r .475^*$ ,  $p .025 < 0.05$ ), and local community satisfaction ( $r .607^*$ ,  $p .032 < 0.05$ ).

The results indicate that self-awareness has a positive impact on local government performance and is consistent with a study conducted in the United States found that self-awareness was positively related to job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and perceived job performance among public sector employees (Doran et al., 2012).

Self-awareness enables leaders to recognize their biases and limitations. This is particularly important in a diverse society like Rwanda, where leaders need to be able to work effectively with people from different backgrounds and perspectives. By understanding their own biases and limitations, leaders can better navigate complex social dynamics and make decisions that are inclusive and equitable.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the existing literature suggests that self-awareness is an important leadership competency that can contribute to the performance of local government in Rwanda. However, more research is needed to fully understand the relationship between self-awareness and organizational performance in this context.

The study revealed that self-aware leaders are better able to understand their strengths, weaknesses, and limitations, and are therefore more effective in their decision-making processes. Additionally, self-aware leaders are better equipped to manage their emotions, build stronger relationships, and foster a positive work culture, which all contribute to improved local government performance.

Therefore, it is recommended that local government officials in Rwanda invest in developing their self-awareness competencies to enhance their performance and ultimately improve the quality of services delivered to the public.

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