



Influence of Empowerment of Team Leadership on Team Effectiveness of Collaborative Partnerships in International Research Organizations in Kenya

Joyce Mukua-Maru, Prof. Teresia K. Linge & Prof. Caren Ouma

ISSN: 2616-8421

Influence of Empowerment of Team Leadership on Team Effectiveness of Collaborative Partnerships in International Research Organizations in Kenya

^{1*}Joyce Mukua-Mar, ²Prof. Teresia K. Linge & ³Prof. Caren Ouma
¹Postgraduate Student, United States International University-Africa
^{2&3}Lecturers, United States International University-Africa
*Email of the corresponding author: jmukua@yahoo.com

How to cite this article: Maru, J. M., Linge, T. K., & Ouma, C. (2023). Influence of Empowerment of Team Leadership on Team Effectiveness of Collaborative Partnerships in International Research Organizations in Kenya. *Journal of Human Resource & Leadership*, 7 (2), 86-105. <https://doi.org/10.53819/81018102t5208>

Abstract

The study examined the impact of empowering team leadership on the effectiveness of collaborative partnerships in international research organizations in Kenya. The research was guided by the following question: How does empowering team leadership influence the effectiveness of collaborative partnerships in international research organizations in Kenya? The study utilized Hill's (2001) theory of team leadership as a theoretical framework and employed a positivist research philosophy. A correlational research design was employed, and a census of 164 program leaders, project managers, and heads of departments from 12 international research organizations was conducted. Structured questionnaires were employed as the data collection method, and the collected data was subsequently organized, coded, and analyzed using SPSS version 25. Descriptive and inferential statistical methods were employed for analysis. The correlation results indicated a positive and significant association between empowering team leadership and team effectiveness. The regression analysis (R^2) demonstrated that 33.2% of the variation in team effectiveness of collaborative partnerships in international research organizations in Kenya could be explained by empowering team leadership. Furthermore, the regression results revealed a significant positive relationship between empowering team leadership and team effectiveness ($\beta = .597$, $t(151) = 8.72$, $p < .05$). The null hypothesis was rejected. Hence, empowerment of team leadership significantly influences the team effectiveness of collaborative partnerships in international research organizations in Kenya. The study concludes that strategies for empowering team leadership may involve skill development, promoting awareness and fostering inclusivity in decision-making processes. Empowerment can enhance motivation and engagement among team members, thereby facilitating better communication and collaboration within the team. It is recommended that international research organizations operating in Kenya prioritize the empowerment of team leadership. Empowering team leadership is crucial for any organization as it cultivates a sense of ownership and accountability among team members, leading to heightened motivation, productivity, and overall team effectiveness. The international research organizations in Kenya should provide training and development opportunities, establish clear goals and expectations, and foster an inclusive and supportive work environment. Additionally, international research organizations operating in Kenya should promote open communication, encourage collaboration and teamwork and establish mechanisms to recognize and reward exceptional performance.

Keywords: *Empowerment, team leadership, team effectiveness, international research organizations, Kenya*

1.0 Introduction

The empowerment of employees can be vital in enhancing their effectiveness (Al-Asoufi & Akhorshaideh, 2017). A fundamental principle of empowerment is providing employees with the means to make important decisions and ensuring the correctness of those decisions (Ntimama, 2018). To improve customer service effectiveness, companies can empower service associates to make on-the-spot decisions instead of involving management in every decision (Njuguna, 2016). Employee empowerment refers to how organizations provide employees with autonomy and control in their day-to-day activities. Staff empowerment is important as it increases their authority to monitor operations within the organization. It can be developed through capacity building initiatives for employees. Al-Asoufi and Akhorshaideh (2017) have indicated a significant impact of employee empowerment on the success of organizational change. Empowerment in an organization can encompass skill development, awareness building, and inclusivity in decision-making (Samwel, 2018; Mamy, Shabbir & Hasan, 2020; Ndunge, 2019; Uzoamaka & Innocent, 2017; Quadros & Misango, 2017; Ogohi, 2018; Lou, Changeux & Rosenstand, 2017; Billon, 2017; Njuguna, 2016; Okpara & Agwu, 2015; Al-Asoufi & Akhorshaideh, 2017; Karimi & Nejad, 2018; Safkaur & Sagrim, 2019; Marri, Azeem & Nadeem, 2021; Nguyen, Le & Trinh, 2019; Jhuthi, 2015).

Awareness plays a vital role in organizations as it enables leaders to identify gaps in their management skills and understand their areas of strength and areas that require further attention (Billon, 2017). Building awareness involves recognizing one's strengths and weaknesses (Muhammad & Naved, 2020). When organizational leadership respects the viewpoints of team members, it can enhance their performance by fostering a sense of honor and value (Sullivan, 2017). Okpara and Agwu (2015) noted that self-awareness enables team members to identify management gaps, leading to higher performance levels. Leaders who possess self-awareness understand their own strengths, allowing them to fulfill their responsibilities more effectively within the organization (Yahaya & Yakubu, 2015). Inclusivity holds great importance as it boosts employee morale, enhances problem-solving capabilities throughout the organization, and fosters creativity and innovation (Ndunge, 2017). Inclusive leadership is characterized by a collaborative mindset, cultural intelligence, and awareness of biases. An inclusive leader must be a team player, bringing together diverse perspectives from team members (Nguyen, Le & Trinh, 2019).

The study specifically focused on international research organizations in Kenya. These organizations, both in Kenya and globally, play a crucial role in investigating and applying complex/big data, providing valuable research-based evidence (Wachira, 2018). According to the NGOs Board of Kenya (2021), there are 12 international research organizations operating in the country. These include CIP, ILRI, IITA, ICI, ICRISAT, IPGRI, ICRAF, ICIPE, CIMMYT, AICB, and HJF Medical Research International. These institutions collaborate with various organizations in Kenya to contribute to the country's economic development (N'gan'ga, 2021). However, despite these collaborations, the study observed that there have been deficiencies in the team effectiveness of collaborative partnerships within international research organizations. This knowledge gap served as the rationale for conducting the study, aiming to investigate whether empowering team leadership can significantly influence the team effectiveness of collaborative partnerships in international research organizations in Kenya. The study findings were expected to be valuable for the formulation of policies and strategies in this context.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

The team effectiveness of collaborative partnerships in international research organizations has been found to be inadequate (Sheppard, Gould, Guilcher, Liu, Linkewich, Austen & Hitzig, 2022; Liu & Li, 2023; Voller, Chitalu, Nyondo-Mipando, Opobo, Bangirana, Thorogood & Chi, 2022; Thornton & Tranter, 2023; Gupta, Verma, Chaudhary, Bashar, Bhag & Kumar, 2022; Elyousfi, Anand & Dalmasso, 2021; Weber, Hardiman, Kanja, Thomas, Robinson-Edwards & Bradbury-Jones, 2021; Magero & Muchelule, 2019). This situation has made it challenging to effectively translate research into policy and practice due to conflicting interests and a lack of effective coordination. A study conducted in India by Gupta, Verma, Chaudhary, Bashar, Bhag, and Kumar (2022) revealed that conflicts of interest and poor leadership capacities significantly reduce the effectiveness of collaborative partnerships. In Cambodia, Thornton and Tranter (2023) found that low stakeholder collaboration has been a challenge that influences project effectiveness. Mirzoev, Omar, Green, Bird, Lund, Ofori-Atta, and Doku (2022) highlighted that independent research activities with limited collaboration and partnerships are prevalent across various institutions in the region. Additionally, Schreinemachers, Sequeros, and Lukumay (2017) discovered that weak interdisciplinary collaborations, inadequate research capacity, and slow adoption of new technologies are constraining research organizations in Africa.

In the context of Kenya, the team effectiveness of collaborative partnerships in international research organizations has been insufficient (Weber, Hardiman, Kanja, Thomas, Robinson-Edwards & Bradbury-Jones, 2021). These organizations face challenges in determining reward mechanisms and equitable sharing of intellectual property rights royalties among researchers, institutions, and communities (Magero & Muchelule, 2019). Inequitable sharing of royalties negatively affects the performance of collaborative partnerships in many research organizations. Otieno's (2019) study revealed a positive and significant relationship between environmental scanning, strategy formulation, strategy implementation, strategy evaluation, and financial performance, but it focused solely on strategic planning, leaving a conceptual gap. Another study by Magero and Muchelule (2019) found that stakeholder participation positively influences the sustainability of women-funded projects, but the study only focused on women-funded projects, presenting a contextual gap.

Given the gaps identified in the reviewed studies (Gupta, Verma, Chaudhary, Bashar, Bhag & Kumar, 2022; Thornton & Tranter, 2023; Mirzoev, Omar, Green, Bird, Lund, Ofori-Atta & Doku, 2022; Schreinemachers, Sequeros & Lukumay, 2017; Weber, Hardiman, Kanja, Thomas, Robinson-Edwards & Bradbury-Jones, 2021; Magero & Muchelule, 2019; Otieno, 2019), none of them specifically examined the influence of empowering team leadership on the team effectiveness of collaborative partnerships in international research organizations in Kenya. Hence, further studies were needed, leading to the current study. This research addresses the knowledge gap by investigating the influence of empowering team leadership on the team effectiveness of collaborative partnerships in international research organizations in Kenya. The findings of this study will be valuable to the leadership of international and local research organizations in Kenya, government bodies, partner organizations, academia, and policymakers.

1.2 Research Question

How does empowerment of team leadership influence team effectiveness of collaborative partnerships in international research organizations in Kenya?

<https://doi.org/10.53819/81018102t5208>

1.3 Hypothesis

H₀: Empowerment of team leadership does not significantly influence the team effectiveness of collaborative partnerships in international research organizations in Kenya.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of the study is underpinned by Hill's team leadership theory, which provides the structure and support for the research. This theoretical framework is depicted in Figure 1.

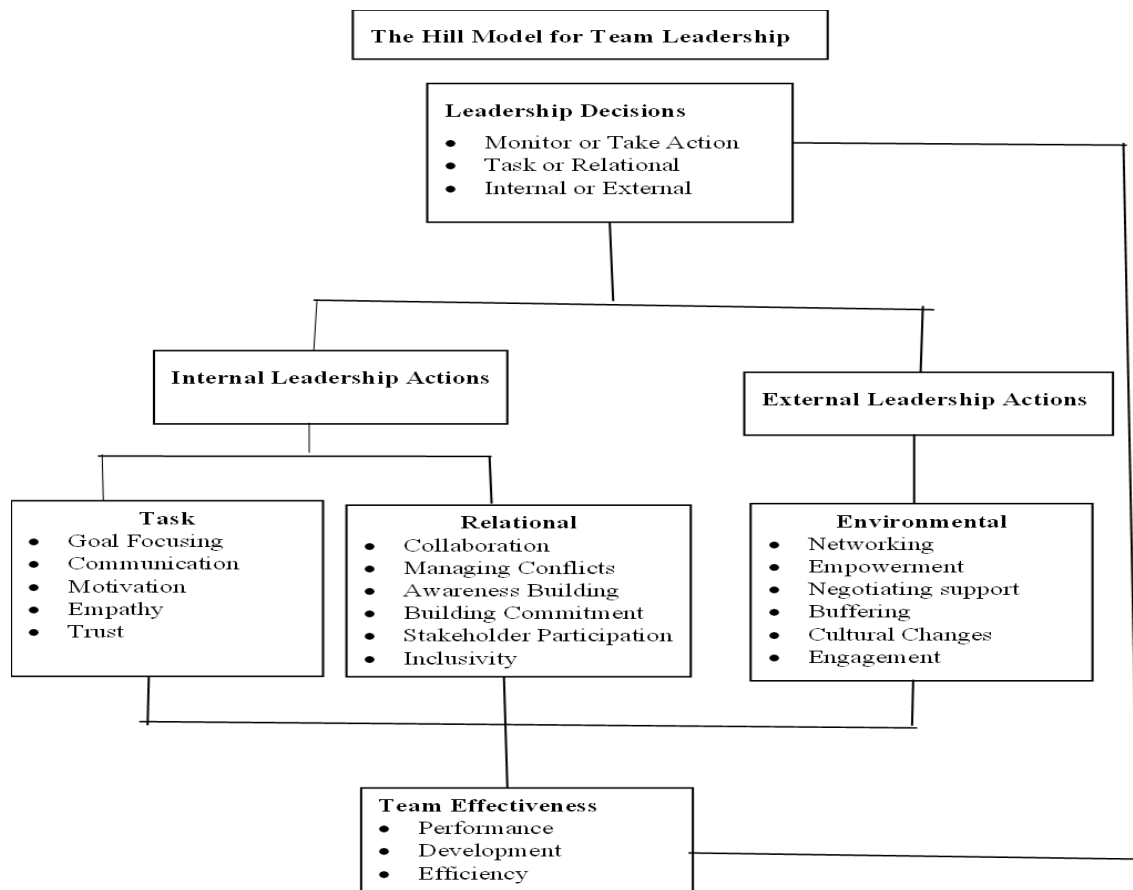


Figure 1: Hill's theory of team leadership

2.2 Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework is a diagrammatical representation that shows the relationship between dependent and independent variables (Creswell, 2014). Figure 2 presents the conceptual framework informed by Hill's theory and guides the study to reveal the relationship between empowerment and team effectiveness.

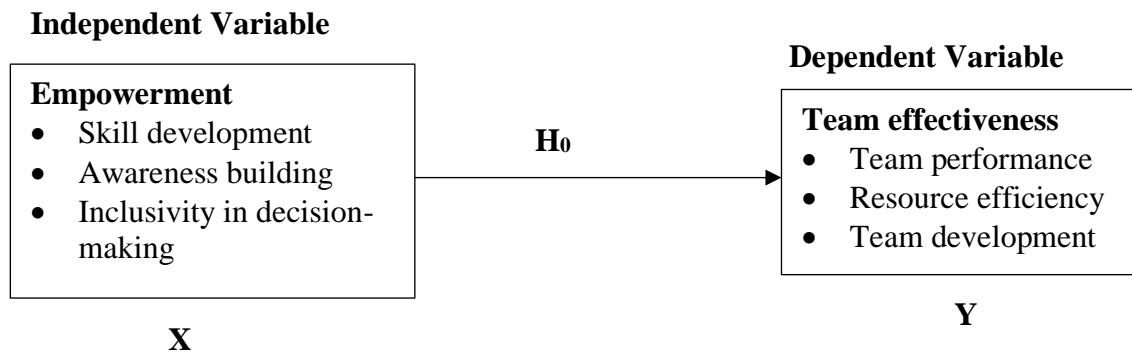


Figure 2: Conceptual framework
Source: Northouse (2006).

The success of organizations relies heavily on effective team leadership decisions. Leaders must possess the skill of knowing when to take action, whether it's related to tasks, internal relationships within the team, or external relationships with the environment (Qadri, 2016). Making the right decision requires experience and the ability to gather relevant information about the team dynamics and external factors (Hill & Bartol, 2016). Leaders should also be open to input from informal team leaders and be willing to address both task-related issues and interpersonal conflicts among team members (Arel, Beaudoin & Cianci, 2012). Additionally, leaders may need to intervene in the external environment by networking, forming alliances, and advocating for the team's interests (Qadri, 2016).

Internal leadership actions involve tasks and relational skills. Leaders focus on goal-setting, structuring, facilitating decision-making, empathy, motivation, trust, training, and maintaining standards. They may also engage in coaching, collaboration, conflict management, inclusivity, building commitment, awareness building, satisfying needs, stakeholder participation, and modeling ethical behavior (Hill & Bartol, 2016). External leadership actions include networking, forming alliances, engagement, collaborations, empowerment, negotiating support, advocating for the team, and recognizing team members. These actions aim to mitigate the impact of external environmental factors on the team (Qadri, 2016). Effective leadership decisions and actions contribute to team effectiveness, which encompasses team performance and team development. Team performance focuses on accomplishing tasks and maintaining a results-oriented structure, while team development involves maintaining unity, collaborative climate, standards of excellence, and external support and recognition (Hill, 2001).

Hill's team leadership theory emphasizes the leader's role in controlling and ensuring team performance. By making effective leadership decisions and implementing internal and external leadership actions, leaders can create team effectiveness and success (Hill & Bartol, 2016). The theory provides a tool for understanding and improving team leadership dynamics, guiding leaders and team members in their decision-making and behavior (Arel, Beaudoin & Cianci, 2012). While the theory may be perceived as complex, it offers valuable principles that can enhance team competitiveness and performance in international research organizations, such as those in Kenya (Hill, Jones & Schilling, 2014). Applying Hill's theory can help leaders prioritize flexibility, align their teams with a common objective, and empower team members to achieve their full potential (Hill & Bartol, 2016).

2.3 Empirical Review

Employee empowerment is a critical aspect of organizational functioning, as it provides employees with autonomy and control in their day-to-day activities (Ntimama, 2018). By empowering service associates to make on-the-spot decisions, companies can enhance customer service effectiveness (Njuguna, 2016). Staff empowerment not only increases their authority to monitor organizational operations but can also be achieved through skill development programs, which aim to identify skill gaps and enhance employees' capacity and knowledge (Samwel, 2018). Awareness building is essential for team members to identify gaps in their management skills and recognize areas that require further improvement (Lou, Changeux & Rosenstand, 2017). Developing self-awareness contributes to improving leadership skills and fostering a nurturing business culture (Gill, Ramsey & Leberman, 2015). Leaders can enhance their awareness by maintaining an open mind, acknowledging their strengths and weaknesses, and being attuned to the business environment. Honest self-assessment allows leaders to identify areas for growth and improvement, while discipline and integrity are integral to gaining respect from others (Billon, 2017).

Employee empowerment significantly enhances their effectiveness within organizations (Al-Asoufi & Akhorshaideh, 2017). Providing employees with the means to make important decisions and ensuring the correctness of those decisions is a fundamental principle of empowerment (Ntimama, 2018). Inclusive decision-making processes increase employee morale, improve problem-solving capabilities, and foster creativity and innovation throughout organizations (Ndunge, 2017). Inclusive leadership, characterized by a collaborative mindset, cultural intelligence, and bias awareness, is crucial in bringing together diverse perspectives from team members (Nguyen, Le & Trinh, 2019).

Organizations need more inclusive leaders who actively promote diversity and encourage inclusivity. Inclusive leaders play a critical role in the success of projects, regardless of their size, by unlocking individual potential, enhancing collective team power, and supporting organizational innovation and growth. Ndunge (2017) conducted a study investigating the effect of communication, goal focusing, and collaboration on team effectiveness in the Ministry of Education in Kenya. The research design employed a cross-sectional descriptive survey targeting all 724 employees of the ministry. A sample of 75 employees was selected using stratified random sampling, and data was collected through questionnaires using the drop and pick technique. The collected data was analyzed using SPSS, involving descriptive and inferential statistical computations. The analysis revealed that changes in a unit's inclusive strategies led to a 0.419-unit increase in performance.

3.0 Research Methodology

The study employed a positivism research philosophy, which aligns with the idea of objectivism and emphasizes gathering factual data through direct observation and quantitative methods (Creswell & Clark, 2017). Positivism aims to test the accuracy of theories by collecting empirical data and analyzing it using statistical analysis. In this study, hypothesis testing was conducted, including the examination of whether collaboration has a significant influence on the team effectiveness of collaborative partnerships in international research organizations in Kenya. Other studies, such as those conducted by Maniagi (2018), Kaua (2021), Zakayo (2017), and Silva (2018), also employed a positivist research philosophy. Thus, positivism was deemed the most suitable research philosophy for this study. The study adopted correlational research design. The

<https://doi.org/10.53819/81018102t5208>

anticipated respondents from the 12 international research organizations included 164 program leaders, project managers and heads of departments. A census was conducted. Structured questionnaires were used to collect the data. SPSS version 25 was used to organize, code and analyze information and generate the quantitative report. Descriptive and inferential statistics were employed in the data analysis process.

4.0 Results and Findings

4.1 Response Rate

The sample size was 164, which included program leaders, project managers and heads of departments. The summary of the response rate is presented in Table 1

Table 1: Response Rate

Response	Targeted respondents	Response (Those responded)	Percentage
Program leaders	26	23	88.46%
Project managers	78	71	91.03%
Head of departments	60	58	96.67%
Average	164	152	92.68%

The study results presented in Table 1 indicate that the average response rate of program leaders, project managers and heads of departments was 92.68%. Specifically, the response rate for program leaders was 88.46%, for project managers it was 91.03%, and for heads of departments it was 96.67%. The response rate was considered adequate for the analysis since, according to Ahmad and Halim (2017), response rates of above 60% of the sample size is sufficient for the analysis and making of inferences. Besides, Freiman, Chalmers, Smith and Kuebler (2019) note that at least a response rate above 50% should be considered satisfactory for the analysis. In addition, Hendra and Hill (2019) reveal that a response rate above 70% is adequate for the analysis and recommendations. Given these perspectives from reputable scholars, the response rates for all units of observation (program leaders, project managers and heads of departments) in the current study were above 80%, making them appropriate for analysis and drawing inferences.

4.2 Empowerment of Team Leadership and Team Effectiveness

The question of the study was; how does empowerment of team leadership influence team effectiveness of collaborative partnerships in international research organizations in Kenya? The discussion of the findings regarding the variable includes descriptive statistics, correlation analysis and regression analysis (inferential statistics).

4.2.1 Descriptive Statistics of Empowerment of Team Leadership and Team Effectiveness

The descriptive statistics in the study are presented based on percentages, mean (M) and standard deviation (SD). A Likert scale of 1 to 5 (1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neutral, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree) was used. These descriptive statistics provide an overview of the distribution of responses, allowing for an understanding of the participants' perspectives on the empowerment

of team leadership and team effectiveness based on the Likert scale. Table 2 presents percentage distribution of empowerment of team leadership and team effectiveness

Table 2: Percentage Distribution of Empowerment of Team Leadership and Team Effectiveness

Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Skill development enables identification of key skill gaps in the organizations which improve the team effectiveness	2.60%	6.60%	7.20%	57.90%	25.70%
Skills development is one of the most important potential motivators for employees that lead to the commitment of the employees in the organizations hence high team effectiveness	10.00%	7.90%	5.80%	57.90%	18.40%
Strong interpersonal skills are critical in promoting team effectiveness in the organizations	3.90%	4.60%	0.00%	61.20%	30.30%
The organizations leadership has invested and prioritized employee skills development to stimulate team effectiveness	5.30%	19.70%	9.20%	42.10%	23.70%
Providing training and professional development opportunities boosts employee commitment to the organizations thus high team effectiveness	7.90%	21.10%	2.50%	56.10%	12.40%
The organizations leadership builds awareness on team leadership, and this increases team effectiveness	10.90%	8.80%	6.50%	64.00%	9.80%
The organizations leadership respect the views of other team members, and this increases their effectiveness	0.70%	5.90%	5.90%	48.00%	39.50%
Engagement of the employees in decision-making processes enhances awareness leading to the team's effectiveness	2.00%	11.20%	8.90%	60.80%	17.10%
Self-awareness allows team members to identify their blind spots and areas for improvement and this helps to obtain higher team effectiveness	9.90%	7.20%	5.30%	45.40%	32.20%
The leadership in the organizations maintain a keen awareness and are responsive to the changing business environment	0.70%	12.50%	5.30%	59.90%	21.70%
The organizations leadership demonstrates aspects of inclusivity for employees in the decision-making process and this increases the team effectiveness.	2.60%	7.20%	8.60%	32.90%	48.70%
The organizations leadership creates common understanding in the team, which creates employee commitment.	6.60%	2.00%	2.60%	50.00%	38.80%
Creating mutual understanding influences team effectiveness in the organizations	3.30%	8.80%	3.30%	33.20%	51.40%
The inclusivity of the team members in decision-making enhances the team effectiveness	0.60%	11.60%	6.60%	48.60%	32.60%
The inclusivity of the employee in decision-making increases their commitment of the team thus high team effectiveness	1.20%	9.40%	1.50%	40.40%	47.50%

The results presented in the table indicate that 57.90% of the respondents acknowledged that skill development plays a crucial role in identifying key skill gaps within organizations. Furthermore, they recognized that addressing these skill gaps through development initiatives can contribute to improved team effectiveness. This finding highlights the importance of skill development programs in organizations, as they allow for the identification of areas where teams may be lacking essential skills. By investing in skill development, organizations can address these gaps and enhance the overall effectiveness of their teams. Further examination of the results shows that

<https://doi.org/10.53819/81018102t5208>

about sixty-one percent (61.20%) of the respondents agreed that strong interpersonal skills are critical in promoting team effectiveness in organizations, which underscores the importance of effective communication, collaboration, and relationship-building skills within teams. Interpreting this data implies that individuals need to work well together, understand one another, and effectively convey ideas, ultimately leading to improved team outcomes. Looking at the results in the table, forty-two percent (42.10%) of the participants acknowledged the importance of investment made by organizational leadership in employee skills development, suggesting that a significant portion of the respondents perceive leadership's commitment to developing employee skills.

Based on the results presented in the table, approximately fifty-six percent (56.10%) of the respondents agreed that providing training and professional development opportunities boosts employee commitment to the organizations, thus resulting in high team effectiveness. This result suggests that investing in training programs and offering avenues for professional growth can significantly impact employee commitment. This acknowledgment implies the importance of continuous learning and development within organizations. In addition, sixty-four percent (64.00%) of the respondents agreed that building awareness on team leadership by organizational leadership increases team effectiveness. It can also be seen from the results that forty-nine percent (48.70%) of the participants agreed that the organization's leadership demonstrates aspects of inclusivity for employees in the decision-making process, which increases team effectiveness.

According to the results presented in the table, about fifty-one percent (51.40%) of the respondents agreed that creating mutual understanding influences team effectiveness in organizations. This suggests that when team members have a shared understanding of goals, expectations, and processes, it enhances overall team effectiveness. The fact that approximately fifty-three percent (53.30%) of the participants agreed that the inclusivity of team members in decision-making enhances team effectiveness, implies that when team members are included in the decision-making process, it positively impacts team effectiveness. Additionally, the fact that about fifty-six percent (56.80%) of the respondents agreed that fostering a culture of continuous learning and improvement contributes to team effectiveness, implies that when organizations prioritize learning, provide opportunities for skill development, and encourage a growth mindset, it positively influences team effectiveness.

The results presented show that approximately fifty-four percent (54.20%) of the participants agreed that effective communication channels and processes are crucial for team effectiveness, thus emphasizing the significance of clear and open communication within teams. This result could be interpreted to mean that when team members can express their ideas, share information, and provide feedback effectively, it promotes collaboration, prevents misunderstandings, and ultimately enhances team effectiveness. Furthermore, the fact that about fifty-nine percent (58.60%) of the respondents recognized that establishing trust among team members is essential for team effectiveness, highlights the importance of trust as the foundation of effective teamwork. This consensus implies that when team members trust each other, they feel safe to take risks, share ideas, and collaborate openly, leading to improved communication, cooperation, and overall team effectiveness. This fact underscores the foundational role of trust in building and maintaining high-performing teams in organizations. Table 3 presents the mean and standard deviation of empowerment of team leadership and team effectiveness

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation of Empowerment of Team Leadership and Team Effectiveness

Statements	M	SD
The organizations leadership respect the views of other team members, and this increases their effectiveness	4.20	0.846
The organizations leadership has invested and prioritized employee skills development to stimulate team effectiveness	4.18	0.964
The organizations leadership demonstrates aspects of inclusivity for employees in the decision-making process and this increases the team effectiveness.	4.18	1.036
The inclusivity of the employee in decision-making increases their commitment of the team thus high team effectiveness	4.16	0.966
The organizations leadership creates common understanding in the team, which creates employee commitment.	4.13	1.038
Skills development is one of the most important potential motivators for employees that lead to the commitment of the employees in the organizations hence high team effectiveness	4.10	0.735
The inclusivity of the team members in decision-making enhances the team effectiveness	4.09	0.913
Creating mutual understanding influences team effectiveness in the organizations	4.07	1.208
Proving training and professional development opportunities boosts employee commitment to the organizations thus high team effectiveness	4.05	1.044
Engagement of the employees in decision-making processes enhances awareness leading to the team's effectiveness	4.03	0.776
Strong interpersonal skills are critical in promoting team effectiveness in the organizations	4.01	0.987
Skill development enables identification of key skill gaps in the organizations which improve the team effectiveness	3.97	0.913
The organizations leadership builds awareness on team leadership, and this increases team effectiveness	3.92	0.980
The leadership in the organizations maintain a keen awareness and are responsive to the changing business environment	3.89	0.907
Self-awareness allows team members to identify their blind spots and areas for improvement and this helps to obtain higher team effectiveness	3.83	1.238
Average	4.05	0.970

The study found that most of the respondents agreed that organizations' leadership respects the views of other team members, which increases their effectiveness (M = 4.20, SD = 0.846). The results indicate that most of the respondents agreed that organizations' leadership has invested and prioritized employee skills development to stimulate team effectiveness (M = 4.18, SD = 0.964). according to the results from this study, most of the respondents agreed that organizations' leadership demonstrates inclusivity for employees in the decision-making process and this increases the team effectiveness (M = 4.18, SD = 1.036). According from the results presented from this study, most respondents agreed that inclusivity of the employee in decision-making

<https://doi.org/10.53819/81018102t5208>

increases their commitment to the team; thus, high team effectiveness ($M = 4.16$, $SD = 0.966$). The results also indicate that most of the respondents agreed that the organization's leadership creates a common understanding in the team, which makes employee commitment ($M = 4.13$, $SD = 1.038$). Further, the results illustrate that most of the respondents agreed that skills development is one of the most important potential motivators for employees that lead to the commitment of the employees in the organizations hence high team effectiveness ($M = 4.10$, $SD = 0.735$).

According to the study results, most of the respondents agreed that the inclusivity of the team members in decision-making enhances the team's effectiveness ($M = 4.09$, $SD = 0.913$). The results imply that most respondents agreed that creating mutual understanding influences team effectiveness in organizations ($M = 4.07$, $SD = 1.208$). It can be seen from the results that providing training and professional development opportunities boosts employee commitment to the organizations, thus, high team effectiveness ($M = 4.05$, $SD = 1.044$). Further, results also indicate that most respondents agreed that strong interpersonal skills are critical in promoting team effectiveness in organizations ($M = 4.01$, $SD = 0.987$). In addition, the results show that most of the respondents agreed that organizational leadership builds awareness of team leadership, and this increases team effectiveness ($M = 3.92$, $SD = 0.980$). Further, the study found that most of the respondents agreed that leaders in the organizations maintain a keen awareness and are responsive to the changing business environment ($M = 3.89$, $SD = 0.907$).

According to the results, most respondents agreed that skill development enables the identification of key skill gaps in organizations, which improves team effectiveness ($M = 3.97$, $SD = 0.913$) and that most of the respondents agreed that self-awareness allows team members to identify their blind spots and areas for improvement and this helps to obtain higher team effectiveness ($M = 3.83$, $SD = 1.238$). The average M score of the responses under the variable empowerment of team leadership was 4.05, with a SD of 0.970. This signified that most respondents agreed with most of the statement/survey questions regarding the variable empowerment of team leadership, with the minority either disagreeing or being neutral.

4.2.2 Correlation Analysis for Empowerment of Team Leadership and Team Effectiveness

The correlation results presented in Table 4 examines the association between the items for empowerment of team leadership and team effectiveness of collaborative partnerships.

high team effectiveness (F)	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.869	0.102	0.276	0.115	0.268							
The organizations leadership builds awareness on team leadership, and this increases team effectiveness (G)	Pearson Correlation	0.046	0.205	-0.017	0.117	0.190	0.334	1.000					
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.572	0.011	0.838	0.151	0.019	0.128						
The organizations leadership respect the views of other team members, and this increases their effectiveness (H)	Pearson Correlation	0.031	0.041	-0.074	0.014	-0.068	0.050	0.123	1.000				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.708	0.615	0.364	0.861	0.408	0.544	0.132					
Engagement of the employees in decision-making processes enhances awareness leading to the team's effectiveness (I)	Pearson Correlation	0.153	-0.251	-0.087	-0.061	-0.052	0.039	0.021	0.101	1.000			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.061	0.002	0.286	0.456	0.523	0.633	0.799	0.215				
Self-awareness allows team members to identify their blind spots and areas for improvement and this helps to obtain higher team effectiveness (J)	Pearson Correlation	0.099	0.383	0.077	0.164	0.109	0.011	0.038	0.089	-0.104	1.000		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.224	0.245	0.346	0.044	0.182	0.891	0.643	0.274	0.200			
The leadership in the organizations maintain a keen awareness and are responsive to the changing business environment (K)	Pearson Correlation	0.012	0.117	0.036	-0.051	0.158	0.026	0.065	0.036	0.014	0.102	1.000	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.886	0.153	0.664	0.533	0.052	0.749	0.426	0.661	0.861	0.212		
The organizations leadership demonstrates aspects of inclusivity for	Pearson Correlation	0.068	-0.072	0.064	-0.137	-0.118	-0.118	0.131	-0.018	0.059	0.008	0.259	1.000

<https://doi.org/10.53819/81018102t5208>

employees in the decision-making process and this increases the team effectiveness (L)	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.406	0.378	0.435	0.092	0.148	0.149	0.107	0.830	0.473	0.919	0.001					
The organizations leadership creates common understanding in the team, which creates employee commitment (M)	Pearson Correlation	0.134	0.108	-0.077	-0.046	0.137	-0.018	0.062	-0.058	-0.071	0.073	0.035	0.035	1.000			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.099	0.184	0.345	0.573	0.093	0.830	0.449	0.474	0.385	0.369	0.667	0.672				
Creating mutual understanding influences team effectiveness in the organizations (N)	Pearson Correlation	0.097	-0.046	-0.135	-0.134	-0.108	-0.150	-0.118	0.025	-0.031	0.035	0.007	-0.032	0.056	1.000		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.236	0.571	0.097	0.100	0.186	0.066	0.147	0.761	0.706	0.669	0.932	0.700	0.492			
The inclusivity of the team members in decision-making enhances the team effectiveness (O)	Pearson Correlation	0.046	-0.029	-0.141	-0.074	-0.047	0.010	0.015	0.124	-0.051	0.048	0.043	-0.114	0.017	-0.042	1.000	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.576	0.722	0.083	0.364	0.561	0.905	0.855	0.129	0.535	0.556	0.600	0.161	0.839	0.610		
The inclusivity of the employee in decision-making increases their commitment of the team thus high team effectiveness (P)	Pearson Correlation	0.118	0.005	-0.051	-0.154	-0.124	-0.040	-0.049	0.073	-0.043	-0.148	-0.048	0.063	0.078	-0.033	-0.016	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.149	0.952	0.533	0.058	0.128	0.621	0.548	0.368	0.602	0.069	0.556	0.439	0.337	0.687	0.844	

The table displays Pearson correlation coefficients and significance levels (2-tailed) between Team effectiveness of collaborative partnerships (A) and other items related to team leadership and skill development (B-P). Skill development enabling identification of key skill gaps in the organizations, which improves team effectiveness (B), shows a Pearson correlation of 0.198 with Team effectiveness of collaborative partnerships (A) and a significance level (2-tailed) of 0.015. This indicates a weak positive correlation between skill development and team effectiveness. Skills development being an important potential motivator for employees leading to their commitment in organizations and, hence, high team effectiveness (C) has a Pearson correlation of 0.045 with Team effectiveness of collaborative partnerships (A) and a significance level (2-tailed) of 0.583. Strong interpersonal skills being critical in promoting team effectiveness in organizations (D) has a Pearson correlation of 0.052 with Team effectiveness of collaborative partnerships (A) and a significance level (2-tailed) of 0.524. This indicates a very weak positive correlation between strong interpersonal skills and team effectiveness. The organization's leadership investing and prioritizing employee skills development to stimulate team effectiveness (E) shows a Pearson correlation of 0.025 with Team effectiveness of collaborative partnerships (A) and a significance level (2-tailed) of 0.762. Providing training and professional development opportunities to boost employee commitment to organizations, thus leading to high team effectiveness (F), has a Pearson correlation of 0.014 with Team effectiveness of collaborative partnerships (A) and a significance level (2-tailed) of 0.869.

The organization's leadership building awareness on team leadership, and this increasing team effectiveness (G), has a Pearson correlation of 0.046 with Team effectiveness of collaborative partnerships (A) and a significance level (2-tailed) of 0.572. This suggests a very weak positive correlation between leadership building awareness on team leadership and team effectiveness. The organization's leadership respecting the views of other team members, and this increasing their effectiveness (H), shows a Pearson correlation of 0.031 with Team effectiveness of collaborative partnerships (A) and a significance level (2-tailed) of 0.708. Engagement of employees in decision-making processes enhancing awareness leading to the team's effectiveness (I) has a Pearson correlation of 0.153 with Team effectiveness of collaborative partnerships (A) and a significance level (2-tailed) of 0.061. This suggests a weak positive correlation between employee engagement in decision-making and team effectiveness. Self-awareness allowing team members to identify their blind spots and areas for improvement, thus helping to obtain higher team effectiveness (J), shows a Pearson correlation of 0.099 with Team effectiveness of collaborative partnerships (A) and a significance level (2-tailed) of 0.224.

The leadership in organizations maintaining a keen awareness and being responsive to the changing business environment (K) has a Pearson correlation of 0.012 with Team effectiveness of collaborative partnerships (A) and a significance level (2-tailed) of 0.886. This suggests the organization's leadership demonstrating aspects of inclusivity for employees in the decision-making process and this increasing the team effectiveness (L) has a Pearson correlation of 0.068 with Team effectiveness of collaborative partnerships (A) and a significance level (2-tailed) of 0.406. The organization's leadership creating a common understanding in the team, which creates employee commitment (M), shows a Pearson correlation of 0.134 with Team effectiveness of collaborative partnerships (A) and a significance level (2-tailed) of 0.099.

Creating mutual understanding influences team effectiveness in the organizations (N) has a Pearson correlation of 0.097 with Team effectiveness of collaborative partnerships (A) and a significance level (2-tailed) of 0.236. This indicates a weak positive correlation between creating

<https://doi.org/10.53819/81018102t5208>

mutual understanding and team effectiveness. The inclusivity of the team members in decision-making enhances the team effectiveness (O) has a Pearson correlation of 0.046 with Team effectiveness of collaborative partnerships (A) and a significance level (2-tailed) of 0.576. This suggests a very weak positive correlation between inclusivity of team members in decision-making and team effectiveness. The inclusivity of the employee in decision-making increases their commitment to the team, thus resulting in high team effectiveness (P) has a Pearson correlation of 0.118 with Team effectiveness of collaborative partnerships (A) and a significance level (2-tailed) of 0.149. This indicates a weak positive correlation between inclusivity of employees in decision-making and their commitment leading to high team effectiveness. The results indicate that all the items (statements) of empowerment of team leadership are positively associated with team effectiveness of collaborative partnerships. The study also did an overall summary of the correlation analysis between empowerment of team leadership and team effectiveness of collaborative partnerships and the results are presented in Table 5

Table 5: Overall Summary of Correlation Analysis for Empowerment of Team Leadership

		Team effectiveness	Empowerment
Team effectiveness	Pearson Correlation	1.000	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		
Empowerment	Pearson Correlation	.580**	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	

The study results of the correlation analysis in Table 5 indicate that a positive and significant association exists between the empowerment of team leadership and team effectiveness of collaborative partnerships ($r=0.580$, $p=0.000$). This result underscores the importance of empowering team leadership in order to enhance the effectiveness of collaborative partnerships within international research organizations. By providing team leaders with the necessary authority, autonomy, and decision-making abilities, organizations can create an environment that fosters effective teamwork and collaboration. This, in turn, leads to improved overall team effectiveness and the successful achievement of organizational goals.

4.2.3 Regression Analysis for Empowerment of Team Leadership and Team Effectiveness

The regression analysis in the study includes the analysis of model fitness, analysis of variance (ANOVA) and regression of coefficient. The study results of the model fitness is presented in Table 6

Table 6: Model Fitness for Empowerment of Team Leadership

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.580a	0.336	0.332	0.310

The results presented in Table 6 established that empowerment of team leadership is satisfactory in affecting team effectiveness of collaborative partnerships in international research organizations in Kenya. The $R^2=0.332$ (33.2%). This implied that empowerment of team leadership could explain 33.2% of the variations of team effectiveness of collaborative partnerships in international research organizations in Kenya. The results of the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) are summarized in Table 7

<https://doi.org/10.53819/81018102t5208>

Table 7: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) for Empowerment of Team Leadership

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	7.32	1	7.32	76.042	.000b
	Residual	14.439	150	0.096		
	Total	21.759	151			

The results in Table 7 indicate that the overall model is statistically significant. This is supported by $F(1,150) = 76.042, p < .05$. The null hypothesis is rejected since the p value (0.000) is less than 0.05. The results of the study highlight the significance of empowering team leadership in improving the team effectiveness of collaborative partnerships in international research organizations in Kenya. Organizations should focus on empowering their leaders, monitor their efforts, and create a supportive environment to maximize the potential of collaborative partnerships and achieve desired outcomes. Hence, empowerment of team leadership has a significant influence on team effectiveness of collaborative partnerships in international research organizations in Kenya. The study results of the regressions of coefficients is presented in Table 8

Table 8: Regressions of Coefficient for Empowerment of Team Leadership

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.595	0.289		5.518	0.000
Empowerment of Team Leadership	0.597	0.068	0.58	8.72	0.000

Based on the results, the regression model thus becomes;

$$Y = 1.595 + 0.597X$$

Where: -

Y= Team effectiveness

X = Empowerment of Team Leadership

It was found that empowerment of team leadership is positively and significantly related to team effectiveness ($\beta = .597, t(151) = 8.72, p < .05$). The results signified that a unitary increase in empowerment of team leadership would increase team effectiveness of collaborative partnerships in international research organizations in Kenya by 0.597 units when other factors are held constant. The findings of this study have important implications for international research organizations in Kenya. The positive and significant relationship between the empowerment of team leadership and team effectiveness suggests that organizations should prioritize empowering their team leaders to enhance the effectiveness of collaborative partnerships. The beta coefficient of 0.597 indicates that for every unit increase in the empowerment of team leadership, there is an associated increase in team effectiveness. This finding highlights the potential impact that empowering team leaders can have on the overall success of collaborative partnerships in these organizations. By providing team leaders with the necessary authority, autonomy, and support, organizations can create an environment that fosters effective teamwork, communication, and decision-making. This, in turn, can lead to improved team effectiveness and the successful achievement of organizational goals. Therefore, organizations should invest in strategies and initiatives that empower team leaders, such as providing training, resources, and support, to

maximize the potential of collaborative partnerships and enhance overall organizational performance.

5.0 Conclusion

The study results demonstrate that enhancing the empowerment of team leadership within collaborative partnerships in international research organizations in Kenya leads to a significant increase of team effectiveness by 0.597 units when other factors are held constant. The null hypothesis was rejected. Hence, empowerment of team leadership significantly influences the team effectiveness of collaborative partnerships in international research organizations in Kenya. The rejection of the null hypothesis was supported by the ANOVA results, where the p-value (0.000) falls below the significance level of 0.05. The study's findings emphasize the crucial role of empowering team leadership in enhancing the effectiveness of collaborative partnerships in international research organizations in Kenya. By adopting and integrating these findings, organizations can nurture a culture of empowerment, collaboration, and ongoing improvement, ultimately realizing their objectives and advancing research and development endeavors in the country. Empowering team leaders stimulates increased motivation and engagement among team members, facilitating enhanced communication and collaboration. This, in turn, amplifies team performance, yielding greater success in research projects. Additionally, empowering team leaders fosters a culture of innovation and creativity within organizations, further bolstering team effectiveness.

6.0 Recommendations

The study recommends that international research organizations operating in Kenya prioritize the empowerment of team leadership. Empowering team leaders fosters a sense of ownership and accountability among team members, leading to increased motivation, productivity, and overall team effectiveness. These organizations can promote team leadership empowerment through various approaches. One such approach is providing training and development opportunities aimed at enhancing the skills and competencies of team leaders. This can involve organizing leadership workshops, seminars, and mentoring programs that equip leaders with the necessary knowledge and tools to effectively guide and inspire their teams. Additionally, fostering open communication, encouraging collaboration and teamwork, and recognizing and rewarding exceptional performance also play a significant role in team leadership empowerment and subsequently improving team effectiveness. These initiatives contribute to creating a positive work environment where team leaders can thrive and lead their teams to success.

REFERENCES

- Agwu, E. M. (2019). Impact of Stakeholders' Analysis on Organizational Performance: A Study of Nigerian Financial Organizations. *International Journal of Strategic Decision Sciences (IJSDS)*, 10(4), 64-80. <https://doi.org/10.4018/IJSDS.2019100104>
- Ahmad, H., & Halim, H. (2017). Determining sample size for research activities. *Selangor Business Review* 5(2), 20-34.

- Al-Asoufi, B. B., & Akhorshaidah, A. H. O. (2017). The impact of employee empowerment on the success of organizational change: a study in privatized enterprises in Jordan. *Journal of Public Administration and Governance*, 7(1), 87-101. <https://doi.org/10.5296/jpag.v7i1.10849>
- Arel, B., Beaudoin, C. A., & Cianci, A. M. (2012). The impact of ethical leadership, the internal audit function, and moral intensity on a financial reporting decision. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 109(3), 351-366. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-011-1133-1>
- Billon, A. (2017). Basic Self-Awareness: Lessons from the Real World. *European Journal of Philosophy*, 25(3), 732-763. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ejop.12168>
- Elyousfi, F., Anand, A., & Dalmasso, A. (2021). Impact of e-leadership and team dynamics on virtual team performance in a public organization. *International Journal of Public Sector Management*, 6(2), 45-56. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJPSM-08-2020-0218>
- Field, A. (2013). *Discovering statistics using IBM SPSS statistics*. Sage.
- Freiman, J. A., Chalmers, T. C., Smith, H. A., & Kuebler, R. R. (2019). The importance of beta, the type II error, and sample size in the design and interpretation of the randomized controlled trial: survey of two sets of “negative” trials. In *Medical uses of statistics* (pp. 357-389). CRC Press. <https://doi.org/10.1201/9780429187445-19>
- Gill, L. J., Ramsey, P. L., & Leberman, S. I. (2015). A systems approach to developing emotional intelligence using the self-awareness engine of growth model. *Systemic practice and action research*, 28(6), 575-594.
- Gupta, M., Verma, M., Chaudhary, K., Bashar, M. A., Bhag, C., & Kumar, R. (2022). Effectiveness of a collaborative model in improving maternal and child health outcomes among urban poor in Chandigarh, a North Indian city. *Journal of Education and Health Promotion*, 11.
- Hendra, R., & Hill, A. (2019). Rethinking response rates: new evidence of little relationship between survey response rates and nonresponse bias. *Evaluation review*, 43(5), 307-330.
- Hill, C. W., Jones, G. R., & Schilling, M. A. (2014). *Strategic management: theory: an integrated approach*. Cengage Learning.
- Hill, N. S., & Bartol, K. M. (2016). Empowering leadership and effective collaboration in geographically dispersed teams. *Personnel psychology*, 69(1), 159-198. <https://doi.org/10.1111/peps.12108>
- Hill, N. S., Seo, M. G., Kang, J. H., & Taylor, M. S. (2012). Building employee commitment to change across organizational levels: The influence of hierarchical distance and direct managers' transformational leadership. *Organizations Science*, 23(3), 758-777. <https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.1110.0662>
- ILRI (2020). Feed the Future Animal Health Innovation Lab. Retrieved from <https://www.ilri.org/research/projects/feed-future-animal-health-innovation-lab>

- Jhuthi, B. (2015). *Determinants of implementation of non-governmental projects in Kenya: a case of World Vision Osiligi Ipa in Kajiado County* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Nairobi).
- King, D. W., Smith, T. A., & Fairholm, G. W. (2019). Team leadership and diversity of thought. *Journal of Leadership Studies*, 13(4), 1-15.
- Liu, H., & Chen, C. C. (2018). Cross-functional team empowerment, satisfaction, and performance: The moderating role of team task complexity. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 29(14), 2130-2150. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2016.1261399>
- Ndunge, S. P. (2019). *The Influence of knowledge management on humanitarian aid response*. *Journal of Management* 4(2), 17-25. <https://doi.org/10.4018/IJDREM.2019070102>
- Sullivan, P. S. (2017). The Relationship of self-awareness to leadership effectiveness for experienced leaders.
- Thornton, A., & Tranter, P. (2023). Towards effective stakeholder collaboration in building urban resilience in Phnom Penh: opportunities and obstacles. *Environment, Development and Sustainability*, 25(1), 297-320. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10668-021-02055-y>
- Thornton, P. K., & Campbell, B. M. (2017). Responding to global change: A theory of change approach to making agricultural research for development outcome-based. *Agricultural Systems*, 152, 145-153.
- Voller, S., Chitalu, C. C. M., Nyondo-Mipando, A. L., Opobo, T., Bangirana, C. A., Thorogood, N., ... & Chi, P. (2022). “We should be at the table together from the beginning”: perspectives on partnership from stakeholders at four research institutions in sub-Saharan Africa. *International Journal for Equity in Health*, 21(1), 111-118.
- Wachira, J. W. (2018). *Factors Influencing Employee Retention at International Research Institutes: A Case of the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI)* (Doctoral dissertation, United States International University-Africa).
- Weber, S., Hardiman, M., Kanja, W., Thomas, S., Robinson-Edwards, N., & Bradbury-Jones, C. (2021). Towards ethical international research partnerships in gender-based violence research: insights from research partners in Kenya. *Violence against women*, 10778012211035798. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12939-022-01707-3>
- Zakayo, O. (2017). *Role of Leadership in Strategy execution in the Airline Industry in Kenya* (Doctoral dissertation, JKUAT).