

Influence of Intellectual Stimulation on Organizational Performance of Private Universities in Nairobi County, Kenya

James Kioko^{1*} Prof. Ursulla Okoth¹ Prof. Susan Chepkonga¹ Prof. Joshua Okumbe¹

1. School of Education, University of Nairobi, PO box 30197, Nairobi, Kenya

* E-mail of the corresponding author: jkmuthusi2013@gmail.com

Abstract

Transformational leadership is a process in which leaders and followers help each other to advance to a higher level of morale and motivation, creating significant changes in the lives of people and organizations. The purpose of the study was to investigate the influence of intellectual stimulation style on organization performance in private universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya. The objective that guided the study was to: establish the influence of intellectual stimulation on organizational performance in private universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya. The study used Transformational Leadership Theory by Burns (1978) and the conceptual framework of this study was based on the relationship between intellectual stimulation style and organizational performance. The sample comprised of 288 lecturers and 7 Deans of Academic Affairs of the chartered private universities. Questionnaires and interview guides were used to gather data. Validation of the questionnaires were through Cronbach's Alpha and use of expert judgement. The coefficient value was 0.891 at $\alpha = 0.05$. Data was analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Regression analysis showed a strong relationship between intellectual stimulation and performance of private universities. The results revealed a positive and significant relationship between intellectual stimulation ($\beta = .552, p < .05$). It was concluded that stimulating creativity, promoting intelligence, delegating responsibility, and critical thinking influences performance. The following recommendations were made: the management of private universities ought to stimulate their employees intellectually, in that they talk about their needs to be accomplished; as well as ensuring that the universities have all the necessary facilities and resources to help in learning and improving their performance. In addition, the management of private universities should empower their employees to have a diverse perspective on getting solutions to problems; suggest new ways of achieving their set targets and re-examine important assumption.

Keywords: Intellectual stimulation, Transformational leadership, Organizational performance

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1. Introduction

According to Chandan (2021), leadership is the art of influencing and inspiring subordinates to perform their duties willingly, competently and enthusiastically for achievement of group objectives. Similarly, leaders are seen as people that are capable of making changes in order to attain a high level of performance (Desky *et al.*, 2020), they must be able to create visions, develop strategies, and use his power to influence their subordinates positively (Indrawan *et al.*, 2020). In addition, leaders who possess these qualities are classified as "Transformational Leaders" (Desky *et al.*, 2020). Leaders have the ability to equalize his future vision with that of his subordinates and heighten his subordinates' needs (Kadiyono *et al.*, 2020). Transformational leadership is a process in which leaders and followers help each other to advance to a higher level of morale and motivation, creating significant changes in the lives of people and organizations (Burns, 1978).

Alatawi (2022) conceptualized transformational leadership as comprising four I's: idealized Influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration. Intellectual stimulation in leaders facilitates follower empowerment via communication and reassurance to identify issues and their remedies (Smothers *et al.*, 2019), leads to the development of staff commitment to the institutions, implying that organizational goals are achieved based on the dedication and industrious nature of the employees (Anjali & Anand, 2020). Alvansson and Karreman (2019) stated that transformational leader through its component of intellectual stimulation also arouses critical thinking, enhances problem solving, and empower subordinates to be creative and innovative to solve problems and find solutions through intellectual stimulation which happens in the mind and heart of followers resulting into increased creativity and innovation, new ideas to solving

organizational problems. Study findings on the influence of transformational leadership style on organizational performance in three banks operating in Jordan, Orabi (2021) revealed that intellectual stimulation had a positive influence on organizational performance. Similarly, Snell, Yi and Chak (2019) confirmed that intellectual stimulation had been extensively noted as an independent variable impacting organizational performance.

In line with the demand for change in organizations, there is a significant role that the model of transformational leadership is playing in organizational performance because transformational leader can create vision in an environment which can motivate the employees to achieve results that exceeds expectations (Gelard *et al.*, 2019; Birasnay *et al.*, 2021). Yukl (2009) cited in Milelu (2019) suggested that transformational leadership could help in building the work groups and integrate individual towards achievement of organizational corporate goal. According to Ahmad *et al.* (2019), transformational leadership plays a very crucial role in an organization in the sense that, it brings about positive change in the followers; it enhances the motivation, morale and performance, and that its relevance and contribution to organizational performance cannot be undermined.

One way of examining intellectual stimulation is through the performance of the private universities. With 17 fully chartered private universities in Kenya and 7 in Nairobi City County, the higher education sector has registered growth, attributable to a host of factors, among them the growing demand for university education. Consequently, there has been a strain on public universities to handle the subsequent demand. The growth of Private University sector in Kenya has further been attributed to the fact that most of the private universities in the country are established and managed and/or affiliated with religious organizations with massive followings diminishing; as well as the diminishing opportunities available in public universities. Being profit making entities, fees in private universities are accordingly charged in conformity to market forces on the grounds of full cost recovery (Altbach *et al.*, 2019)

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Private university education has experienced a crisis ranging from deteriorating quality, unsustainable financing, limited research, relevance, low staff morale, and insufficient facilities due to the kind of leadership being applied (Mbirithi, 2019). This has affected the teaching quality and painted the wrong picture to the public as far as quality teaching and performance of universities is concerned (Lumbasi, K'aol & Ouma, 2016). The future of the private universities in Kenya depends on how well the university's leadership responds to the challenges and thus one of the critical factors in assessing how these universities respond to these challenges is their style of leadership (Abagi, 2017). Effectively, Kenyan private universities must formulate strategies to attract larger student enrolment, collaborate with the private sector and development partners to be self-sufficient (Ogolla, Bolo & Muchemi, 2019; Wanzala, 2019).

Michieka (2017) observed that research into leadership in Kenya has little influence on leadership in higher education. It may create major gaps in terms of leadership in universities in Kenya. Transformational leaders need to show intellectual stimulation because the lack of it means that they will not recognize their employees through creativity, stimulation or innovation (Lim & Ployhart, 2019). Therefore, there is need to explore ways of addressing the above challenges through sound responses, to meet the best intellectual stimulation leadership style for universities to remain competitive and to maximum performance. Universities are forced to adopt modern strategies that ensure that these organizations achieve their strategic objectives.

In leadership, the private universities have made an effort to ensure that there is good leadership that will in the long run influence the performance of the universities (Gaiti & Kiiru, 2021). Significant changes have been undertaken, such as introducing performance contracting, performance ranking of private sector institutions based on agreed criteria, and devolving services (Milelu, 2019). In addition, Aondo (2020) revealed that they have formulated strategies at corporate, business and functional levels in their quest to improve performance and compete in the global market. These changes have been seen as a tool to improve accountability, transparency, efficiency, and effectiveness in delivering quality services and improving the efficient utilization of resources to improve overall performance. The null hypothesis of this study was: There is no significant relationship between intellectual stimulation and organizational performance in private universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

1.2 Purpose and Objective of the Study

The purpose of the study was to investigate the influence of intellectual stimulation style on organization performance in private universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya. The objective that guided the study was to: establish the influence of intellectual stimulation on organizational performance in private universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

2. Empirical Review

According to Mendez-Keegan, (2019), transformational leaders use this behaviour and attribute to develop competent supporters and motivate innovative ideas this will encourage state corporations to be institutionalized to be creative and innovative. These leaders also make the followers believe in creative decision-making and problem-solving workers for improved performance. Transformational leaders always encourage internal learning and try to create the right environment for it. The leader fosters an environment where it is safe to have conversations, be creative and voice ideas, a place where all team members feel valued. They challenge cultural norms and work to inspire passion with their teams and peers (Algahtani, 2022). Due to its innovativeness and people-oriented nature, transformational leadership is regarded as quite an effective leadership style (Juma & Ndisya, 2019). This means that the leader gives followers the freedom to discharge their duties creatively without necessarily dictating to them how to perform their duties while encouraging them to solve issues as they arise (Dartey-Baah, 2015). Transformational leadership is open to innovation and it involves radical changes in the organization to enhance performance (Mwove, 2023).

Milelu (2019) found that intellectual stimulation was among the key aspects of transformational leadership affecting the institution's performance. Among the indicators of intellectual stimulation, the indicators that were found to influence performance included; leaders' ability to motivate employees, enhance employees' creativity, help employees become good decision-makers, direct employees towards logical problem solving, recognize creative employees, support critical thinking among employees and engage employees in decision making. Muia's (2018) finding show that intellectual stimulation elements positively contributed to KCSE examinations in public secondary schools. The principal's intellectual stimulation was high leading to a strong relationship toward teachers and students. This is an indication that performance was also high. Furthermore, Ngunyi and Ndurumo (2019) found that intellectual stimulation positively affected academic performance by the model coefficient results, $t = 4.929$, $p = 0.028 < 0.05$ and by an increase of 11.5 per cent.

Furthermore, Arthur and Priscilla's study in (2022) concluded that outstanding performance is the outcome of encouraging workers to use their initiative, think critically about challenges they find while working and look for creative ways to approach their jobs and projects. Nyakomitta (2021) revealed that intellectual stimulation affected the performance of commercial banks in Kenya while Angela *et al.* (2022) established the influence of intellectual stimulation on organizational commitment in commercial banks in Kenya. Moreover, the findings of Tahsildari *et al.* (2022) supported the idea that intellectual stimulation, demonstrated through fostering innovation, encouraging knowledge sharing, and providing opportunities for staff professional development, contributed to improved employee performance. In Uganda, a study by Komakech *et al.* (2021) revealed that intellectual stimulation had a negative and insignificant effect on employee performance, while Murage (2022) also found that intellectual stimulation has no significant effect on performance of public universities in Kenya.

3. Theoretical Framework

Transformational leadership theory which focuses on leadership behaviors influencing positive changes in its followers informed this study. According to transformational leadership theory, transformational leadership involves leaders exerting influence on followers to increase their commitment to organizational performance (Antonakis & House, 2019; Shikokoti, Okoth, Chepkonga, 2023). This is realized when the leader is able to influence followers to increase their performance by motivating them to transcend self-interest and increase their level of commitment to the task at hand. The followers' performance is achieved through higher degrees of extra effort, effectiveness, and satisfaction (Bush, 2008; Bush, 2013).

Northouse (2014) emphasized that the admiration and respect that transformational leaders exhibit is entrenched through commitment to advance the interests of the individuals in the group they are leading. Thus, intellectual stimulation can be reliably associated with transformational leaders. Bass (2012) explained that transformational leaders embody high-level moral codes, and they are always found going beyond the call of duty in any situation that requires their attention. According to Bass, they do this not out of good practice, but because they are visionary and focused. Transformational leaders understand that because of the intended goals and the much-desired impact of their actions, they must operate within the boundaries of high standards while they put people at the center of all that they champion.

The theory argues that good leadership in organizations can result to organizational productivity. It is argued by the theory that leaders who serve as role models are likely to shape the behaviour of workers. Leaders who recognize and support workers to own the change process in any organization are likely to face minimal resistance from workers (Evangelos & Psomas, 2022). The theory argues that organizations which succeed in

implementing new policies formulated are attributed to competitive practices such as employee motivation, technological integration in the system and ability of the leaders to challenge the status quo (Fotopoulos, Psomas & Vouzas, 2020). The theory opines that transformative leaders in any competitive organization are always keen in rewarding behaviour rather than individuals (Choi & Eboch, 2019). Furthermore, the theory suggests that organizations that fail to navigate in the dynamic business environment are highly rigid to embrace transformational leadership (Bell & Omachonu, 2021). Based on this theory, this study sought to investigate the influence of intellectual stimulation style on organization performance in private universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

4. Conceptual Framework

Orodho (2017) noted that the conceptual framework is a model or diagrammatic way of examining the variables under study. It shows how the independent variable, which is intellectual stimulation influences the dependent variable, which is, performance of private universities. Figure 1 shows the relationship between transformational leadership and private universities performance.

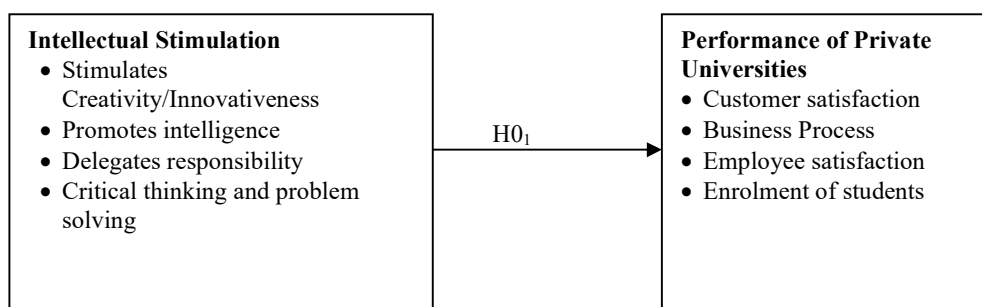


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework showing the relationship between independent and dependent variable

Intellectual stimulation was measured using stimulating creativity/ innovativeness, promoting intelligence, delegating responsibility to employees, and critical thinking and problem solving.

5. Research Methodology

5.1 Research Design

A research design is the entire methodological frame of the study (Cooper & Schindler, 2014). Descriptive survey was adopted in this study. Descriptive research design was appropriate for this study since it enabled the researcher to provide detailed summaries on relevant variables of the study (Orodho, Khateta & Mugiraneza, 2016). These variables are intellectual stimulation as the independent variable and performance of private universities as the dependent variable.

The sample comprised of 288 lecturers and 7 Deans of Academic Affairs of the chartered private universities. The study utilized simple random sampling and purposive sampling to draw the study's population.

5.2 Research Instruments

Questionnaires and interview guides were used to gather data from the lecturers and Deans of Academic affairs respectively. Creswell (2012) noted that questionnaire can collect a large amount of information reasonably quickly. The questionnaire method was preferred because of the large number of respondents targeted and the nature of the information sought (Kothari, 2013). Galletta (2013) asserted that the interview guide was flexible and provides more in-depth responses to the questions at hand. It also helped in triangulating the responses from the questionnaire

5.3 Pretesting of Research Instruments

Pilot study is a small-scale preliminary study aimed at evaluating the feasibility of a research project in terms of cost, time and tools. The findings of which are used to refine the research design prior to conducting the full-scale study (Hildebrand & Ott, 2011). The pilot study was the first step in understanding the influence of intellectual stimulation style on the performance of private universities in Nairobi County, Kenya. The pilot study enabled the researcher to check whether the items used are valid and reliable and correct misunderstanding, detect possible flaws in measurement procedures and in the operationalization of independent variables, check

language level, to weed out/restructure unclear statements, determine time limits and clarify instructions and eliminate ubiquity at the right time (Lucas & Donnellan, 2012).

Validation of the questionnaires were through use of expert judgement. Cronbach's Alpha was used to establish the reliability of the study's instruments. The coefficient value was 0.891 at $\alpha = 0.05$. A scale is reliable if Cronbach's coefficient alpha is well above the threshold value of 0.7 and the acceptable minimum of 0.6 (Hair *et al.*, 2006).

5.4 Data Collection Procedures

The researcher first obtained a transmittal letter from the University department offices and a permit from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) to aid in getting authorization from the private universities to collect data from the respondents in the premises. Trained and qualified research assistants distributed the questionnaire. Participation was however on a voluntary basis. The research assistants interviewed the respondents face-to-face. However, where they were unavailable or busy, the research assistants used the drop and pick method. After a week, the researcher and research assistants collected the questionnaires for analysis and those that had not completed were reminded and given two more days upon which the rest were treated as non-response rates.

Thereafter, the researcher contacted the Deans of Academic Affairs to schedule a time and day for conducting the interview. They then visited their offices as agreed and interviewed them for about interviewed them for about 15 minutes. The interview data was collected by note taking.

5.5 Data Analysis

Data collected from the completed questionnaires were analyzed using a SPSS. Thematic analysis was used to analyze qualitative data and presented in prose. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics (percentages, frequencies, mean and standard deviation). In addition, correlation analysis and regression analysis were used to determine the relationship between the variables.

6. Findings And Discussions

6.1 Questionnaire Return Rate

Data was collected from 217 out of 288 lecturers (80.2%) in private universities in Nairobi County, Kenya. The questionnaire was administered to lecturers and the interview guides to Deans of Academic Affairs. The researcher targeted at least 70% of each category to participate. A total of five Deans of Academic Affairs from the private universities in Nairobi County, Kenya responded. Table 1 shows the questionnaire and interview guide return rate.

Table 1: Research Instruments' Response Rate

<i>Respondents</i>	<i>Returned</i>	<i>Not returned</i>	<i>% Return rate</i>
Lecturers	231	57	80.2
Deans of Academic Affairs	5	2	71.4

Table 1 indicates that the response rate of the lecturers was 80.2 percent while that of the Deans of Academic Affairs was 71.4 percent. According to Best and Kahn (2011), in a population where the respondents are either widely scattered across a large geographical area or are difficult to access, at least 70% of the sample picked will respond.

6.2 Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Demographic results showed that majority of the lecturers in private universities in Kenya were male 125(57.6 percent) while 92(42.4 percent) were female. Demographic information of the Deans of Academic affairs was 4(80.0 percent) male and 1(20.0 percent) female. The results revealed that there was high gender disparity of the lecturers and Deans of Academic Affairs.

Concerning the age of the respondents, majority of the lecturers (55.4 percent) and Deans of Academic Affairs (60.0 percent) were aged 40-50 years giving an indication that they are of diverse age categories hence cordial interaction with the management leading to a clear understanding of the transformational leadership and how it affects the performance of the private universities.

Regarding education level of the respondents, majority of the lecturers have attained PhD level of education

comprising of 52.5 percent while all the Deans of Academic Affairs (100.0 percent) have attained PhD. This showed that there were adequate academic qualifications that qualify the respondents suitable in their line of duties respectively that contribute to the performance of the private universities.

Majority of the lecturers have worked in the education sector for 4-6 years (34.1 percent) and Deans of Academic Affairs had worked in the education sector for more than 10 years (100.0 percent) implying that they have an understanding of how transformational leadership affects the performance of universities. Furthermore, regarding years worked in the university, the lecturers have worked in the university for 4-6 years comprising 39.6 percent of the total sampled population while Deans of Academic Affairs have worked in the university for more than 10 years comprising of 80.0 percent. The findings reveal that the respondents have been in the private universities for a longer period and thus have a clear picture of how performance of the private universities is influenced by the different aspects of transformational leadership. Therefore, they can be able to give their opinions on the current study.

6.3 Performance of the Private Universities

The lecturers were required to indicate the agreement level on performance of private universities in Kenya. The findings are presented in frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations (SD).

Table 2: Performance of the Private Universities

	N	Mean	SD
Customer Satisfaction			
This institution has highly satisfied clients/students	231	4.13	.966
This institution enjoys a good public image	231	4.03	1.042
This institution retains existing students and manage to attract new ones	231	4.13	.933
Business Processes			
The operational efficiency of this institution has increased over the last three years	231	3.89	1.057
This institution is generally innovative	231	3.90	.964
Productivity of lecturers is much higher than the industry average	231	4.03	1.101
Employee Satisfaction			
The university's top managers promote and support innovative ideas, experimentation and creative processes	231	4.10	1.156
Lecturers' trust in leadership is high	231	4.14	1.060
In our institution, we often organize internal training of our lecturers	231	3.72	1.096
Enrolment			
The number of students enrolling in the university has increased in the last 5 years	231	4.20	.898
Enrolment of students affects the performance of this university	231	4.31	.832
Average Mean	231	4.05	1.009

Regarding customer satisfaction, this institution has highly satisfied clients/students had a mean of 4.33 and SD of .966. The study is in line with Hoque (2018) who found that if customers are not satisfied, they will soon find other products, product suppliers or service providers to meet their needs. The amount of money universities will make in future depends on the way they treat their clients today (Gaiti & Kiiru, 2021). Furthermore, the satisfaction among students regarding to the educational service offerings has become more important for educational institutions (Mai, 2019). Even if students are dissatisfied, however, they start coping with this dissatisfaction by embracing factors unrelated to the educational unit in order to remain satisfied. Satisfaction is the result of a judgement of service quality and the ability to cope with dissatisfaction (Fischer & Suwuphong, 2018; Shikokoti *et al.*, 2023).

The institution retains existing students and manage to attract new ones had a mean of 4.13 and SD of .933. According to Kubai *et al.* (2023), a well performing organization has a high flow of customers thus it is forced to have other branches to take the services/products closer to the customers. In the same, a good performing university would open new campuses to meet the growing number of students. AliReza *et al.* (2019) found that

in order for universities to attain new students and retain current students they should aim to enhance student satisfaction and reduce student dissatisfaction. This can only be achieved if all services that are related to academic life such as implicit services, explicit services and physical services are delivered to a suitable standard.

The institution enjoys a good public image had a mean of 4.03 and SD of 1.042. These findings are in agreement with Maore (2020) who revealed that corporate image is critical for customer satisfaction and performance of universities in Kenya. Alves and Raposo (2020) established that public image plays a critical role in influencing customer overall evaluation of quality and satisfaction with a brand. Tse (2019) observes that corporate image directly or indirectly influences consumer selection process hence affecting the level of satisfaction with the brand.

Regarding business processes of the university, productivity of lecturers is much higher than the industry average had the highest mean of 4.03 and SD of .964. These findings disagree with Ogolla (2020) who concluded that in some corporations, productivity of employees is much higher than industry average. According to Baquero (2022), employees are most likely to leave an organization when they realize that the performance is declining, hence, they are not assured of their job security. According to Apoi and Latip (2019), one of the major links between firm leadership and its performance is employee productivity and commitment. The scholars contend that with appropriate leadership, the best talents will be retained and this increases their productivity through which the firm performance is stirred.

The operational efficiency of this institution has increased over the last three years had a mean of 3.89 and SD of 1.057. This study is in line with Hanna and Katja (2021) who found that effective internal business processes also improve operational efficiency, organization risk management, process discipline, and increases alignment of corporate shared services to enhance customers' services leading to customer satisfaction and to improved corporation performance.

This institution is generally innovative had a mean of 3.90 and SD of .964. These findings agree with Milelu (2019) who revealed that a greater number of respondents perceived their leaders as having the ability to enhance innovativeness among employees, enable employees to exceed expectations and assisted employees going through personal change. Mbuchi (2019) concluded that the applicability of innovation in driving university's performance is critical. White and Glickman (2020) further added that technology can drive innovations in operations and offer opportunities for the delivery of academic programs in novel ways. The flexibility brought about by new technologies enables gains in many aspects of an institution's operations, provided that it is willing and able to adopt the technologies.

With respect to employee satisfaction, the university's top managers promote and support innovative ideas, experimentation and creative processes had a mean of 4.10 and SD of 1.156. These findings concur with Prantasari (2022) who noted that in the current economic environment, universities require creative and innovative employees who can take initiative, embrace change, stimulate innovation and cope with high uncertainty in the market. Nkolimwa (2023) revealed that the management of Tanzanian public learning institutions support innovation and creativity among their employees and this has a positive influence on organizational performance.

Lecturers' trust in leadership is high had a mean of 4.124 and SD of 1.060. The findings are in line with Juma and Ndisya's study (2019) which established that increase in employees' trust in their leaders had a significant increase in employee performance. Kubai (2023) found that trust in leadership motivates the university employees to work harder and this has a positive influence on the performance of the private universities in Kenya. This means that because employees trust their leaders, they are less resistant, there is less conflict as employees take their leaders advice and therefore perform tasks as expected.

In the institution, they often organize internal training of their lecturers had a mean of 3.72 ad SD of 1.096. These findings concur with Ogolla (2020) who found that organization includes employee training and corporate cultural attitudes related to both individual and corporate self-improvement thus increasing the performance of the firm. In addition, Hayes (2019) found that training and capacity building are important factors in the business world today because they improve efficiency and effectiveness of both employees and the organization. He also added that staff performance depends on diverse issues including skills to perform relevant tasks. Anwar *et al.* (2019) further added that training can allow employees to be more productive.

On enrollment, enrolment of students affects the performance of this university had the highest mean of 4.31 and SD of .832. The findings agree with Kubai (2023) who found that due to decreased enrolment levels, private universities also reduce the number of new courses offered an indication of declining performance. Mukhaji, Ndiku and Obaki (2018) revealed that the establishment of more universities, and campuses and diversification

of programs have made higher education more accessible thus leading to increase in enrolment thus having an effect on the performance.

The number of students enrolling in the university has increased in the last 5 years had a mean of 4.20 and SD of .898. Kubai (2023) found that the level of enrolment is correlated with the number of courses where the universities with the lowest number of courses have the lowest level of enrolment. Mukhaji *et al.* (2018) found that in Maseno university, The findings of the study showed that enrolments, especially under Module II, are on a steady rise and this led to improved performance.

Overall, in performance of the private universities, the average mean was 4.04 and SD of 1.009. This means that majority of the lecturers agreed that customer satisfaction, business processes, employee satisfaction and enrolment are important factors of performance in the universities. These findings concur with Söderlind and Geschwind (2019) who explained that universities utilize diverse criteria for measuring performance. These include student enrollment figures, rankings, research accomplishments, publications, grant acquisitions, graduation rates, and the reputation of their faculty members (Söderlind & Geschwind, 2019; Ortagus *et al.*, 2020). Al Khajeh (2018) further added that customer retention, productivity, profitability, ability to become accustomed to the ever-varying environment, employee satisfaction, growth and social responsibility are used to measure performance. Other indicators include: effectiveness, efficiency, quality, and company image (Waganjo, Mukulu & Kahiri, 2017).

6.3.1 Responses from Interviews

One of the Deans of Academic Affairs stated that

"We encourage employee satisfaction recognizing employees regularly and valuing them, supporting their mental health and providing better benefits to ensure they are content. We also offer competitive pay in line with industry standards and the present cost of living. This is important as employee satisfaction established whether the employees are satisfied or not as satisfied employees are happier workers which in turn means quality work and good performance."

Another Dean noted that when an organization has high quality human capital, they perform better, and deliver higher and more consistent returns to stakeholders. The satisfied employees are also more likely to be creative and come up with breakthroughs that allow the university to grow and change positively with the changing market conditions and time.

The Deans of Affairs noted that they use both monetary and non-monetary incentives to motivate their employees. They noted that the monetary incentives include commissions and bonuses for the good work done. The non-monetary incentives include certificates, gift vouchers, trophies, letters of appreciation, promotions, participation in decision -making, training, representing the universities at public and training forums, financial rewards to motivate their employees, growth opportunities, and special assignments. One of the Deans of Academic Affairs stated that

"More often than not, attractive remuneration packages are offered to entice best talents to a position, ensuring they perform at maximum efficacy, and retain talented employees within the organization while commission-based remuneration are extended to encourage employees to meet organizational targets."

The Deans of Academic Affairs pointed out that they create a conducive working environment that involves good university culture, management styles and human resource policies such as reward management, talent management, performance management and human resource planning. This is because employees want to feel that their talents and skills enables them to develop in a certain organization through growth opportunities and the absence of this leads to poor performance and dissatisfaction.

The internal business processes in the university include quick customer service and responding to enquiries on time, financial management, customer relationship management, supply chain management, knowledge management, inventory management employee onboarding, capacity utilization using technology, and internal communication.

The financial returns/Assets challenge the organization faces were highlighted a high taxation that has made assets very expensive, high maintenance costs, and high cost of living leading to high cost of expenditures such as electricity and water bills increasing. Monitoring of cash flow has also become a challenge as there have been delayed customer payments, and seasonal variations in enrollment, sales and costs, tax compliance as well as debt management.

6.4 Intellectual Stimulation and Organizational Performance

The researcher sought to determine the influence of intellectual stimulation on performance of private universities in Kenya. Intellectual stimulation has characteristics that are helpful and can be copied by management and lecturers of private universities thus increasing performance. This can be achieved through stimulating creativity, promoting intelligence, delegating responsibility, and critical thinking.

6.4.1 Responses on the Use of Intellectual Stimulation and Organizational Performance

The lecturers were required to indicate their level of agreement on intellectual stimulation and its influence of performance of private universities in Kenya Table 3 shows the lecturer's responses on intellectual stimulation and performance. A five-point likert scale was used: where; 1= Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree.

Table 3: Responses on Intellectual Stimulation and Performance of Private Universities

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)	f (%)
Top leadership suggests new innovative ways to complete assignments	9 3.9	27 11.7	31 13.4	94 40.7	70 30.3
Top leadership gets others to look at problems from many different angles	12 5.2	23 10.0	51 22.1	88 38.1	57 24.7
Differing perspectives are sought when solving problems in the university	15 6.5	20 8.7	26 11.3	88 38.1	82 35.5
Top leadership re-examines critical assumptions to question whether they are appropriate in the university	12 5.2	6 2.6	19 8.2	118 51.1	76 32.9
Leaders in our organization believe that employees have enough potential to achieve organizational goals	9 3.9	14 6.1	18 7.8	124 53.7	66 28.6

The Table 3 reveals that majority of the lecturers agree that: leaders in our organization believe that employees have enough potential to achieve organizational goals (53.7%) while 28.6% strongly agreed. The findings are in agreement with Talebloo *et al.* (2019) who pointed out that as a transformational leader, the leaders influence the employees who in turn challenge the followers intellectually by inspiring them to work hard. Kinara *et al.* (2023) argues that engaging employees in decision making enhances performance as it makes employees feel more committed to the goals and objectives which they consider themselves as being part of. The employees feel more motivated to take part in tasks and assignments that they themselves feel like they had created rather than as those being pushed down to them by their leaders. (Agyemang *et al.*, 2019).

The findings reveal that 51.1% of the lecturers agreed that top leadership re-examines critical assumptions to question whether they are appropriate in the university while 32.9% strongly agreed and 8.2% were neutral. The findings are in line with Ogola *et al.* (2017) who posited that intellectual stimulation leaders stimulate permanent re-examination of the existent assumptions, stimulate change in the way of thinking about problems, and plead the use of analogy and metaphor. By constantly searching for new knowledge, intellectual stimulation transformational leaders constantly teach, illustrate, but also promote and get new and creative ideas for solving problems from all organizational members (Anjali & Anand, 2020).

Majority of the lecturers agreed that top leadership suggests new innovative ways to complete assignments (40.7%), while 30.3% strongly agreed and 11.7% disagreed. The findings support Milelu (2019) who found that leaders as having the ability to enhance innovativeness among employees, enable employees to exceed expectations and assisted employees going through personal change. transformational leaders encourage followers to transform positively and make instant changes by applying creativity and innovation (Sandiasa, 2019). The study findings also agree with that of Feng, Huang and Zhang (2022) who observed that to spur innovation at the leadership level, leaders must be proactive by developing adequate plans and schedules for generation and implementation of new ideas. CEO's leadership can enhance the senior management's tendency to contribute to the organization's creative process by openly sharing their knowledge with their peers.

Furthermore, the findings revealed that 38.1% of the lecturers agreed that top leadership gets others to look at problems from many different angles (38.1%) while 24.7% strongly agreed, 22.1% were neutral and 10.0% disagreed. The findings are in agreement with Bellé (2021) who agreed that the new ways of thinking are about the followers' beliefs and values. Studies by Bell and Menguc (2020) and Liu (2019) postulate that intellectual stimulation emphasizes positive practices by the leaders like being creative when dealing issue. The leader encourages the followers to think critically toward performance. Similarly, Lai *et al.* (2020) posited that transformational leaders encourage members to effectively use their intelligence or experience, view problems from various angles, master the problem-solving process, and determine the best solution to improve efficiency. This implies that leaders can offer enough resources (e.g., physical, emotional, or psychological) to members to try new solutions to task-related problems.

Majority of the lecturers agreed that differing perspectives are sought when solving problems in the university (38.1%) while 35.5% strongly agreed and 8.7% disagreed. The findings concur with a study by Liu (2019) who postulates this dimension helps the followers to have new ways of thinking to enable the organization grow. Milelu (2019) revealed that ability to direct employees to find solutions to problems, the recognition of employees' contributions to the organization and the leaders' support of critical thinking among employees have a significant impact on performance of the institution. Similarly, Nyakomitta *et al.* (2021) affirmed that transformational leaders encourage employees to be problem solvers by giving them an opportunity to handle challenging tasks, and challenges them to take calculated risks.

The Deans of Affairs stated that they pay close attention to the needs and desires of the employees and that they respond to those needs and desires for growth by encouraging them to pursue what they love. They also conduct regular training and development seminars, offer coaching and mentorship programs to the staff. They also offer support and advice to the employees whenever necessary as this helps in helping them gain confidence. They further noted that it is important for leaders to be open-minded as they intellectually influence the employees. Therefore, they will challenge the employees who will in turn challenge themselves more and with this cognitive thinking, people are able to gain more knowledge.

6.5 Inferential Statistical Analysis

The null hypothesis: there is no significant relationship between intellectual stimulation and organizational performance in private universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

6.5.1 Correlation Analysis

Correlational analysis using Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to test the relationship between intellectual stimulation and performance of private universities. The results of the correlation are presented in the Table 4.

Table 4: Correlation Analysis for Intellectual Stimulation and Performance of Private Universities

		Performance	Intellectual Stimulation
Performance	Pearson Correlation	1	.614**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	231	231
Intellectual Stimulation	Pearson Correlation	.614**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	231	231

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

The Table 4 shows that the computed correlation of Intellectual Stimulation and performance was 0.614 ($p=0.000$). This indicates that performance as the dependent variable had a positive and significant relationship with Intellectual Stimulation. Therefore, this implies that as Intellectual Stimulation in transformational leadership increases, the performance of private universities in Kenya also increases. The findings agree with Juma and Ndisya's (2019) study on the influence of transformational leadership on organizational performance, a case study of Safaricom limited found a positive influence between intellectual stimulation and organizational performance. Ngunyi and Ndurumo (2019) posited that intellectual stimulation positively influenced organizational performance hence defining the company's effectiveness. However, Kinara *et al.* (2023) found that intellectual stimulation did not have a statistically significant influence on the outcome of organizational performance of South Eastern Kenya Economic Bloc. Murage (2022) also found that intellectual stimulation has

no significant effect on performance of public universities in Kenya. In summary, the lecturers agreed that when intellectual stimulation increases, the performance of the private universities increases too.

3.4.2 Regression Analysis

Regression analysis was done to determine the relationship between the indicators of intellectual stimulation and performance of private universities at an alpha value of 0.05 significance level.

Table 5: Model Summary for Intellectual Stimulation and Organizational Performance

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.499	.389	.375	6.62698

a. Predictors: (Constant), Intellectual Stimulation

As presented in Table 5, the degree to which Intellectual Stimulation influences performance was statistically significant, $R^2 = 0.389$, $F(1, 229) = 22.460$, $p\text{-value} < 0.05$. This shows that 38.9% of performance can be attributed to Intellectual Stimulation while the remaining 61.1% can be attributed to other factors not included in the study and the error term. Table 6 shows the regression ANOVA output. The regression ANOVA determines if the model used is the best to answer the study hypothesis.

Table 6: ANOVA Table for Intellectual Stimulation and Organizational Performance

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	986.385	1	986.385	22.460	.000 ^b
	Residual	10056.975	229	43.917		
	Total	11043.359	230			

a. Dependent Variable: Performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Intellectual Stimulation

As presented in Table 6, intellectual stimulation had a significant influence on performance, $F(1, 229) = 104.144$, $p\text{-value} < 0.05$. This shows that the regression model used was suitable for predicting the outcome variable on how intellectual stimulation influences performance. The third table 4.7 shows the regression coefficient output of intellectual stimulation on performance advantage. The coefficient indicates the Beta values of the parameters.

Table 7: Regression Coefficients Table for intellectual stimulation and Organizational Performance

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	33.916	2.296		14.769	.000
Intellectual Stimulation	.552	.116	.614	4.739	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Performance

As presented in Table 7, intellectual stimulation had a significant influence on performance ($\beta = .552$, $t = 4.739$, $p < .05$). This shows that a unit change in intellectual stimulation will affect performance by .552. Thus, the study rejected the null hypothesis, that there is no significant relationship between intellectual stimulation and organizational performance in private universities in Nairobi County and accepted the alternative hypothesis that there is significant relationship between intellectual stimulation and organizational performance in private universities in Nairobi County.

Similar views were expressed by Ogola et al. (2017) who found that intellectual stimulation had a positive proportion of variance in performance ($\beta = .722$, $t(194) = 14.444$, $p < .000$). A study by Samuel (2020) noted that intellectual stimulation dimension and academic achievement positively correlated ($1.000 = 0.202$) while Nyakomitta et al. (2021) revealed that intellectual stimulation affected the performance of commercial banks in Kenya. However, in Uganda, a study by Komakech et al. (2021) revealed that intellectual stimulation had a negative and insignificant effect on employee performance. The findings disagree with a study conducted in Bomet County by Kitur et al. (2020) which found that intellectual stimulation had no statistical significant relationship with students' academic performance in KCSE results.

7. Conclusion And Recommendation

7.1 Conclusion

Transformational leadership is a process in which leaders and followers help each other to advance to a higher level of morale and motivation, creating significant changes in the lives of people and organizations. The purpose of the study was to investigate the influence of intellectual stimulation style on organization performance in private universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya. The main reason was to establish how intellectual stimulation influences organizational performance in private universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya.

Intellectual stimulation was seen to be used by private universities in Nairobi County as it directly contributed to their performance. The findings from the lecturers and Deans of Academic Affairs imply that intellectual stimulation is very crucial in attaining performance in private universities. University administrators who are the key factors provide the most valuable leadership by improving performance and employee commitment. Therefore, the leaders should stimulate creativity, promote intelligence, delegate responsibility, and encourage critical thinking among their employees. The indicators of intellectual stimulation include ($\beta = .552$ $t = 4.739$, $p < .05$). the null hypothesis states that "There is no significant relationship between intellectual stimulation and organizational performance in private universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya" was rejected at $p < 0.05$ hence the model was significant there is no significant influence of intellectual stimulation to organizational performance in private universities in Kenya.

7.2 Recommendations

The objective of the study was to investigate the relationship between intellectual stimulation and organizational performance in private universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya. Hypothesis that was tested was that there was no significant relationship between intellectual stimulation and organizational performance in private universities in Nairobi City County, Kenya. From the findings of the study on intellectual stimulation and organizational performance in private universities, the study concludes that there is a positive and significant relationship between intellectual stimulation and organizational performance in private universities. Observed results further indicated that intellectual stimulation as an element of transformational leadership was practiced in private universities in Kenya thus demonstrating a high level of relationship between intellectual stimulation and organizational performance in the private universities.

Therefore, the study recommends that the management of private universities ought to stimulate their employees intellectually, in that they talk about their needs to be accomplished; as well as ensuring that the universities have all the necessary facilities and resources to help in learning and improving their performance. It is important for the Deans of Academic Affairs to attend seminars and trainings in transformational leadership so that they can be well versed with transformational leadership skills, responsibilities and characteristics. When the Deans of Academic Affairs attend these training on capacity building, they get the quality transformational leadership skills. The study further recommends that the private universities' management should identify and hire leaders who exude confidence and are able to motivate confidence among the lecturers. Additionally, the leaders in private universities should empower employees by engaging them in decision making, and encouraging them to think critically if they expect to realize higher performance of their respective institutions.

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