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Relationship between Self-Leadership and Academic Performance of Students: Empirical Evidence from Public Sector Universities in AJ&K

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ABSTRACT

The study investigates the relationship between self-leadership and the academic performance of students. The research was quantitative in nature, utilizing a survey method. The study was carried out in various departments of the Women University of AJK Bagh, with 326 students selected as the sample through simple random sampling. A close-ended questionnaire was adopted to collect data from the selected students. After data collection, statistical technique Pearson correlation was employed for analysis. The findings revealed a strong positive correlation between self-leadership and academic performance of university students. The study's implications suggest integrating self-leadership concepts and activities across different academic disciplines to underscore its significance and provide practical application opportunities for students. By emphasizing self-leadership, educational institutions can potentially enhance students' motivation and performance, ultimately contributing to their overall success.

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1. Introduction

The concept of self-leadership has gained prominence in the study of leadership and management. It involves leading oneself to develop essential skills and qualities to achieve personal and organizational goals (Neck, 2006). Self-leadership is characterized by a set of definite policies for one's own improvement Al-Jammal and Ghamrawi (2015) and emphasizes self-control, self-belief, and self-awareness (Sydänmaanlakka, 2005). Self-leadership is often described as "the method of inducing oneself" to acquire the necessary management and personality traits to fulfill tasks and responsibilities (Neck, 2006). It consists of three fundamental components: self-belief, self-awareness, and reflective capacity (Sydänmaanlakka, 2005). These elements play a crucial role in guiding individuals towards self-improvement and personal growth (Tuovinen, 2010). Numerous studies have shown the positive outcomes of self-leadership. It is associated with improved psychological functioning, communication, working relationships, quality control, reduced work-related stress, and higher job satisfaction among corporate employees (Dolbier, Soderstrom, & Steinhardt, 2001). Self-leadership is also linked to better health, increased toughness, a less stressful atmosphere, and decreased interpersonal distrust among college students (Dolbier et al., 2001). As workplaces evolve, the demand for self-leadership abilities in employees has increased. The shift from rigid employer-employee relationships to cooperative work environments has necessitated the development of strong work habits and personal responsibility (Salminen-Tuomaala, 2009). Future managers are expected to possess self-leadership skills, quick adaptability, and self-awareness to effectively navigate unforeseen challenges (Cranmer, Goldman, & Houghton, 2019; Sydänmaanlakka, 2005). Furthermore, it has been widely argued that a leader's approach to self-initiative, given the challenging balancing act of self-management, serves as a critical predictor of success or failure (DÖNER & EFEOĞLU, 2023).

Existing leadership research emphasizes self-leadership as a crucial enabler of effective organizational management, with individual leadership qualities being a prerequisite for successful organizations (Alnakhli, Singh, Agnihotri, & Itani, 2020). The level of achievement in educational goals, both short-term and long-term, for a student, school, or both, is measured by academic performance, which is assessed through continuous evaluation or cumulative grade point average (Narad & Abdullah, 2016). Aslani and Hozoori (2016) propose that the hardest person to lead is oneself, and if you can't lead yourself, it's difficult to lead others. Many circumstances that might result in arguments will arise if the mind is not under control. It is easy to lead people if one has gained control of one's own mental stability through effective self-leadership. Algahtani (2023) investigated how flipped classes affected female students' study habits and capacity for self-directed learning. Numerous studies have shown that self-leadership has a definite, favorable impact on performance, efficacy, and self-confidence. Research indicates that students with high self-efficacy perform better in uncertain situations, and when they exhibit self-leadership in online learning, their self-efficacy and performance satisfaction increase (Afridi, Ali, & Zahid, 2023). Previous studies imply that self-leadership is a crucial component for individuals in academic and working situations to perform effectively (Nel & Van Zyl, 2015). In today's dynamic, competitive, and ever-changing environment, this concept offers potential for individuals. In literature, self-leadership is described as a process by which individuals successfully influence themselves to attain the self-motivation and self-direction required to complete their jobs. Previous studies imply that self-leadership is a crucial component for persons in academia and in working situations to function effectively (Nel & Van Zyl, 2015).

In this constantly competitive, and ever-changing world, this approach has the ability to help students enhance their performances. Existing research suggests that self-leadership is favorably associated with work-related performance outcomes (Panagopoulos & Ogilvie, 2015). Nevertheless, the connection between self-leadership and educational results remains an underexplored research domain. Therefore, this study aims to examine the correlation between self-leadership and the academic performance of university students in Bagh, Azad Kashmir.

2. Literature Review

The principles of self-leadership have been extensively discussed in the existing literature, as it significantly impacts the extent to which organizations achieve their defined goals (Katewa, 2016). Numerous studies have demonstrated that developing exceptional leadership skills can be accomplished through self-leadership (Katewa, 2016). In essence, "leadership" refers to the individual responsible for decision-making. Furthermore, it has been widely argued that a leader's approach to self-initiative, given the challenging balancing act of self-management, serves as a critical predictor of success or failure (Stewart, Courtright, & Manz, 2011). Hence, a leader's ability to effectively manage oneself reveals much about their managerial capabilities, just as their leadership style reflects their unique leadership traits. Existing leadership research emphasizes self-leadership as a crucial enabler of effective organizational management, with individual leadership qualities being a prerequisite for successful organizations (Alnakhli et al., 2020). Goldsby, Goldsby, Neck, Neck, and Mathews (2021) argue that the lack of self-leadership among employees is the root cause of stress and burnout in the workforce. Establishing a culture of self-leadership is a part of the solution. This suggests that the challenges faced by present-day leaders cannot be resolved through training alone. Effective leadership heavily relies on self-leadership to meet the demands of modern leadership. This essay delves into the literature on self-leadership and provides insights into the philosophies and practices of self-leadership values and practices demonstrated by contemporary leaders. Good self-leadership is undoubtedly one of the most significant components of effective management, and it plays a vital role in addressing the world's problems today (Squires, 2018).

Neck (2006) focused on the self-authority of Danish administration consulting firms, emphasizing the importance of self-initiative, self-discipline, and belief to effectively manage internal and external situations for improved outcomes. Stewart, Courtright, and Manz (2019) defines self-leadership as a holistic self-influence process, encompassing driving oneself to perform tasks that are intrinsically compelling or necessary but not intrinsically motivating. This challenges traditional beliefs in hierarchical psychology and authoritative styles of acting. Several researchers have defined self-leadership, Devece, Palacios & Ribeiro-Navarrete

(2019). defining it as the intentional shaping of one's ideas, attitudes, and behavior in service of predetermined goals. Kotzé (2018) assert that self-leadership plays a more potent role than mindfulness in predicting psychological capital and mediating the devotion aspect of professional engagement. ud din Khan, Li, Chughtai, Mushtaq, and Zeng (2023) emphasize that self-leadership leads to shared leadership and empowering leadership, as individuals motivate and influence themselves to engage in desirable behaviors and maximize their skills. According to (Cranmer et al., 2019) self-leadership revolves around self-awareness and guidelines that inspire individuals to give their best effort. Daud (2020) highlights self-administration as a cyclical element that affects inspiration in virtual work structures and influences the relationship between groundbreaking administration and representational inspiration. Superior self-leadership helps leaders distinguish themselves from other leadership members (Cristofaro, Neck, Giardino, & Neck, 2022). While self-leadership is crucial, recent research seems to emphasize self-management more strongly than self-leadership (Marques, 2017). Many scholars agree that prioritizing self-management leads to hierarchical success. Ugoani (2021) defined that stresses the significance of self-management by urging people to identify their values and strengths to build on positive aspects of their lives rather than focusing solely on eliminating negative aspects. In conclusion, self-leadership remains a vital aspect of effective leadership and has garnered substantial attention in organizational studies. Its impact on leadership effectiveness, motivation, and organizational success continues to be a subject of ongoing research and exploration.

2.1. Objectives of the Study

The current study was conducted at Women University AJK Bagh to achieve the following objectives.

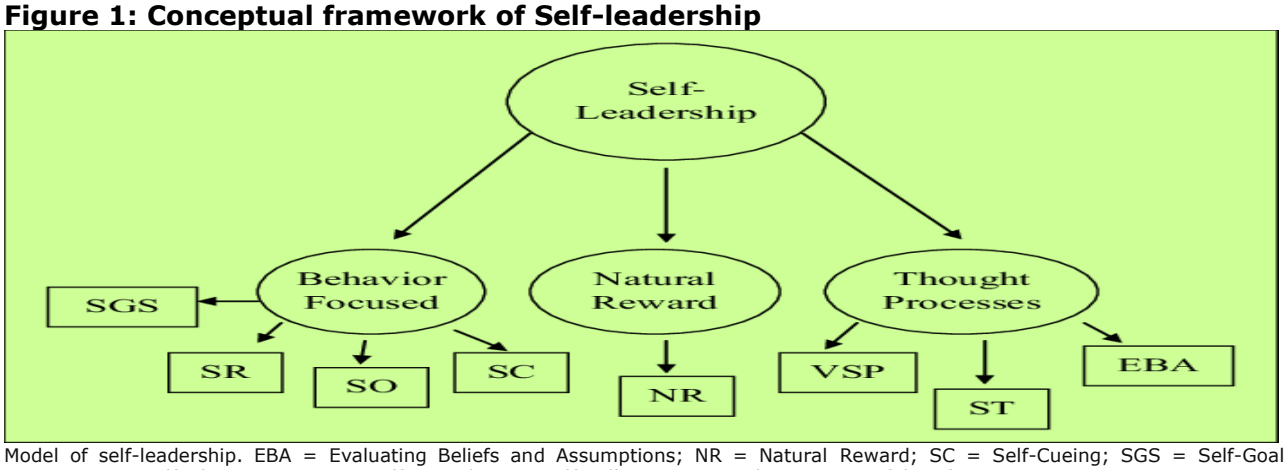
1. To find out the relationship between Self-leadership and academic performance of students.
2. To investigate the relationship between Sub Constructs of Self Leadership and Academic Performance of Students.

2.2. Research Hypothesis

Hypothesis 1 (H01): There is no significant relationship between self-leadership and academic performance of university students.

Hypothesis 2 (H02): There is no significant relationship between the sub-constructs of self-leadership and academic performance of university students.

Figure 1: Conceptual framework of Self-leadership



Model of self-leadership. EBA = Evaluating Beliefs and Assumptions; NR = Natural Reward; SC = Self-Cueing; SGS = Self-Goal Setting; SO = Self-Observation; SR = SelfReward; ST = Self-Talk; VSP = Visualizing Successful Performance

3. Methods and Materials

The research was quantitative in nature, utilizing a survey method. The study was carried out in various departments of the Women University of AJK Bagh. The population of the study includes all the faculties of social sciences at the Women's University of AJK Bagh. Specifically, there are 636 students in the social sciences faculty, comprising 111 Master's students and 525 B.S. students.

Table 1: Sample of the Study

Name Of The Departments	M.A	B.S	Total	Sample Size 50% From Each Departments
EDU	47	234	281	140
ENG	24	119	143	72
ECO	24	61	85	42
IR	16	66	82	41
BBA		62	62	31
Total	111	525	636	326

3.1. Instrument

Self Leadership Questionnaire (ASLQ) originally developed by Houghton, Dawley, and DiLiello (2012) was utilized to assess self-leadership ability of the students. The questionnaire items were constructed using the Likert Scale. The self-leadership construct comprises six sub-constructs.

3.2. Reliability of Instrument

40 students selected randomly from all the 5 departments of the faculty of Social Sciences 8 from each department. The responses of these 40 students were analyzed. The Cronbach's Alpha Value was .748 which shows that the instrument was internally consistant.

Table 2: Reliability Statistics

Cronbach' Alpha	No of students
.748	40

4. Findings

Descriptive Statistics

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation of the Study Variables

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
CGPA	326	1.00	3.00	1.52	.54
Self Leadership	326	17.00	45.00	34.39	5.69
Self Goal Setting	326	2.00	10.00	7.66	1.80
Self Observation	326	1.00	5.00	3.84	1.04
Visualizing successful performance	326	2.00	10.00	7.79	1.74
Self Reward	326	1.00	5.00	3.74	.99
Evaluating beliefs and assumptions	326	2.00	10.00	7.62	1.82
Self Talk	326	1.00	5.00	3.71	1.12

Table 3 showed descriptive statistics for the CGPA and Self Leadership by providing the maximum, minimum, standard deviation and Mean for the constructs under study. Similarly our main variable of interest is Self Leadership the Index for the students leadership attributes that we developed in this study is (M=34.39, SD=5.69),while other variables respectively Visualizing successful performance (M=7.79, SD=1.74), for Self Goal Setting (M=7.66, SD=1.80), for Evaluating Beliefs and Assumptions (M=7.62, SD=1.82), for the variable Self Observation (M=3.84, SD=1.04), for variable Self Reward (M=3.74, SD=.99), for variable Self Talk (M=3.71, SD=1.12) and the lowest value was found for the variable CGPA (M=1.52, SD=.54).

Table 4: Pearson's Correlation Coefficient among Self Leadership and Academic Performance of Students

Variables	M	SD	R	P
CGPA	1.5215	.54165		
Self Leadership	34.3926	5.69635	.789	.000

p=.01

The results in table 4 showed that there is a positive strong relationship (r=.789, p<.01) between the studentsself leadership and their CGPA obtained by them. Thus the Null Hypothesis is rejected at 1% Level of Significance.

In Table 5 the association between the Sub Constructs of Self Leadership and Academic Performance was examined. The correlation coefficient ($r = .552$, $n = 323$, $p < .05$) for Self Goal Setting indicates a significant and positive relationship with CGPA. Similarly, the correlation coefficient ($r = .592$, $n = 323$, $p < .05$) suggests a positive link between self-report

and grade point average.Visualizing Successful Performance also shows a positive association with CGPA, as indicated by the correlation coefficient ($r = .610$, $n = 323$, $p < .05$) in the statistics. Furthermore, a positive relationship is found among self-reward and CGPA, with a correlation coefficient ($r = .583$, $n = 323$, $p < .05$).

Table 5: Correlation Coefficients between Sub Constructs of Self Leadership

Variables	M	SD	R	p
Academic Performance (CGPA)	1.52	.54		
Self Leadership	34.39	5.69		
Self Goal Setting	7.66	1.80	.552	.000
Self Observation	3.84	1.04	.592	.000
Visualizing successful performance	7.79	1.74	.610	.001
Self Reward	3.74	.99	.583	.000
Evaluating beliefs and assumptions	7.62	1.82	.568	.000
Self Talk	3.71	1.12	.527	.000

The association between Evaluating Beliefs and Assumptions and CGPA is also positive, with a correlation coefficient ($r = .568$, $n = 323$, $p < .05$). Additionally, the correlation coefficient ($r = .527$, $n = 323$, $p < .05$) implies that there is a favorable relationship between self-talk and CGPA.The findings demonstrate a favorable association between student performance outcomes and self-leadership components, including self-goal setting, self-talk, self-observation, self-rewarding, and visualizing successful performance.

5. Discussion

The study's results offer valuable insights into the correlation between self-leadership and academic performance among university students. The descriptive statistics revealed that students displayed relatively high levels of self-leadership attributes, indicating that they were proactive in setting goals, evaluating their beliefs, and engaging in positive self-talk and self-rewarding behaviors (Houghton et al., 2012). Moreover, the significant positive correlation between self-leadership and CGPA indicates that students with higher self-leadership abilities tend to perform better academicall. These results align with prior research on the subject. Numerous studies have underscored the significance of self-leadership across diverse domains, with a particular emphasis on academic contexts. The positive association between self-leadership and academic performance is supported by research that suggests individuals with strong self-leadership skills are ambitious and face challenges, and take initiative to achieve their objectives (Norris, 2008).

Furthermore, previous research has also emphasized the role of self-regulation and self-control in academic success. Self-leadership involves elements of self-regulation, such as self-goal setting and self-reward, which can enhance students' ability to manage their time effectively, stay focused, and maintain a positive attitude towards their studies (Bandura, 2000). This can contribute to improved study habits, increased engagement in coursework, and better performance in examinations.The study's focus on specific sub-constructs of self-leadershipas envisioning successful outcomes and assessing beliefs and assumptions, aligns with existing literature that highlights the importance of self-efficacy and positive self-beliefs in academic achievement (Baumeister, Campbell, Krueger, & Vohs, 2003). Visualizing successful performance allows students to mentally rehearse their success, boosting their confidence and motivation to perform well. Similarly, evaluating beliefs and assumptions can help students identify and challenge negative thought patterns, which may otherwise hinder their academic progress.In conclusion, the study's findings support the positive correlation between self-leadership and academic achievement among university students. Students with higher levels of self-leadership attributes, including self-goal setting, self-reward, and positive self-talk, tend to achieve better academic outcomes. These results are consistent with previous research on the topic and underscore the importance of fostering self-leadership skills in educational settings to promote student success (Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2013).

6. Conclusion

The study investigates the relationship between self-leadership and the academic performance of students. The research was quantitative in nature, utilizing a survey method. The study was carried out in various departments of the Women University of AJK Bagh, with

326 students selected as the sample through simple random sampling.The results of the study revealed a strong positive relationship between students' Self Leadership and their academic achievement. This significant correlation suggests that students with higher self-leadership attributes tend to achieve better academic performance. Moreover, the analysis of the Sub Constructs of Self Leadership and Academic Performance showed significant positive associations.

6.1. Recommendations

On the basis of the findings following were the recommendations of the study

- Educational institutes incorporate self-leadership development programs into the institution's curriculum. These programs can be offered as workshops, training sessions, or courses specifically designed to enhance self-leadership skills.
- It is recommended to educational institutes that they should integrate self-leadership concepts and activities across different academic disciplines to emphasize its importance and provide practical application opportunities for students.
- It is recommended to Educational institutes that they should establish mentorship programs where experienced faculty members, professionals, or senior students can serve as mentors to guide and support students in developing their self-leadership skills.
- It is recommended to Educational institutes that they should foster a supportive and empowering environment by encouraging open communication, collaboration, and self-reflection among students.

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