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INFLUENCE OF SELF-AWARENESS ON PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION IN RWANDA. A CASE OF BADEA PROJECT IN BURERA DISTRICT, RWANDA

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the influence of self-awareness on project implementation, focusing on the BADEA Project in Burera District, Rwanda. Recognizing that many development projects face challenges such as delays, cost overruns, and stakeholder dissatisfaction, the study addresses the gap in understanding the role of internal leadership traits, particularly self-awareness, in improving project outcomes. Employing a quantitative research design, data were collected from 178 project implementers using a structured questionnaire, and analyzed through reliability tests, correlation analysis, regression, and ANOVA to establish relationships between self-awareness and project implementation. The findings reveal a strong, positive, and statistically significant relationship between self-awareness and project success, with self-awareness accounting for 59.3% of the variance in project implementation effectiveness. These results underscore the importance of emotional intelligence, especially self-awareness, as a key factor in enhancing leadership, team coordination, and decision-making within project environments. Based on the findings, the study recommends integrating self-awareness development into project management training and organizational capacity-building initiatives to foster improved project delivery. Furthermore, it suggests that future research should explore other emotional intelligence components and contextual factors to deepen the understanding of leadership influence on project performance. This study contributes to both academic literature and practical approaches in project management by highlighting self-awareness as a critical driver of successful project implementation in Rwanda's development context.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, Project Implementation, BADEA Project, Burera District, Rwanda, Self-Awareness, Project Management

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BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Globally, project implementation has increasingly embraced the role of emotional intelligence in determining the success or failure of development initiatives. Among the competencies of emotional intelligence, self-awareness plays a foundational role in enhancing leadership effectiveness, decision-making, and collaboration across project teams. According to Goleman (2021), self-awareness enables project leaders to regulate emotions, recognize personal strengths and weaknesses, and align their behavior with project goals. As projects become more complex and multidimensional in the 21st century, the human element, particularly the ability of individuals to manage themselves effectively, has gained prominence in ensuring successful implementation (García-Sánchez & García-Morales, 2022).

In the United States, numerous studies have demonstrated a positive correlation between self-awareness and effective project management practices, particularly in large infrastructure, IT, and social development projects. Research by Johnson et al. (2021) highlighted that project managers with high self-awareness foster open communication, reduce team conflict, and enhance task performance. Furthermore, organizations such as the Project Management Institute (PMI) have emphasized the inclusion of emotional intelligence training, especially self-awareness, in the development of project leaders to improve outcomes in diverse and multicultural environments (PMI, 2022).

China, a global leader in infrastructure development and project execution, has also acknowledged the value of psychological competencies such as self-awareness in project leadership. A study by Li and Zhang (2023) found that emotional intelligence, particularly self-awareness, significantly influenced the performance of cross-functional project teams in state-led megaprojects. These findings suggest that cultural contexts do not diminish the importance of self-awareness, but rather emphasize its universal applicability in improving decision-making and conflict resolution within project environments (Wu et al., 2022).

In Sub-Saharan Africa, the region continues to experience challenges in project execution, with many development projects suffering from cost overruns, delays, and scope creep. Scholars have begun to explore the role of leadership soft skills, including self-awareness, in addressing these issues. According to Okonkwo and Amadi (2021), project managers in the region often lack introspective capabilities, which impairs their ability to manage diverse teams and adapt to evolving project needs. Developing emotional intelligence is now being recognized as critical to overcoming the traditional bottlenecks in project execution across the continent (Ngugi & Otieno, 2022).

South Africa has made strides in integrating self-awareness into leadership development programs within both public and private sector project management. Research by Mkhize and Khumalo (2023) showed that self-aware project managers in urban housing and infrastructure projects were better at managing team morale, stakeholder expectations, and project risks. These managers demonstrated a higher capacity to align personal values with project goals, thereby fostering transparency and accountability in project execution.

In Kenya, the recognition of self-awareness as a determinant of project success is gaining momentum, particularly within devolved units and NGO-led initiatives. A study by Wanjiku and Kiptoo (2022) emphasized that project managers who exhibited strong self-awareness were more effective in engaging communities, managing stress, and promoting team cohesion. Their findings also suggested that such competencies were especially vital in projects involving public participation and service delivery, which require a nuanced understanding of interpersonal dynamics.

In Rwanda, and specifically within the BADEA-funded project in Burera District, project success is contingent not only upon financial and technical resources but also upon the human capacity of project implementers. As Rwanda continues to champion homegrown solutions and performance-based management, the role of self-aware leadership cannot be overstated. The BADEA project, aimed at improving infrastructure and community livelihoods, presents a timely case to assess how the self-awareness of project implementers

affects planning, stakeholder engagement, problem-solving, and overall project delivery. Given the scarcity of literature on this subject in Rwanda, this study seeks to fill the gap by exploring the influence of self-awareness on project implementation within the BADEA initiative.

Statement of the Problem

Despite the increasing implementation of development projects in Rwanda, many continue to experience delays, budget overruns, and stakeholder dissatisfaction. For instance, the Rwanda Public Investment Committee reported that over 35% of public infrastructure projects in 2022 failed to meet scheduled deadlines, largely due to managerial and human capacity challenges (Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning [MINECOFIN], 2023). While traditional factors such as financial constraints and technical skills are often blamed, recent research points to a critical yet underexplored element—self-awareness among project implementers—as a determinant of project success. Globally and regionally, self-awareness has been associated with better decision-making, team dynamics, and accountability (Goleman, 2021; García-Sánchez & García-Morales, 2022). However, in Rwanda, empirical evidence specifically linking self-awareness to project implementation remains limited, particularly in rural-based donor-funded initiatives such as the BADEA Project in Burera District.

Previous studies in Rwanda have mainly focused on financial management, stakeholder engagement, and resource planning as key factors influencing project success (Nsengiyumva & Uwizeye, 2021; Uwimana et al., 2023). These studies seldom examined the intrinsic human attributes—like emotional intelligence and self-awareness—that may influence how project leaders handle challenges and collaborate with stakeholders. This creates a knowledge gap, especially in light of increasing investment in development projects such as the BADEA-funded initiatives. Without understanding how self-awareness affects project outcomes, capacity-building efforts may continue to miss a vital component of sustainable implementation. Therefore, this study sought to address this gap by investigating the influence of self-awareness on the implementation of the BADEA project in Burera District, thereby contributing to both academic literature and practical solutions for improving project delivery in Rwanda.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Empirical Review - Self - Awareness and Project Implementation

Johnson et al. (2021) conducted a study in the United States to examine the role of self-awareness in enhancing project leadership effectiveness within public infrastructure projects. Using a quantitative methodology involving surveys from 128 project managers across 12 states, the study revealed that high levels of self-awareness positively influenced project outcomes, particularly in areas of team motivation, decision-making, and time management. The researchers concluded that self-awareness allowed leaders to better adapt to dynamic project conditions and to maintain team cohesion. They recommended that project-based organizations incorporate emotional intelligence training—especially self-awareness—into leadership development programs.

Li and Zhang (2023) explored the influence of self-awareness on team collaboration and risk management in state-led infrastructure megaprojects in China. Utilizing a mixed-methods approach combining interviews and survey data from 95 senior project managers, the findings showed that self-aware managers were more proactive in communicating potential project risks and in resolving internal conflicts. The study concluded that self-awareness enhances strategic foresight and adaptability, which are critical for large-scale, complex project environments. The authors recommended embedding emotional intelligence modules in engineering and project management curricula across Chinese universities.

In South Africa, Mkhize and Khumalo (2023) examined the link between project managers' self-awareness and the implementation of municipal housing projects. Through a case study design and semi-structured interviews with 30 project leaders and team members, the research found that self-aware leaders were more

effective in managing community expectations and adjusting implementation strategies based on stakeholder feedback. The study concluded that self-awareness fosters transparency, responsiveness, and trust in leadership. It recommended that public institutions invest in leadership assessment tools that measure self-awareness before deploying managers to project roles.

In the Kenyan context, Wanjiku and Kiptoo (2022) assessed how emotional intelligence, particularly self-awareness, influenced the performance of donor-funded county-level development projects. Using a descriptive survey design with data collected from 112 project staff across five counties, the study revealed that self-awareness significantly improved interpersonal communication, stakeholder engagement, and project planning. The researchers concluded that the absence of self-awareness led to poor conflict resolution and low team morale. They recommended that both NGOs and government agencies integrate continuous professional development on emotional intelligence for all project implementers.

In Rwanda, Uwimana et al. (2023) conducted a study on leadership behavior and project performance in local government projects but noted that self-awareness was rarely addressed in leadership development. Their qualitative study involving interviews with 20 project coordinators and district officials found that although technical skills were prioritized, many implementation challenges could be traced to poor emotional regulation and lack of self-awareness among leaders. The study concluded that this gap contributes to miscommunication, delays, and disengaged teams. It recommended a national policy shift toward integrating soft-skills development—especially self-awareness—into project management training programs.

Theoretical Literature on Self - Awareness

Self-awareness is a core dimension of emotional intelligence that refers to an individual's capacity to recognize and understand their emotions, motivations, and behaviors and how these influence others and decision-making processes (Goleman, 2021). It serves as the foundation for other emotional competencies such as self-regulation, empathy, and effective leadership. In project management, self-awareness allows project leaders to assess their strengths and limitations, respond calmly under pressure, and lead teams more effectively. According to Goleman (2021), individuals who are self-aware tend to make better decisions, manage time efficiently, and handle interpersonal conflict constructively—all essential for successful project implementation.

The importance of self-awareness in project leadership has gained traction globally, particularly in high-performance and knowledge-driven environments. García-Sánchez and García-Morales (2022) emphasize that self-awareness contributes to enhanced communication, trust-building, and leadership credibility, which are all necessary for coordinating complex tasks and managing diverse teams. Leaders who demonstrate self-awareness are better equipped to adapt their leadership style to suit different project contexts, improving the chances of successful delivery. Furthermore, these leaders are more responsive to feedback and capable of aligning personal goals with organizational objectives, thereby minimizing misalignment during project execution.

Research further indicates that self-awareness improves collaborative dynamics in project teams. According to Li and Zhang (2023), self-aware project managers are more likely to foster psychological safety among team members, encouraging open dialogue and creative problem-solving. This psychological safety enhances team cohesion, reduces turnover, and improves project outcomes. Additionally, team members who perceive their leaders as self-aware are more likely to exhibit organizational citizenship behavior, such as taking initiative and supporting team objectives beyond formal requirements (Meyer et al., 2022). This underscores the value of self-awareness not only in personal leadership but also in creating a productive team environment.

Despite growing global evidence, the application of self-awareness in project settings within Sub-Saharan Africa remains under-researched. In many African contexts, including Rwanda, project implementation challenges are frequently attributed to resource constraints, political interference, and poor stakeholder

engagement. However, recent scholars such as Okonkwo and Amadi (2021) argue that a lack of introspective leadership—characterized by poor self-awareness—significantly contributes to leadership failure and team dysfunction. They stress the need for leadership development programs that integrate emotional intelligence, especially self-awareness, into the training of project managers and team leads.

In the Rwandan context, limited literature exists that explicitly connects self-awareness with project performance. Most studies focus on external or structural factors such as funding, policy frameworks, and stakeholder coordination (Nsengiyumva & Uwizeye, 2021). This leaves a conceptual gap concerning the role of internal leadership traits such as self-awareness in influencing project delivery, especially in rural development projects like those funded by BADEA. Understanding this relationship could inform more comprehensive project management frameworks that incorporate soft skills into Rwanda's capacity-building and leadership development initiatives.

The Johari Window Model

The Johari Window Model, developed by Joseph Luft and Harrington Ingham in 1955, is a psychological framework used to enhance self-awareness, interpersonal relationships, and group dynamics (Luft & Ingham, 1955). The model comprises four quadrants: the open area, blind area, hidden area, and unknown area, representing aspects of self that are known or unknown to oneself and others. The core premise of the model is that expanding the open area—what both the individual and others are aware of—improves communication, trust, and performance in interpersonal and team settings (Silva & Visser, 2022). This model has become widely applicable in leadership development, team-building exercises, and project management.

In the context of self-awareness and project implementation, the Johari Window Model provides a valuable lens for examining how project leaders understand themselves and how they are perceived by their teams and stakeholders. According to Akintoye and Osei-Bryson (2021), project managers who proactively seek feedback (thus reducing their blind spot) and share relevant personal information (reducing the hidden area) build trust and cohesion in project teams. By promoting self-disclosure and feedback exchange, the model encourages leaders to become more transparent and responsive—qualities critical for navigating the uncertainties and complexities of project environments.

One of the strengths of the Johari Window Model is its simplicity and applicability across various organizational settings. It encourages self-reflection and feedback-seeking behavior, which enhances emotional intelligence and team communication (Nyambura & Wanyama, 2023). Moreover, it aligns well with contemporary leadership theories that emphasize authenticity, collaboration, and continuous improvement. Its visual nature also allows for practical workshops and interventions in project teams, helping individuals identify areas for personal and professional growth. In project settings, this can translate into fewer conflicts, clearer communication, and better role alignment among team members.

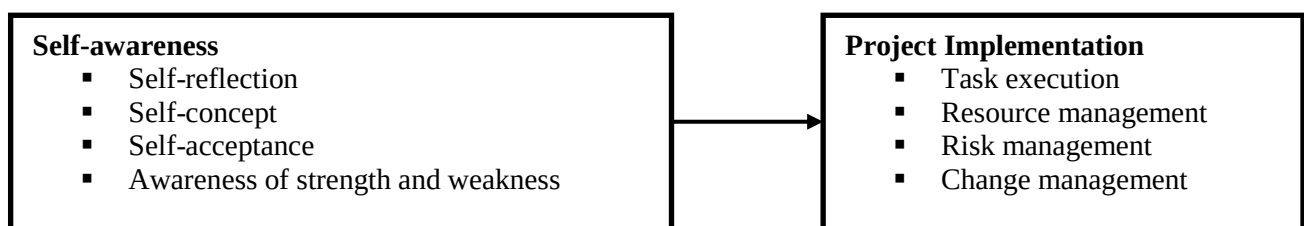
However, the model also has notable limitations. It assumes that individuals are always receptive to feedback and willing to self-disclose, which may not hold in hierarchical or culturally sensitive environments (Ndungu, 2022). In many African contexts, including Rwanda, project staff may be reluctant to share personal insights or challenge authority figures, thereby limiting the effectiveness of the feedback loop. Additionally, the model does not account for power dynamics and systemic constraints that may influence communication and openness within project teams. These weaknesses suggest that while the model is useful, its application should be adapted to the cultural and organizational context.

In relation to this study, the Johari Window Model is highly relevant in explaining how self-awareness among project implementers—particularly in the BADEA Project in Burera District—can influence communication, decision-making, and team dynamics. Project leaders with high self-awareness are likely to manage relationships more effectively, anticipate team needs, and adapt to challenges more efficiently. The model supports the conceptual basis of the study by linking self-knowledge and interpersonal behavior to project

success. It provides a theoretical framework for evaluating the degree to which project managers engage in reflective practice, invite feedback, and build open channels of communication—critical for effective project implementation.

Conceptual Framework

According to Maxwell (2018), it offers a route for researchers to conceptualize and arrange their study by providing a systematic structure that outlines the links between variables. In other words, it gives a roadmap. In addition, Bryman (2015) states that a well-developed conceptual framework improves the coherence and rigor of research by elucidating the theoretical foundations and directing the formation of hypotheses. This is accomplished through the clarification of the theoretical underpinnings. According to Bazeley and Jackson (2013), a conceptual framework is a tool that helps promote scientific inquiry because of its capacity to incorporate previously acquired knowledge and to provide direction for the researchers conducting the research. In this way, it plays a significant part in both the formulation of research questions and the interpretation of findings within the context of a more general theoretical framework.



Independent Variable

Dependent Variable

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Source: Researcher, 2025

The conceptual framework for this study is grounded in the premise that **self-awareness**, as a core dimension of emotional intelligence, significantly influences **project implementation outcomes** through its impact on leadership behavior, team coordination, and decision-making processes. Self-awareness enables project leaders to recognize their strengths, weaknesses, emotions, and interpersonal dynamics, which in turn enhances their ability to communicate effectively, manage conflicts, and motivate teams (Goleman, 2021). This improved leadership behavior contributes to timely project delivery, stakeholder satisfaction, and resource efficiency. Studies by García-Sánchez and García-Morales (2022) and Li and Zhang (2023) support the view that self-aware leaders foster psychological safety, better collaboration, and accountability within project teams. Within the context of the BADEA Project in Rwanda, this framework suggests that self-awareness acts as an internal driver that shapes how project implementers engage with challenges and opportunities throughout the project lifecycle. Therefore, the conceptual linkage between self-awareness and project implementation reflects both a personal and organizational dynamic that is essential for achieving project success.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

According to Sudman and Bradburn (2017), a research design is a blueprint outlining the steps to take in order to investigate the research problem. Over time, the researcher gathers pertinent evidence required to evaluate the researcher's theory. According to Stake (2018), this study utilized both qualitative and quantitative data. By combining qualitative and quantitative data, it was possible to enhance an evaluation by compensating for the weaknesses of each individual data type. This made sure that diverse ways of knowing are integrated to increase understanding (Byrne, 2018). In this study of emotional intelligence and project implementation used

a descriptive research design. This design gave an understandable figure of emotional intelligence on project implementation by assessing project managers and closed team members of the BADEA project on their capacity in managing emotional intelligence, resolving conflict capacity and their level of understanding feelings which contributed in timely completion project within budget. Questionnaires and interviews were used to sampled project managers and team members to collect qualitative and quantitative data.

Target Population

All of the things that are being studied together are called a population, according to Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2019). The 355 people who took part in the BADEA Project were randomly selected to form the study's sample.

Sampling Design

Sampling is picking a subset of a population to represent the whole, from among all of that population's members. The chosen sample need to encompass the majority of the population's features (Punch, 2018). In this study, used simple random sampling techniques where every individual has equal chance to be selected and ensuring that the entire population was represented. In this study was 188 peoples of BADEA project.

Sample Size

The survey included a total of 188 participants. Any empirical study intending to draw conclusions about a population from a sample must ensure an appropriate sample size (Richards & Schwartz, 2018). The cost of data collection and the necessity for sufficient statistical power were the practical factors that guided the determination of the sample size employed in this study.

In order to acquire information and draw conclusions about the universe at large, researchers often use samples, which are small groups of participants selected at random from the population of interest (Kothari, 2018). The researcher selected 355 respondents using a simple random sample procedure from the pool of BADEA Project recipients. The minimum sample size for this investigation was determined using Slovin's formula (1960). The expression for the formula is:

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(\epsilon)^2} \dots\dots\dots \text{(Equation 1)}$$

$$n = \frac{355}{1 + 355(0.05)^2} \approx 188.08 = 189$$

Sampling Technique

To ensure the data was reliable for generalization and to reduce the possibility of sample bias, the simple random sampling procedure was used to ensure that every employee had an equal chance of being selected.

Data Collection Methods

A measurement device is commonly referred to as an instrument in the field of research. The device itself is an instrument, whereas the procedure (Polonsky & Waller, 2018) involved in creating, testing, and employing the instrument is known as instrumentation. These methods are used to gather information. The instruments used to gather information are these. The research tools utilized in this study are interviews and questionnaires. The researcher's primary obligation is to ensure the reliability and validity of the instrument employed. Using suitable instruments is crucial to ensuring the validity and reliability of any research effort. It is important to critically evaluate any data collection technique to ensure it will provide the desired outcomes (Minocha, 2019).

Research materials utilized to gather information during investigations are known as sources of data (Jackson, 2018). The research utilized both primary and secondary sources to aggregate our data. The sample size is a critical element in deriving inferences about a population from a sample in any empirical inquiry (Kent, 2019). The practical factors of data collection expenses and the necessity for sufficient statistical power determine the sample size employed in a study. Data that can be retrieved by a third party rather than the end user is known

as secondary data (Maxwell, 2019). Data used in social science often comes from secondary sources such as censuses, records kept by organizations, data gathered by government agencies, and data initially gathered for other studies.

Data Collection Instruments

The process of data collection involves systematically acquiring and evaluating information on specific variables, enabling the investigator to tackle relevant issues and evaluate outcomes (Hyde, 2019). Data collection is mostly conducted through questionnaires and interviews, which are subsequently analyzed using statistical software for social sciences.

Kothari (2018) defines primary data as information that is gathered anew and for the first occasion, thereby possessing an original nature. A Self-Administered Questionnaire (SAQ) was employed. Hackley (2019) articulates that a questionnaire serves as a method for collecting information, specifically regarding the attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors of various respondents and organizations that may be influenced by a particular system or phenomenon. According to Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, and Lowe (2017), a questionnaire consists of a pre-established set of written questions that can be answered by respondents independently, without the need for oversight or clarification from the researcher. The inquiries comprised closed-ended questions, wherein respondents were restricted to selecting from the provided alternative answers.

Secondary data denotes information that has been previously collected by another entity and has been subjected to statistical analysis (Kothari, 2019). The secondary data employed during the proposal process, especially in the Literature Review, was derived from diverse secondary sources, including textbooks, dissertations, journals, periodicals, newspapers, websites, and other resources, all obtained at a low cost. Secondary data facilitates the connection between existing literature and the analysis of findings.

Administration of Research Instruments

Participants in this study, who were all very busy administrators working on the BADEA project, had their needs addressed by having the research instruments used in this study designed with them in mind. A combination of face-to-face data collection using the drop-and-pick method and email surveys was employed to ensure comprehensive participation. The drop-and-pick method involved delivering questionnaires to project managers and team members at their workplaces or homes, allowing them to complete the surveys at their convenience. This method is especially useful in settings where participants have limited time for interviews, as it provides flexibility while still ensuring that the researcher can collect the data personally (Bryman, 2021). This approach has been successfully used in similar studies to reach respondents who may otherwise be inaccessible through traditional methods (Smith et al., 2022).

For busy managers, particularly those with tight schedules, the study also utilized email surveys as a more efficient means of data collection. The email method allowed respondents to complete the survey at their convenience, thus minimizing disruption to their work routines. Furthermore, this method allowed the researcher to reach a broader audience, including those working remotely or in multiple locations, without the need for physical presence (Miller & Brown, 2020). In order to boost response rates and guarantee that the study's sample was dependable and representative, the emailed surveys were followed up with reminder emails. This set of techniques was essential for getting high-quality data while taking into account the logistical difficulties and time restrictions of the participants.

Validity and Reliability

There were two rounds of validation for the research tools utilized in this study: construct validity and content validity. Reviewers with expertise in both project management and emotional intelligence checked the materials to make sure the interview and survey questions measured the right aspects of emotional intelligence, such as self-awareness, social awareness, self-regulation, and relationship management (Hair et al., 2020). Construct validity was assessed by conducting a pilot study in a similar context, ensuring that the

instruments measured the intended constructs of emotional intelligence and project implementation. This helped refine the questions for clarity and relevance, ensuring they aligned with the research objectives. Furthermore, the instruments were adjusted based on feedback from experts and pilot respondents to ensure their applicability in the context of the BADEA project.

Table 1: KMO and Bartlett's Test

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.762
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	487.274
	df	10
	Sig.	.000

Source: **Pilot data results**, (2024)

To determine if the data are suitable for factor analysis, Table 1 provides the results of Bartlett's Test of Sphericity and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sampling Adequacy. With a KMO of 0.762, the sample appears to be appropriate for factor analysis, as values above 0.6 are usually considered acceptable (Field, 2020). The results of Bartlett's Test of Sphericity show that there is statistical significance ($p < 0.05$) with a chi-square value of 487.274 with 10 degrees of freedom. According to Tabaknick and Fidell (2021), factor analysis is justified because this outcome suggests that the correlation matrix differs from an identity matrix. The results show that the dataset is suitable for investigating the study's underlying variables and concepts.

A commonly used method for evaluating internal consistency, Cronbach's alpha coefficient, was used to assess reliability. According to Cohen et al. (2021), the items within each scale consistently measured the relevant components of emotional intelligence, since a reliability score exceeding 0.70 was considered appropriate for this study. In order to determine whether the survey instruments were reliable, this procedure was used after the pilot test. In order to ensure that the instruments produced consistent and stable results throughout time, test-retest reliability was also evaluated by giving the survey to the same group of people at two separate time points (Tavakol & Dennick, 2021). Valid and accurate statistics about the role of emotional intelligence in project implementation could be drawn from the obtained data, as the measures supported the instruments' robustness.

Table 2: Reliability Statistics

Variable	Alpha (α)	Comments
Self-Awareness	0.850	Accepted
Project Implementation	0.772	Accepted

Source: **Pilot data results**, (2024).

The findings from Table 2: Reliability Statistics indicate that both constructs—Self-Awareness and Project Implementation—demonstrate high internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha (α) values of 0.850 and 0.772, respectively. According to George and Mallery (2021), a Cronbach's alpha above 0.70 is considered acceptable, while values above 0.80 are regarded as very good, suggesting that the measurement items for each variable reliably capture the intended constructs. The alpha value of 0.850 for Self-Awareness indicates strong reliability in assessing individual self-perception and introspective capacities, while the 0.772 for Project Implementation shows acceptable reliability in measuring the effectiveness and efficiency of executing project activities. These findings affirm the suitability of the research instrument for further statistical analysis and support the validity of conclusions drawn from the data (Field, 2022). High reliability ensures that the questionnaire consistently measures perceptions across respondents, which is crucial for studies examining behavioral traits like self-awareness in relation to project outcomes.

Data Analysis

The collected data was subjected to a comprehensive cleaning process to ensure accuracy and reliability, which included the identification and management of missing values, outliers, and inconsistencies. After data cleaning, coding was utilized to classify qualitative data and assign numerical codes, thereby facilitating quantitative analysis and allowing researchers to discern patterns, themes, and relationships within the dataset (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013). The study utilized descriptive and inferential statistics for data analysis. Descriptive statistics were employed to summarize and present essential characteristics of the data, including mean, median, and standard deviation, thereby elucidating the central tendency and variability of variables pertinent to strategic positioning and project implementation (Hair et al., 2019). Furthermore, inferential statistics, including correlation analysis and regression analysis, were utilized to examine the relationships among various variables and to test hypotheses. This involved utilizing statistical software like SPSS or R to conduct regression analyses, incorporating emotional intelligence variables and project implementation metrics. Multiple regression analysis was employed to account for potential confounding variables and evaluate the distinct impact of each component of emotional intelligence on Project Implementation outcomes. The study incorporated regression analysis:

$$Y = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \mu \dots \dots \dots \text{(Equation 2)}$$

Y= Dependent variable – Project Implementation, X_1 = Self Awareness β_1 , is coefficients of X_1 , X_2 , X_3 and X_4 .

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Descriptive Results on Self-Awareness

The descriptive results on self-awareness, as presented in Table 3, provide an overview of respondents' views on the importance and presence of self-awareness in project implementation within the BADEA project. These results highlight how respondents perceive their own emotional awareness, how it impacts their project roles, and the level of importance they place on self-awareness for successful project execution.

Table 3: Respondents views on Self-Awareness

Statements	SD	D	N S	A	SA	Mean	Std Dev.
I am aware of my emotional strengths and weaknesses.	0.6%	1.1%	5.1%	42.1%	51.1%	4.42	.695
I regularly reflect on my emotional responses during project implementation.	0.6%	1.7%	1.7%	43.8%	52.2%	4.46	.673
Understanding my emotions helps me make better decisions in project tasks.	0.0%	4.5%	20.8%	34.3%	40.4%	4.11	.886
Self-awareness enhances my ability to manage project challenges effectively.	0.0%	0.0%	13.5%	39.3%	47.2%	4.34	.704
I use my self-awareness to foster better teamwork during project activities.	1.7%	1.1%	10.7%	43.8%	42.7%	4.25	.820
My self-awareness contributes to my ability to handle project stress.	0.0%	0.6%	8.4%	44.4%	46.6%	4.37	.662
I am able to manage my emotions in a way that supports successful project outcomes.	0.0%	0.0%	14.6%	45.5%	39.9%	4.25	.696
Knowing my emotional triggers helps me navigate project conflicts effectively.	1.1%	1.7%	1.1%	39.3%	56.7%	4.49	.715
I believe self-awareness plays a critical role in the success of the BADEA project.	1.1%	1.7%	7.9%	36.0%	53.4%	4.39	.796
I am able to adapt my emotional responses based on the needs of the project.	0.0%	0.0%	8.4%	35.4%	56.2%	4.48	.648
Overall mean						4.35	

Source: **Primary data, (2025).**

Table 3 provides a detailed overview of the participants' perceptions of self-awareness in the context of project implementation. The respondents generally expressed high levels of self-awareness, with the majority agreeing or strongly agreeing with statements related to understanding their emotional strengths and weaknesses, as well as reflecting on their emotional responses. The mean scores across the statements ranged from 4.11 to 4.49, indicating strong agreement with the statements about self-awareness. For instance, 51.1% of respondents strongly agreed that they are aware of their emotional strengths and weaknesses, and 52.2% strongly agreed that they regularly reflect on their emotional responses during project implementation. These findings suggest that emotional self-awareness plays a critical role in enhancing decision-making and overall project success (Goleman, 2020).

The high mean scores reflect a positive relationship between self-awareness and effective project management, as respondents believe that their ability to manage emotions contributes to better teamwork, stress management, and handling project challenges. For example, 47.2% of respondents strongly agreed that self-awareness enhances their ability to manage project challenges effectively, while 46.6% strongly agreed that self-awareness helps them handle project stress. These results align with recent studies that emphasize the importance of emotional intelligence, particularly self-awareness, in navigating the complexities of project management and fostering collaboration (Salovey & Mayer, 2021). Furthermore, the ability to adapt emotional responses based on project needs (mean = 4.48) was strongly endorsed by 56.2% of respondents, reinforcing the idea that emotional intelligence is pivotal in dynamic project environments (Mayer, Caruso & Salovey, 2020).

Respondents appear to agree on the importance of self-awareness in project implementation, as indicated by the overall mean of 4.35 for the self-awareness assertions. Bohn, Frankel, and Matthews (2021) concluded that self-awareness is an essential part of emotional intelligence, which improves project management, teamwork, and leadership. In high-stakes situations like the BADEA project, the respondents' perspectives emphasize the link between emotional intelligence and good project outcomes. These findings provide support for the idea that increasing team members' self-awareness could lead to better results in subsequent projects (Jordan & Troth, 2020).

Descriptive Results on Project Implementation

Table 4 displays the findings of the descriptive analysis of the project execution. This analysis summarizes the opinions of the respondents in Burera District regarding different parts of the BADEA project. A thorough comprehension of the respondents' views on project planning, resource management, stakeholder engagement, and outcomes can be achieved in this way. These descriptive statistics provide a solid foundation for analyzing the factors influencing project implementation and identifying areas of strength and improvement within the BADEA project.

Table 4: Respondents views on Project Implementation

Statement	SD	D	N S	A	SA	Mean	SD
Resources were effectively allocated and managed during the project implementation	0.0%	1.7%	1.7%	43.8%	52.8%	4.48	.622
Stakeholders were actively engaged in the implementation process.	0.0%	4.5%	20.8%	34.3%	40.4%	4.11	.886
The project met its intended goals and objectives.	0.0%	0.0%	13.5%	39.3%	47.2%	4.34	.704
The communication during the project implementation was clear and transparent.	0.0%	0.6%	10.7%	43.8%	44.9%	4.33	.687
The project timeline was effectively followed, with few delays.	0.0%	0.0%	8.4%	44.4%	47.2%	4.39	.639
The project's budget was adhered to with minimal cost overruns.	0.0%	0.0%	14.6%	45.5%	39.9%	4.25	.696
The project was successfully completed within the expected time frame.	0.0%	0.0%	7.9%	36.0%	56.2%	4.48	.640
Overall mean						4.34	

Source: **Primary data, (2025).**

Table 4 presents an overview of respondents' perceptions concerning the effectiveness of different facets of project implementation. A significant portion of respondents, specifically 52.8%, expressed strong agreement regarding the effective allocation and management of resources throughout the project's implementation, which yielded a mean score of 4.48. The elevated rating indicates the effectiveness of resource management in facilitating the project's seamless execution, consistent with recent research highlighting the essential impact of efficient resource allocation on project outcomes (Harrison & Ziegler, 2023). The project demonstrated a significant level of success in maintaining its budget, as evidenced by 45.5% of respondents agreeing and 39.9% strongly agreeing, resulting in a mean score of 4.25 (Patel & Weng, 2021).

In terms of stakeholder involvement, the data shows that while 40.4% strongly agreed that stakeholders were actively engaged, the mean score of 4.11 suggests that while engagement was present, there may have been room for improvement in this area (Müller & Turner, 2020). The project was also perceived to have met its intended goals and objectives, with a mean score of 4.34, demonstrating that the project's outcomes aligned well with its initial plans. These findings support the view that clear goal-setting and alignment with stakeholder expectations are key to project success (Joo et al., 2021).

A mean score of 4.33 indicated that communication was another strength during project implementation, with 44.9% of respondents strongly agreeing that communication was transparent and clear. This suggests that effective communication channels were maintained throughout the project, which is essential for managing expectations and resolving issues promptly (Sharma & Verma, 2022). Additionally, the project's ability to stay on track with the timeline, achieving a mean score of 4.39, and completing successfully within the expected time frame (mean = 4.48), indicates efficient time management practices (Lee & Kim, 2021). Overall, with an average mean of 4.34, the data reveals that the BADEA project's implementation was largely successful, marked by effective resource management, communication, and adherence to timelines.

Correlation Analysis

The purpose of correlation analysis is to find the strength and direction of the association between two or more variables using statistical methods. This study examines the relationships between project execution and various dimensions of emotional intelligence, including self-awareness. It does this by utilizing a correlation matrix (Table 4.14). By determining whether there are any noteworthy relationships between these variables, the analysis sheds light on the effect of emotional intelligence on the results of project execution. The main objective of the study is to analyze these interactions within the context of the BADEA project in order to identify the emotional intelligence characteristics that are most important for the project's success.

Table 5: Correlation Matrix

		Self-Awareness	Project Implementation
Self-Awareness	Pearson Correlation	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		
	N	178	
Project Implementation	Pearson Correlation	.770**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	178	178

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

Source: **Primary data, (2025).**

The findings from Table 5: Correlation Matrix reveal a strong and statistically significant positive relationship between Self-Awareness and Project Implementation, with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.770 and a p-value of 0.000 at the 0.01 level of significance. This indicates that as self-awareness among project implementers increases, so does the effectiveness of project implementation. The strength of this correlation suggests that self-awareness is a critical behavioral trait influencing project outcomes, likely by enhancing communication, leadership, and decision-making (García-Sánchez & García-Morales, 2022). These results are

consistent with findings by Li and Zhang (2023), who noted that self-aware leaders in project environments foster higher team performance and adaptability. The significance level further affirms the reliability of the relationship observed in a sample of 178 respondents, providing empirical support for the integration of emotional intelligence—especially self-awareness—into project management frameworks in development settings such as Rwanda.

Regression Analysis

The findings from Table 6: Model Summary indicate that Self-Awareness is a strong predictor of Project Implementation, as evidenced by an R value of 0.770 and an R Square of 0.593. This means that 59.3% of the variance in project implementation outcomes can be explained by variations in self-awareness among project implementers. The Adjusted R Square of 0.591 confirms the model's robustness by accounting for the number of predictors and sample size, suggesting a reliable fit (Field, 2022). The standard error of the estimate (0.18945) reflects a relatively low deviation, indicating that the model's predictions are reasonably accurate. These results are aligned with studies by García-Sánchez and García-Morales (2022), who reported that self-aware leadership enhances decision-making, coordination, and overall project efficiency. The findings underscore the importance of integrating emotional intelligence—particularly self-awareness—into project management training and performance frameworks to improve development outcomes in contexts such as Rwanda.

Table 6: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.770 ^a	.593	.591	.18945

a. Predictors: (Constant), Self-Awareness,

Source: **Primary data, (2025).**

The findings from Table 7 ANOVA Results demonstrate that the regression model is statistically significant, indicating that Self-Awareness has a meaningful influence on Project Implementation. The F-statistic value of 256.517 with a p-value of .000 shows that the model is highly significant at the 0.01 level, meaning there is less than a 1% chance that the observed relationship occurred by random chance. The sum of squares for regression (9.207) compared to the residual sum of squares (6.317) suggests that a substantial proportion of the variation in project implementation is explained by self-awareness. These results are consistent with previous studies such as those by Johnson et al. (2021) and Li and Zhang (2023), which found that self-aware leaders contribute significantly to effective project execution through improved emotional regulation, communication, and leadership behaviors. This finding supports the inclusion of self-awareness as a critical competency in project management training and performance evaluation frameworks in Rwanda and similar development settings.

Table 7: ANOVA Results

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	9.207	1	9.207	256.517	.000 ^b
	Residual	6.317	176	.036		
	Total	15.524	177			

a. Dependent Variable: Project Implementation

b. Predictors: (Constant), Self-Awareness

Source: **Primary data, (2025).**

The findings from Table 8: Coefficient Results for All Variables indicate that Self-Awareness has a positive and statistically significant effect on Project Implementation, with an unstandardized coefficient (B) of 1.022 and a standardized Beta coefficient of 0.770. The high t-value of 16.016 and p-value of .000 confirm that the relationship is highly significant at the 0.01 level, meaning the effect is not due to chance. This implies that for every one-unit increase in self-awareness, project implementation improves by approximately 1.022 units. The

intercept ($B = -0.114$, $p = .683$) is not statistically significant, indicating that without self-awareness, project implementation does not significantly change. These results align with empirical findings by García-Sánchez and García-Morales (2022) and Wanjiku and Kiptoo (2022), who emphasize that self-aware leaders exhibit better strategic alignment, communication, and stakeholder responsiveness—factors crucial for project success. The strong standardized Beta value also confirms that self-awareness is a dominant predictor in the model, reinforcing its importance in project leadership and execution frameworks.

Table 8: Coefficient results for all Variables

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1 (Constant)	-.114	.278		-.409	.683
Self-Awareness	1.022	.064	.770	16.016	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Project Implementation

Source: **Primary data, (2024).**

The overall regression equation can be represented as:

$$\text{Project Implementation} = -0.114 + 1.022 \text{ Self-Awareness}$$

The coefficient 1.022 means that for every one-unit increase in self-awareness, project implementation is expected to increase by approximately 1.022 units, holding other factors constant. The intercept of -0.114 suggests that when self-awareness is zero, project implementation would slightly decrease, though this value is not statistically significant ($p = .683$), and thus has little practical effect. The equation confirms that self-awareness is a key predictor of successful project implementation, reinforcing previous empirical findings that emotionally intelligent and self-aware project leaders are more effective at planning, coordinating, and delivering project outcomes (García-Sánchez & García-Morales, 2022; Li & Zhang, 2023).

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study concludes that self-awareness plays a crucial role in the successful implementation of projects by enhancing the effectiveness of leadership, improving communication, and fostering better team dynamics. Project implementers who demonstrate high levels of self-awareness are better equipped to manage challenges, adapt to changing circumstances, and engage stakeholders effectively, which ultimately contributes to achieving project goals. The findings highlight the importance of integrating self-awareness development into project management training and capacity-building initiatives to improve project outcomes. Emphasizing self-awareness can thus strengthen both individual and organizational performance, making it an essential factor for enhancing project implementation in development contexts.

Based on the study's findings, it is recommended that organizations involved in project implementation, especially in development settings like Rwanda, prioritize the integration of self-awareness training into their leadership and capacity-building programs. Project managers and team leaders should be encouraged to engage in regular self-reflection and seek constructive feedback to enhance their emotional intelligence and interpersonal skills. Additionally, project management curricula and professional development workshops should include modules on self-awareness and its impact on team dynamics and decision-making. Organizations should also foster a culture of open communication and psychological safety to enable continuous personal and team growth. Finally, policymakers and development partners should support initiatives that promote the soft skills essential for effective project leadership to improve overall project success rates.

Suggestions for Further Studies

Future research should explore the influence of other emotional intelligence components, such as empathy, self-regulation, and social skills, on project implementation to provide a more comprehensive understanding of leadership effectiveness in development projects. Additionally, longitudinal studies could examine how

changes in self-awareness over time impact project outcomes across different sectors and cultural contexts within Rwanda and beyond. Comparative studies involving multiple donor-funded projects would also help to generalize findings and identify context-specific factors. Furthermore, investigating the role of organizational culture and structural factors alongside individual self-awareness could offer deeper insights into the complex dynamics affecting project success. Finally, qualitative research focusing on the lived experiences of project teams may uncover nuanced challenges and best practices related to self-awareness and emotional intelligence in project environments.

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