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## Effects of Training Methods on Employee Performance in Devolved Governments: A Case of County Government of Nyeri, Kenya

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### **Abstract:**

*Employees should be the most valued and critical asset in any county as they individually and collectively contribute to achievement of County objectives. Employee performance in the County has been deteriorating since devolution in 2013 with 43% of the employees in 2014, 41% of the employees in 2015, 47% of the employees in 2016, 48% of the employees in 2017 and 51% of the employees in 2018 working in Nyeri County government did not achieve the set individual and departmental targets. The objectives of the study were to identify the effect of internships, mentorship and team training on employee performance in County Government of Nyeri. The study was carried out in Nyeri County and the study primary data was collected by use of questionnaire. Secondary data for 2014 to 2018 on employee performance was retrieved from county records. The study was anchored on human capital theory and social learning theory. Descriptive research design was used. The target population focused on 3877 employees working in the County Government of Nyeri. The sample size was 365 employees arrived through stratified random sampling and simple random sampling. Questionnaires were used to collect primary data. Validity of more than 0.7 test score was arrived using Cronbach Alpha. The data collected was analyzed by quantitative and qualitative analysis method. The findings presented that the county has considered internship as a major contributor to the improved employee performance. The findings show that inexperienced workers are attached for skill development purposes to more experienced employees. The study indicated that knowledge in the Nyeri County government is acquired, disseminated and shared through mentoring training. It was concluded that sufficient support and guidance to less experienced employees are always offered by the county governments. The study recommended the county directors should encourage employees to adhere to policies and training programs.*

**Keywords:** Employee performance, internship, mentoring, training methods, team training

### **1. Introduction**

Training new and old personnel has been important in attaining efficiency in devolved units. Institutions that do not identify and reward the employee's performance end up losing them to the competing organizations, institutions and countries (Sousa, Aspinwall, Sampaio & Rodrigues, 2014). This affects the growth and profitability of the organizations and institutions in the long run, it increases the cost of recruiting new staff, training and development. If organizations want to be successful, they should treat employees equally and competitively for the purposes of retaining them. Very few organizations consider employees as assets which are capable of delivering positive results in the organization if managed well (Lalli, 2015). This is also true for devolved systems.

Employee performance is the process of achieving a particular objective within an organization based on the predetermined standards and measures such as time spent, accuracy and the incurred expenses (Sultana, 2012). There are many expectations contact concerning employee's performance and when this anticipation levels are meant the performance of the employees are deemed to be good. Development of workers skills and Performance have been connected with human resource management practices (Akbar & Hafeez, 2015).

There is need to create a conducive environment to enable the employees perform the assigned task with the name of achieving the set targets. According to Shadareet (2009) an employee supposed to be motivated which helps him to achieve the set specific goals by creating enabling and environment. According to Akbar (2012) the many factors which influence the employee's performance are; development training, work conditions, policies in the organization and employer-employee relationship. Performance of the employees can be measured in many ways; number of units produced, achieving the set targets support the management, professionalism an ability to play in a team. Performance of the employees is a vital role for any company to outperform its competitors which leads to a great success with the stakeholders (Osunde, 2015).

Training entails improving the skills and knowledge of employees. Choi and Hong (2016) argued that there are two possible training methods that organizations can use to improve the skills and knowledge of its employees. These

training activities or types are on-job training and off-job training. On-job training enables employees to be trained on actual task in the working environment during working hours. While off-job training involves employees being trained outside the working environment. On-job training examples include job rotation, job shadowing, internships, mentoring and apprenticeship. Off-job training examples include role-playing, conferences, seminars, lectures, team training and simulations.

### *1.1. County Government of Nyeri*

Nyeri County is among the 47 counties in Kenya. The County was former central province administrative headquarters. Nyeri County is located 150Kms north from the Nairobi the capital city of Kenya. It occupies an approximately 3337.1 Kilometres squared. County Government of Nyeri comprises of three categories of employees. One group devolved from National Government, the defunct Local Authorities, and the county public service board appointed staff members with terms of service which are different. One of the major vital objectives of the county being to offer quality and better services to the citizens and people living in Nyeri County. However, these could not be achieved successfully as a result of ineffective training and employee's turnover. Most of the transferred and devolved employees have not taken the change positively because of issues of structure of the organization, culture, values. They argued that these has not been factored in the devolution Agenda and was not appropriately addressed to devolved government act 2012 by the transition authority who were spearheading the process.

Nyeri County governance has been on the forefront in mitigating unemployment among the youth by rolling out internship programs geared towards giving unemployed graduates in the county and beyond an opportunity for hands-on training for skills acquisition to enhance future employability. The Program started with a batch of 200 interns selected from all over the country and who joined the county workforce in June 2018. The county had allocated Sh24 million in the 2018/19 financial year to be spent on stipends for the interns who were given a remuneration of ksh.10,000 per month for the twelve months of the program. After the completion of the first batch internship, the county retained 27 interns offering them jobs in the county. In the following year 2019 after the success of the first batch, the county welcomed applications for the second batch which entailed a rigorous and transparent interviewing and probing. The Nyeri county internship Program has become a benchmarking haven for other county governments and the national government joining the bandwagon. The Nyeri County government hopes to perpetuate the Program as it prepares youth to take up responsibilities in the competitive labour market besides helping combat radicalization, as one of his anchor Programs for supporting the empowerment of youth (Nyeri County Government Report, 2019).

### *1.2. Statement of the Problem*

Despite close to a decade of implementing policies and structures of devolved units, little is known about how training methods affect employee performance in the process of devolution. This study will contribute to the growing knowledge in this area. Most studies on training are confined to the developed world and little academic research has been conducted in Sub-Saharan Africa. Scarcity of study is evidenced relating to training methods especially handling the performance of the devolved governments since 2013.

Employee performance in the County has been deteriorating since devolution in 2013 with 43% of the employees in 2014, 41% of the employees in 2015, 47% of the employees in 2016, 48% of the employees in 2017 and 51% of the employees in 2018 working in Nyeri County government did not achieve the set individual and departmental targets (Nyeri County Government Report, 2018). According to KIPPRA (2015) 38% of the employees working in public sector don't report to work in the right time or leave early for their personal activities. It was reported that the number of employees asking for sick leave in Nyeri County government increased from 13% in 2014 to 27% in 2018 and too much time is taken to accomplish a task (Nyeri County Government Report, 2018).

There is a scarcity of studies regarding the impact of staff training on employee performance in the Kenyan Public Service and more specifically focusing on the County Public Service of Nyeri County. The rate of employee's turnover in Nyeri county government the level of employee absconding duties and absenteeism is alarming between the year 2014 to 2017. Several employees have not achieved their yearly individual targets since 2014 and hence failure of the county to achieve its yearly revenue targets (Kabiru, 2016). The county has continued to incur more costs on recruitment and selection to replace the vacuum left by employees who left the service. The purpose of this study, therefore, was to establish the effects of training methods and performance of employee in Nyeri County government.

### *1.3. Objectives of the Study*

- To determine the effect of internship on employee performance in Nyeri County Government.
- To examine the effect of mentoring on employee performance in Nyeri County Government.
- To establish the effects of team training on performance of employees in Nyeri County Government.

### *1.4. Justification and Significance of the Study*

Human capital is the most important capital in any county. Training which helps in the acquisition of new knowledge, skills and attitude helps employee discharge their duties effectively and efficiently. Training is one of the major functions in human resource management has attracted great attention from researchers and academicians all over the world. Researchers have continued to have you on the importance of training in many of the public institutions in Kenya which has been taken for granted by many public offices. The recognition of training as heavily influenced the importance of training to both private and public sector. The intensification of competition an increase in relative scarcity of expertise

has resorted to many organizations' investment in employee development through training. The contribution of training has been criticizing supported in equal measures by researchers all over the world some arguing that training and answers capacity and better utilization of human resources while others arguing that training does not add value and contributes to increased cost into the public institutions. This research tried to bridge in the gap and solved contradicting findings.

### *1.5. Significance of the Study*

This study would be of great importance to the county government of Nyeri for it will help in strategizing on the importance training practices and appreciate different training methods based on their outcome and their significant contribution to the employee performance. This would help the employees the improvement of quality service delivery and reduce the cost of turnover recruitment and selection. The County services board will understand the contribution of employee dissatisfaction this will enable them the plan on the requirements of training on different sectors within the County. They will also understand the demographic characteristics and the contribution of employee turnover. The study will help the policy makers within the national government together information relating to contribution of training methods and the extent to which it affects the county governments this will help in policy development and implementation. The researchers will benefit from the research findings and will help in comparing the future researchers and identifying gaps within the research.

## **2. Literature Review**

### *2.1. Empirical Review*

Robinson, Dilys and Hayday (2013) studied the impact of training on performance of employees in United Kingdom. The variables used in the study were coaching and internship. The study found that training through the process of internship influences the employees' performance positively through a process of engagement of employees. The study found that employee internships helps student to familiarize with the environment and in turn helps them improve their productivity level. The study established that there is a positive and significant relationship between employee's internship and performance of the employee in the long run. The study was carried out in developed country (United Kingdom) and the findings may not be applicable in Kenya which is a developing country. The results were based on majorly on inferential analysis and therefore presented a methodological knowledge gap. The gaps were filled in the current study by presenting both descriptive and inferential statistics related the effect of training methods on employee performance in Nyeri County government.

Onyango and Wanyoike (2014) assessed the effect of employee training on employee performance which was carried out in Siaya County on health workers. The findings of the study indicated that there is strong positive correlation with mentoring of the employees and as a result generated increased performance. The study also established that the employees recognizes the significance and importance of mentoring, organizations growth and success majority of the employees. The study indicated that it is expensive to carry out the process of mentoring since a lot of time is taken to mentor one particular employee. Mentoring was found to increase their skills knowledge and attitude. The study found that it is easier for majority of the employees to gain knowledge if a good trainer and a mentor is chosen. The study presents a contextual knowledge gap since it concentrated on health workers performance in Siaya County. The current study filled the gap by studying the performance of employees in the county government.

Tuei and Saina (2015) studied training methods and its effects on employee's productivity branches of Kenya Commercial Bank In regions of North Rift, Kenya. The study found management of KCB need restructuring and proper design in ensuring that their team framework of training improves to motivate the employees for better quality service delivery. The bank was found to less concentrating on non-financial factors. The results indicated that team training had positive regression coefficient.

Akbar and Hafeez (2015) studied the impact of training on employee's performance (Evidence from Pharmaceutical Companies in Pakistan). The study established that team training had positive significant impact and relationship with employee performance. The study concentrated commercial institutions and their performance while the current study focuses performances of employees in the County.

### *2.2. Theoretical Literature Review*

The study was guided by human capital theory. Smith in 1960 proposed human capital Theory. Smith proposed that humans are the best and most of it for human type of capital. The theory dictated that people's performance and the results must be achieved through investing in human. Bratton (2007) argue that this investment reduces cost and the benefit of the organization as a whole. The importance of learning in the workplace through training supported by human capital portrays the skills and knowledge in an effort and possibilities of human. This theory tries to explain training by ensuring that the employees achieve the required standards.

Everyone is born with a particular set of skills and Genie determining the ability to execute tasks. When these abilities are trained and require population is valued to the appropriate investment untreated human capital within the organization will prevail. Human capital management firms refer to commitment aptitude workplace intelligence skills ability to learn knowledge and good traits that an employee drives into the organization. The contribution of the employees and talking into the organization is nevertheless unpredictable and variable depending on the utilization of that particular useful assets which must be trained and shaped into the future (Bratton, 2007).

Human Capital-theory relevance in the study is that it informs the variables on team training, mentorship and apprenticeship and internship which require funding as an investment. As employees upgrade their skills, they maintain the mastery of their area likely to bear fruit. Employee's value is determined from their methods of delivery, forwarding arguments or choosing a more informed way and respect by others on their ideas hence making their institution gain a competitive advantage over others because human capital gained through training can be source of competitive advantage. This theory informed the need to put employees in to the internship program for better performance. Human capital contributes to competitive advantage that supports team training in order to improve employee performance (Bryan, 2006).

### 3. Research Methodology

Descriptive and Exploratory research design was used. The study was carried out in Nyeri County. Its targeted employees working in the county government of Nyeri situated in the CBD of Nyeri town. The employees targeted were from various department in the County. 10 department were targeted and a group of interns constituting 11th targeted groups as depicted in the table below.

Data was collected through the use of interview schedules and questionnaires. Data analysis is the process of manipulating the data collected through the questionnaire and interview guide to answer the questions presented in section 1.4. This was done through a process through coding, editing, numbering and inserting the data in a statistical package of social sciences. This package helped in generating mean, standard deviation, percentages and frequencies for the purposes of describing the study variables.

### 4. Research Findings and Discussion

#### 4.1. Employee Performance in Nyeri County

The research assessed the performance of employees in the government of Nyeri County. The research results are set out in Table 4.1 below.

Statements	Mean	Stdev.
Employees work hard for with an aim of achieving the set targets.	3.9772	1.122
The output levels in terms of the number of tasks handled by employees are ever increasing	3.1630	1.317
The employees take a considerable short time when handling a task	3.1760	1.1101
The time taken to complete a task has continuously declined over time	3.5710	.8117
The number of unaccomplished tasks has declined over the years	3.7778	.8879
Employee performance is greatly affected by training methods	4.4223	1.211

Table 1: Employee Performance

The results in table 1 show that most workers worked hard to achieve the set targets as indicated by a mean of 3.9772 and standard deviation of 1.122. The results showed that the respondents were not sure if the output levels are that in terms of the number of tasks performed by workers, as shown by an average of 3.1630 and a standard deviation of 1.317. Workers in Nyeri County weren't aware if the employees take a very short time to handle a job as demonstrated by an average of 3.1760 and a standard deviation of 1.1101. The majority of employees argued moderately that the time taken to complete a task has declined continuously over time (Mean=3.5710, Standard deviation=0.8117). An average of 3.7778 and a standard deviation of 0.8879 showed that, over the years, the number of tasks unfulfilled has decreased moderately. The findings indicated that the performance of employees is greatly affected by training methods as shown by an average of 4.4223 and a standard deviation of 1.211.

The Theory on Human Capital supported the findings which posits that people's performance and the results must be achieved through investing in human. It was portrayed that human capital presents the skills and knowledge as a true investment put in place by the organization's management. Majority of the respondents argued that there are challenges related to cost of training and integration of training skills gained to the tasks in county government. Other major challenges affecting improved employees' performance in the county included organizational culture, employee resistance to change, lack of team spirit and support by the top senior management. However, there is need for the Counties and organizations to see training as an investment and not a cost (Mburu, 2018)

#### 4.2. Internships and Employee Performance

This segment illustrates the metrics of internships as provided to the study respondents. Table 2 describes the findings summarized on the basis of the agreements. The findings were on the opinion and perception of the employees regarding internship programs in the County Government of Nyeri.

Statements	Mean	Stdev.
The county has considered internship as a major contributor to the improved employee performance	4.1181	1.2341
The county has internship programs that are scheduled for developing student careers	4.3711	1.3214
The county has a mechanism of assessing training requirements	4.1233	.9417
The county develops internship programs that are central to the county government processes	4.1112	1.1131
There is evident knowledge gained after the internship	4.0010	0.9997

Table 2: Internships and Employee Performance

Table 2 findings presented that the county has considered internship as a major contributor to the improved employee performance as indicated high mean of 4.1181 and standard deviation=1.2341. The results indicated that majority of the employees strongly agreed that the county has internship programs that are scheduled for developing student careers (Mean=4.3711, standard deviation=1.3214). It was presented by the results that the county has a mechanism of assessing training requirements as presented by a mean of 4.1233 and a standard deviation of 0.9417. Majority of the employees reported that the county develops internship programs that are central to the county government processes (mean=4.1112, standard deviation=1.1131). Majority of the respondents indicated in the questionnaire that there is evident knowledge gained after the internship (mean=4.0010, Standard deviation=0.9997). This was supported by results generated after interviewing directors in the county from each of the ten departments in Table 2. Majority of the respondents argued that the intern's programs are pre-set prior to the selection period, monitoring and evaluation were done every month and presented that there was a huge skills and knowledge gained by both the interns and the county employees. Otuko, Chege and Douglas (2013) endorsed the findings that internship is a vital strategic resource that impacts employee skills to develop innovative products and create value in a unique way that rivals can't easily replicate in Kenya. This is important for the success of the current expansion of the global economy and the rapidly changing technical and innovation developments. It reflects the Amin *et al.*, (2013) findings that internship contributes to significant performance gains for individuals, teams, organizations and society. They say the benefits range from individual success and team performance to a nation's economic prosperity.

#### 4.3. Mentorship and Employee Performance

In the county of Nyeri, Kenya, respondents were asked to show the extent with which mentorship influences employee performance. Results were presented in Table 3

Statements	Mean	Stdev.
The novice employees are attached to more experienced employee for the purpose of skill development	4.1813	1.2231
Knowledge is acquired, disseminated and shared through mentorship training	4.1162	.8751
Enough support and guidance are provided to less experienced employees in the county.	3.7181	.9992
Job skills are developed through timely mentorship.	2.2139	1.2232

Table 3: Mentorship and Employee Performance

Table 3 findings show that inexperienced workers are attached for skill development purposes to more experienced employees (high mean=4.1813), (standard deviation=1.2231). The study indicated that knowledge in the County Government of Nyeri is acquired, disseminated and shared through mentoring training as indicated by a Mean=4.1162, standard deviation=0.8751). The findings from the study showed that the majority of respondents believed that the County Government of Nyeri provides sufficient support and guidance to less experienced employees. (Mean=3.7181, Standard deviation=0.9317). It was evident that employment skills in the county were not developed through timely mentorship as shown by the majority of employees at an average of 2.2139 and a standard deviation of 1.2232. From the study findings it was clear that mentoring was not commonly used in the county for the majority of the respondents argued that mentoring was expensive and time consuming. The director of various department also argued that since each employee in the County Government of Nyeri aims to accomplish his or her goals on a daily basis, mentoring becomes a challenge occasionally.

Majority of the respondents argued that well-trained workers are driven and have good morale in managing the tasks that are before them in the county that will enable other departmental employees to improve. A study by Armstrong (2012) echoed the results by showing that mentored employees often work better as teams because everyone knows the expectations and is able to achieve them smoothly together. Various directors in the county submitted that mentored employees also have greater confidence in their performance and decision-making skills. They also suggested that workers receiving regular training are more likely to accept change and to come up with new ideas. Managers in charge of several departments tabled in Table 3 submitted that employees who develop the skills through training make good candidates for promotions because they have demonstrated their ability to learn, retain and use information. Often, productive, skilled employees can be motivated to train other staff, the fact that the management team is under pressure.

#### 4.4. Team Training and Employees Performance

The research attempted to assess how team training led to the success of the employee in Nyeri County, Kenya. The findings were listed in table 4 below.

Statements	Mean	Stdev.
The county has training Programs that are aligned to the training group or departments at the same time	4.1131	1.1181
Team training saves costs	4.0180	1.2411
The efficiency of team training is reflected in the improved team coordination	3.8188	1.0371
The county conducts training evaluation to determine effectiveness of the training exercise.	4.1173	1.1331
The training presentations are understandable and feasible	4.4541	1.3311

Table 4: Team Training and Employees Performance

The study found that the county has training programs that are concurrently matched with the training group or divisions (a mean of 4.1131) and a (standard deviation=1.1181) represent. In many departments in County Government of Nyeri, a majority of respondents strongly agreed that team training saves costs (Mean=4.0180, Stdev=1.2411). The majority of respondents strongly agreed that improved team coordination (mean=3.8188) and (a standard deviation=1.0371) reflect the efficiency of team training. A mean of 4,1173 and a standard deviation of 1,1331 suggested that the county performs training tests to evaluate the efficacy of the training exercise. From the analysis it was clear that the training exercises are understandable and practical as shown by a high level of agreement (Mean=4.4541, standard deviation=1.3311). This was reinforced by the respondents' claim that a team training system helps the county to strengthen the skills each employee wants to improve. The findings were supported by Blackburn (2012) who researched training and its effect on the success of employees. The study found that integrating team training methods into the day-to-day operations of a company is simple for it requires no loss of production and low interruptions in teamwork.

#### 4.5. Regression Analysis

Coefficients <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Un-standardized Co-efficients		Standardized Co-efficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error			
1	(Constant)	3.151	.301		15.457	.000
	Internship	.617	.246	.268	2.566	.000
	Mentorship	.537	.235	.125	1.066	.000
	Team Training	.842	.528	.346	1.484	.000

Table 5: Regression Coefficients

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Performance

As per the SPSS generated table 5, the equation  $Y = 3.151 + .617X_1 + 0.537X_2 + 0.842X_3 + \epsilon$

The results in table 5 indicates holding internships, mentorship and team training constant the value of employee performance was 3.151 ( $\beta_0=3.151$ ). The regression coefficient values were that  $\beta_1=.617$ ,  $\beta_2=.537$ ,  $\beta_3=0.842$ . The coefficient for internships presented that there was positive significant relationship between internship and employee performance ( $\beta_1=.617$ ,  $P=0.012$ ). A positive change in the unit of internship resulted to the positive change in employee performance. Therefore, if internship changes by 100%, employee performance would change by 61.7 per cent.

Table 5 presents the coefficient for mentoring which indicates that there was a significant positive relationship between mentoring and employee performance ( $\beta_2=0.537$ ,  $P=0.000$ ). A unit change on values relating to mentoring resulted to the positive change of employee performance in County Government of Nyeri. Therefore, if mentoring changes by 1 unit, employee performance would change by 0.537 units. The results in table 5 indicated that the correlation between team training and employee performance was positive and significant ( $\beta_3=0.842$ ,  $P=0.001$ ). A positive unit variation in team training results to a positive change in the employee performance. A unit change in the team training results to 0.842-unit changes in employee performance in County Government of Nyeri. Team training was found to have the greatest effect on employee performance as compared to mentoring and internship.

## 5. Conclusions and Recommendations

### 5.1. Conclusions

Based on the findings and inferential statistics generated the study made the following conclusion. The study concluded that the relationship between internship and employee performance was positive and significant. The study concluded that internships are major contributors to the improved employee performance. Through internships, the students familiarize themselves with the work environments and they are able to relate the knowledge gained in class with the skills gained in the work place. It was clearly evident that internship develops skills and knowledge. The County

governments in Kenya have embraced internships programs to increase the employment levels and also to gain from fresh minds from colleges.

The study concluded that the relationship between mentorship and employee performance was positive and significant. The study concluded that inexperienced workers can gain knowledge through mentorship for skill development purposes to more experienced employees. Mentorship was reported to be an expensive and tedious process in the County government but however, sufficient support and guidance to less experienced employees is always offered by the county governments.

The study concluded team training have the greatest effect on employee performance as compared to mentoring and internship and therefore, team training greatly and significantly affects employee's performance. It was resolved that county governments prefers to train employees as a team for it does not only help in saving costs, time saving but also enabling social learning.

## 5.2. Recommendations

There is need for the head of certain departments where internship programs are held to ensure there that there is improved responsiveness of employees to training programs offered. The study suggests that the systems in the County should enable all interns to a develop skills and knowledge through socializing with experienced employees. This helps to reduce any weak connections within the county that rely heavily on others to accomplish basic work. It was recommended that majority of the county CEO in Kenya should consider having a policy that will enable the county governments to consider recruiting fresh graduate every year to occupy temporary certain positions in the County departments.

The senior county officials such as county directors should ensure that employees are handling tasks well, and utilizing the required time. The study recommends that policy should be put in place to ensure every employee is trained at least twice a year. The study suggests that frequent departmental mentorship should be encouraged to inexperienced employees so they all have similar knowledge and skills. The supervisors should put more emphasis on identifying the training gaps and recommend them to the trainers.

The study recommends that the directors in various department within the counties should encourage team training, mentorship and internship as the best training practices since they impact positively on employee performance. The study recommends the county employees to adhere to policies and training programs and that the county directors should encourage team training in many departments for it saves on cost and other valuable resources such as time.

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