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The Nexus between Training and Development and Employee Performance in the County Government of Kakamega, Kenya

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Abstract:

The Constitution of Kenya, 2010 promised Kenyans a devolved system of county governments that would bring services closer to people and allow local people and communities to make decisions and manage their affairs through their elected leaders and representatives. Furthermore, article 10, read together with article 232 of the constitution, promises Kenyans good governance and a public service that upholds the principles of integrity. However, the environment for the implementation of devolution has had several obstacles due to various challenges experienced over time. Since the onset of devolution, county governments in Kenya have faced serious performance challenges, some of which have been attributed to the fact that they have not been able to achieve their desired results due to poor employee performance on service delivery. This study sought to investigate the effect of training and development on employee performance in the county government of Kakamega, Kenya. The study used a descriptive research design. The target population for this study was 6,266 employees of the County Government of Kakamega. The study used a sample size population of 375 employees. The data collected for the study were presented using tables and analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The validity of data instruments was ascertained by both theoretical and empirical literature, while data reliability was confirmed using Cronbach's alpha test approach. The findings revealed that there was a statistically significant relationship between training and development and employee performance among employees of the County Government of Kakamega. The study recommended that the County Government of Kakamega should prioritize the training and development of employees by committing more budget allocation and supporting these commitments with strategic plans, clear policies, and dedicated establishments to enhance employee performance and service delivery.

Keywords: Employee training, employee development, employee performance, service delivery

1. Background to the Study

The skills, abilities, and knowledge that employees possess are closely tied to the strategies and performances of commercial organizations, making human capital one of their intangible assets (Asgarova, 2019). Research has consistently demonstrated that employee training, one of the many intricate HR procedures, can have a major impact on an organization's performance through a variety of means, including learning, creativity, employee motivation, and skill development (Osewe & Gindicha, 2021). Training is the process of molding and preparing people by enhancing their abilities, knowledge, and conduct to perform tasks more swiftly, efficiently, and sensibly (Yuslem, Sugianto & Ichsan, 2022). Conversely, career development is a continuous process that involves moving through a series of stages, each of which has its own unique set of challenges, themes, and responsibilities (Ismail, Abdullah, Salleh & Yahya, 2016). As such, training and development are complementary aspects of the same process. Instead of being sequential and hierarchical, they are interdependent and linked (Vincent, 2020).

Employees who participate in training and development programs are given the fundamental knowledge and abilities needed to perform better in their fields. The adequacy of the training program is determined in large part by its quality and relevance to the employee's work (Niroula & Updhaya, 2023). The methodical process of changing employee behavior to support corporate objectives is known as reviewed training. It entails raising a worker's competency level to the point where they can perform their existing duties to enhance performance within the firm. Many institutions and organizations lack a strategy for training and development, which creates a stagnant work environment that has a detrimental effect on employees' performance (Bashayreh, 2019).

To bridge the gap and carry out certain jobs in society, both skilled and unskilled individuals need different types of training and development. The goal of manpower development is, thus, to strengthen the human resources needed for an organization's optimal functioning. An integrated approach that addresses the multifaceted aspects of employees, from developing systematic and collaborative skills to developing resourceful intellect and leadership, is necessary for human

resource management, a process that aims to maximize an organization's use of its human resources (Ramirez-Anormaliza, Llinàs-Audet & Sabaté, 2017).

The quantity of output produced by an employee's job execution over time in an organization is commonly referred to as employee performance (Wang & Xu, 2017). According to Safitri and Lathifah (2019), employee performance is the accomplishment of certain, well-defined activities that are measured by well-planned, predefined goals and objectives. Armstrong (2020) defines employee performance management as an ongoing process of performance improvement through goal-setting on an individual and team level that is in line with the organization's strategic objectives. Every management strategy revolves around employee performance as, in the absence of goals and objectives, businesses have no reason to exist (Nadeem et al., 2019).

According to Saengchai, Siriattakul, and Jermstittiparsert (2019), staff training and development programs receive an average of 11% of the budget of industrialized countries, such as the United States, where firms are based. In its research from 2018, the Bureau of Labor Statistics found that companies with fewer than 100 employees allowed human resource managers only 12 minutes to train staff, while companies with 500 to 1,000 employees allocated HR managers only 6 minutes. According to McCrie and Lee (2022), this trend indicates that there is an urgent need to increase funding for training and development initiatives that increase the capacity of human resources. Because there has not been enough opportunity for training and development to keep up with the constantly shifting labor trends, government officials in Nigeria have recently had to deal with issues related to labor turnover and inadequate succession planning (Dada & Ojo, 2022).

1.1. Statement of the Problem

The creation of forty-seven (47) County Governments, among other modifications to the Kenyan Constitution, was intended to bring services closer to the people and provide locals and communities the ability to govern their affairs and make decisions through elected officials. Additionally, Kenyans are guaranteed excellent governance and public service that follows integrity ideals under Article 10, read in conjunction with Article 232 of the constitution (Republic of Kenya, 2010). According to the report of the Commission for Implementation of the Constitution of Kenya (2014), the devolution implementation environment has encountered multiple hurdles over the years due to diverse challenges. County governments in Kenya have experienced severe performance issues since devolution began, some of which have been linked to the fact that subpar employee performance in service delivery has prevented them from achieving the intended outcomes (Pawar, 2019).

A study conducted by Queen, Kithae, and Mutua (2019) on management development programs and employee performance in county governments of Kenya revealed dissatisfied employees occasioned by numerous strikes and records of poor performance and service delivery. Alwahabi Alnuaimi (2022) carried out a study on the impacts of workplace factors on employee engagement in the public sector and found that employees in the public sector were not able to deliver quality services to meet public expectations. Similarly, Alnajim (2022) studied the strategic role of human resources development in learning, training, and development in organizations and pointed to the inability of organizations to meet their goals in most cases as a result of poor manpower development policies put in place. The aforementioned makes it clear that employee performance requires training and development. The purpose of this study was, therefore, to determine whether the same tendencies apply to Kakamega County Government employees as well.

1.2. Objective of the Study

The objective of this study was to investigate the effect of training and development on employee performance in the county government of Kakamega, Kenya.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Theoretical Review

The technology-based approach and the human capital theory serve as the two fundamental theoretical pillars supporting this study. The human capital model considers training to be an expenditure on human resources. Therefore, training is only anticipated to be given when the advantages outweigh the expenses. On the other hand, the technology-based approach views training as a process of forming knowledge and abilities (Borrás & Edquist, 2019). Therefore, it is claimed that the increased training in modern times results from job reorganization and quickly advancing technologies. For this reason, training is considered to be offered since it tends to meet the functional needs of a company and also helps the organization build its human capital and skill set.

As long as human resource management techniques generate competent workers who provide value to the company and possess special, unique skills, human capital is seen as a resource that can give an advantage over competitors. Still, both theories overlook a crucial component of training: the training content, which may be a byproduct of how it is designed and delivered. It becomes clearer how human capital development and organizational performance are related when the two theories—the technology-based methods and the human capital approaches—are applied to employee training. According to the two philosophies, training is an investment in the enrichment of human capital, providing employees with special knowledge, skills, and abilities—including technological knowledge—that can add value to the organization by enabling them to carry out tasks necessary to meet organizational objectives and produce positive results at the organizational level (Enyioko, 2017).

2.2. Empirical Literature Review

In support of staff training and development, most managers cite several benefits, such as higher productivity, lower average production costs, increased job satisfaction and motivation among employees, increased process efficiencies that result in financial gains, increased ability to adopt new technologies, increased innovation in strategies and product development, improved organizational reputation, lower employee turnover, and improved performance during uncertain and turbulent times related to succession planning for human resources (Quad, 2016). Organizations must implement a methodical approach to training and development, which frequently entails determining the needs, designing, delivering, and evaluating the training (Cabler, Hobson Hargraves & Jackson, 2022).

Several indicators suggest that there is a relationship between employee performance and training. The relationship between task performance, job satisfaction, supervisory mentoring, and training, for example, was examined by Lin, Kao, and Hsu (2021), taking into account the moderating effect of interpersonal helping. According to the findings, job satisfaction positively affects task performance, and interpersonal assistance, in addition to supervisory mentoring, has a moderating influence on task performance. Training also has a substantial impact on job satisfaction. Organizations must decide on the degree, kind, and duration of training because it is a need-oriented endeavor. The strategic process of assessing training needs entails identifying the organization and industry goals, acquiring competencies, evaluating the data, and figuring out where there are gaps between the current and future conditions (Masrek, 2017).

Peng, Su, Du, and Li's (2021) study sought to ascertain whether employee performance in firms is correlated with a high-performance work system (HPWS). The outcome demonstrated that there is a positive correlation between HPWS and worker performance. The study discovered that the relationship between HPWS and employee performance was positively and significantly mediated by job satisfaction, perceived organizational support, and employee engagement resulting from organizational skills development programs for employees, such as training. To reach greater performance levels, the study stressed that firms should create tactics like staff training programs to promote positive work attitudes and raise perceived organizational support.

A study on the impact of employee development and training on productivity was carried out by Christiana et al. (2021) at a few beverage companies in Southwest Nigeria. The study examined the relationship between training and development and employee productivity in a few beverage companies in Southwest Nigeria. 306 employees of the 7up Bottling Company in Lagos and the International Breweries Company in Ilesa, both in the state of Osun, participated in the study. A descriptive study methodology was employed to investigate 1,267 personnel in the beverage business. The Taro Yamane formula was utilized to determine the sample size, which came out to be 317. Random data were collected with a well-crafted questionnaire. Only 306 copies of the questionnaire were administered and used for data analysis. The variable was analyzed using basic linear regression. The findings indicate that training and development have a favorable and considerable impact on staff productivity. Training and development boost employee and organizational productivity, according to the study's findings.

A case study was carried out by Bansal and Garg (2021) to examine the effects of training and development initiatives on the abilities and overall professional growth of Indian bank workers. In essence, the study examined the causal relationship between employee performance, the dependent variable, and training programs, the independent variable. Task and contextual performance categories were used to categorize employee performance, and training approaches and training designs were used to separate the program. The respondents were 171 State Bank of India workers from the city of Lucknow. The respondents were selected at random, while the places for data collection were selected based on convenience. Data analysis techniques included multiple regression, correlation, and inferential statistics. Cronbach alpha was employed to assess the data's reliability. The study's conclusions demonstrated that the training design and technique—two sub-variables of training and development programs—had a considerable impact on both the task and contextual performance, which were sub-variables of employee performance.

A study was carried out by Ghalawat et al. (2020) to investigate the effects of training and development on worker productivity and performance at DMC Textiles in Haryana. Finding out how training and development impacted worker performance and production was the main objective of this study. Primary data were collected from 100 DCM Textiles employees in Hisar who worked the morning, evening, and night shifts using a questionnaire. The survey was split into two sections: the first asked questions about demographic profiles, while the second asked about workplace conditions, performance reviews, organizational commitment, cultural analysis, performance monitoring, employee satisfaction, and increased productivity, in addition to personal information and business ethics. Almost all of the participants concurred that their performance and productivity were greatly impacted by training and growth.

3. Research Methodology

3.1. Research Design

This study used a descriptive research design. According to Kothari and Garg (2014), descriptive research studies are those that focus on characterizing the attributes of a particular person or group, such as employees. Because the statistical data on the various facets of employee performance was going to be thoroughly examined, this approach was suitable for the study (Zigmund, 2003).

3.2. Target Population

All the objects that are being considered in any field of inquiry are referred to as the target population (Kothari & Garg, 2014). A study population is a subset of people selected from the wider population based on a shared trait (Sekaran

& Bougie, 2011). The target population for this study included 6,266 employees in the County Government of Kakamega drawn across all the devolved departments.

3.3. Sampling Frame

A sampling frame contains a list of items from which the sample will be drawn (Kothari & Garg, 2014). The sampling frame of the study is shown in table 1.

Job Group	Population of Employees	Sample
Q & above	47	3
N-P	124	7
L-M	176	11
J-K	1016	61
G-H	1123	67
E-F	1392	83
A-D	2388	143
Total	6,266	375

Table 1: Population Sampling Frame

3.4. Sample and Sampling Technique

A sample, as defined by Kothari (2010), is a subset of the population that is chosen for analysis and investigation to conclude the population as a whole. The method of choosing respondents to make up a sample is known as the sampling technique (Kothari & Garg, 2014). The following statistical formula from Yamane (1967) was used to extract the sample from the population:

$$n = N / (1 + N(e)^2)$$

Where:

n: Sample size

N: Population under study

e: Margin error (0.05)

1: Constant

According to Yamane (1967), the maximum sample size at a particular confidence level can be obtained by computing the sample size with a margin error of 0.05. The formula above yields a sample size of 375 when the target population of 6,266 and the margin error of 0.05 are substituted. The target population and the stratum's size were taken into account while calculating the proportionate sample sizes for each stratum. As a result, data for this study were gathered from 375 respondents in the sample group. Since Mugenda & Mugenda (2003) suggest that a sample of 10% of the population is regarded as the minimum for descriptive research, this sample size was deemed sufficient.

3.5. Data Collection Instruments

According to Sekaran and Bougie (2011), a data-collecting instrument is a tool used to gather data, such as a computer-assisted interviewing system or a paper questionnaire. A structured questionnaire was employed as the major data collection tool. This gave responders a predetermined list of options—also known as closed questions. Alternative responses are provided in the form of Likert scales for the closed-ended questions.

3.6. Data Collection Procedure

Data collection is the process of gathering and measuring information on targeted variables in an established systematic fashion that enables one to answer relevant questions, test hypotheses, and evaluate outcomes (Sekaran & Bougie, 2011). Research assistants in each of the ten departments in the county government of Kakamega were contacted by the researcher and introduced to the questionnaire. A period of four weeks was given for the research assistants to allow respondents to answer the questions. The contact mobile number and email address of the researcher were given to the respondents for any clarification. Follow-up telephone calls were made after two weeks and at the end of the four weeks to find out if the questionnaires had been posted and to thank them for participating in the research.

4. Results

4.1. Reliability Results

A measuring procedure's accuracy and precision are referred to as its reliability (Kothari & Garg, 2014). Table 2 displays the overall Cronbach's coefficient alpha of 0.850 obtained from the questionnaire reliability tests in this study.

Variable	No. of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Accept/Reject
Employee Training and development	6	0.879	Accept
Employee Performance	8	0.821	Accept
Average		0.850	Accept

Table 2: Summary of Cronbach's Alpha

According to table 2, all constructs illustrated that the values of Cronbach's alpha were above the suggested value of 0.7. The overall Cronbach's alpha was 0.850, which means that there was an acceptable degree of consistency among the responses against each item.

In the model summary shown in table 3, R is a measure of the quality of the prediction of the dependent variable – employee performance.

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.568 ^a	.323	.298	.995
a. Predictors: (constant), employee training and development.				

Table 3: Employee Performance

Table 3 shows that a good degree of prediction is indicated by the value of R (.568). The R Square score of .323 denotes the extent to which the element of employee training and development accounted for the variance in employee performance. When presented as a percentage, this number indicates that 32.3% of the variation in employee performance amongst Kakamega County Government employees can be explained by the model. This represents the percentage of employee performance variance that can be accounted for by the predictor variable. However, a review of the ANOVA data presented in table 4 was required to determine the statistical significance of the outcome.

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Significance
1	Regression	51.869	1	12.967	13.101	.001 ^b
	Residual	108.879	374	.990		
	Total	160.748	375			
a. Dependent variable: Employee performance						
b. Independent variable: Employee training and development						

Table 4: Analysis of Variance

The model achieved statistical significance [$F(1, 374) = 13.101$, $R^2 = .990$, sig. $<.05$] based on the results shown in table 4, suggesting that it was a highly significant and sufficient model to explain the variation in employee performance amongst employees in the County Government of Kakamega.

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Significance
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.040	.523		1.987	.049
	Employee training and development	.241	.119	.199	2.026	.015

Table 5: Regression Output

From table 5, the regression equation is: $Y = 1.040 + 0.199X + 0.523$

The coefficients in the equation show how, among employees of the County Government of Kakamega, employee performance fluctuates with changes in training and development. The findings clearly show that staff development and training have a beneficial impact on worker productivity. Overall, the findings support the notion that training and development have a significant impact on the performance of County Government of Kakamega employees.

5. Summary of Findings

The study's primary goal was to find out how employee performance in the Kenyan county government of Kakamega is affected by training and development. Employee performance was shown to be significantly improved by training and development, according to the data. The findings of a study conducted by Saengchai, Siriattakul, and Jemsittiparsert (2019) support this, as they showed that training and development significantly affect worker productivity and performance.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the study's findings, it was determined that employee performance and training and development among Kakamega County Government employees were positively correlated. As a result, it was determined that, among employees of the County Government of Kakamega, there was, in fact, a statistically significant association between employee performance and training and development, and vice versa.

This study serves as evidence for the proposition that employee performance in Kenya is significantly impacted by training and development opportunities. Recommendations for management and policy are given in light of the study's results and conclusions. Training and development and employee performance among Kakamega County Government employees were shown to be statistically significantly correlated, according to the study's objective findings. Therefore, it is advised that the County Government of Kakamega give employee training and development a higher priority by allocating a larger portion of its budget and bolstering these commitments with strategic plans, well-defined policies, and specialized establishments to improve service delivery and employee performance.

7. Area for Further Research

The results of this study confirm that performance among employees of the County Government of Kakamega is influenced by training and development based on data sampled from 375 employees. Future research will need to be carried out in a different social and geographical setup to ascertain if the link between training and development and employee performance can be generalized.

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