

THE INFLUENCE OF EMPLOYEES COMMITMENT ON THE PERFORMANCE OF TECHNICAL TRAINING INSTITUTES IN MERU COUNTY

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Abstract: Employees commitment on performance has over the years become a very crucial part of Human Resource Management in organizations and its benefits all over the world cannot be over emphasized. The willingness of employees to work determines whether the organization will achieve the stated objectives or not. It involves getting constant feedback on how the employees are working, the employees having the necessary skills and competencies such as communication skills, interpersonal skills, professional skills and ability to scan the surrounding environment to give the organization competitive advantage as well as having clearly defined responsibilities. The main objective the study focused on finding out the relationship between employees commitment and performance of Technical Training Institutes in Meru County. This study was carried out in the four technical training institutes in Meru County. All the management employees of the technical training institutes were used as the respondents. There were 74 respondents' management staff from the 4 technical training institutes in Meru County. It was found that employees do not receive constant feedback on their areas of improvement from their supervisors, there was lack of career planning in most institutions. This is a common problem experienced by majority of the people appointed to positions and are not committed to the work, since their career path is not clear while majority of the teachers had furthered their studies which positively improved their performances. The study recommends that technical institutes' management should conduct seminars and training to the members of staff in order to enhance employees' commitment and improve their organization performance.

Keywords: employee commitment, performance of Technical Training Institutes.

1. INTRODUCTION

Performance Management were introduced to Training Institutes between Director General of Central Administration in the learning Institutions and Directors of Public institution in 1990, with aim of ensuring consistency in a decentralized context. Again performance appraisal was meant to add pressure on the entire service network to improve performance. However, the design and implementation of actions through performance appraisal created accountability and result oriented in learning institutions.

OECD (2013) highlights that the approach to staff management has been challenged by engagement of the concerned parties at the departmental level downwards to sub-departmental level. In United States of America, Technical Training institutes carried performance appraisal system which aimed at improving public sector performance using management indicators such as quality, mission productivity and efficiency. In the actual practice, directorates at local government were managed through performance appraisal and in return performance was improved. These adjustments have been accomplished through involving directors and heads of local services in the local government autonomy to encourage initiative, allocation of responsibilities and decision making for their juniors (Palmer, 2009).

In Singapore the senior staff in various companies would carry out performance appraisal and submit it without the knowledge of the juniors. This was not well received and the National Production Board of Singapore had to look for a better alternative. It came up with a participatory and transparent system of appraisal and all the concerned were sensitized through seminars and trainings. However there are still a good number of organizations that carry out closed performance (Ghorpade, 2010). Japan on the other hand has performance appraisal in technical training institutes being integral to the employees work and it is thus continuous. This kind of appraisal is mainly based on team work and limited for individual workers. Hence these organizations encourage group performance rather than individual. The appraisal in this case is useful for encouragement and motivation as well as identification of training needs.

2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Employees commitment is useful in organization performance and where an organization does not have qualified manpower she will be forced to outsource Dandira (2011). For the organization to be able to perform effectively it must have the necessary manpower which is committed who possess effective communication skills, interpersonal skills, professional skills and ability to scan an environment in order to be able to predict future events.

In Kenya, technical training institutes have started carrying out performance appraisal to their employees with the aim of measuring institutional performance from January 2016 (Daily Nation) as per the requirements of Teacher's Service Commission to enhance performance of the technical training institutes. The employees' commitment in these technical training institutes is meant to check constant feedback given to employees on their areas of work, whether there is clearly defined responsibilities from top management to bottom line managers, whether there are well set out career path for employees to advance on their skills (Mwirigi, 2014).

However, the performance in technical training institutes has remained a challenge and in most cases is as a result of lack of employees' commitment. Gakure (2013) found that highly committed employees is requisite for organization performance. Performance of Technical training institutes is also affected when top management does not support employees towards achieving organizational goals as employees commitment deserves. It is from this information that a gap is found to exist which needs an academic inquiry in order to establish the relationship between employees commitment and performance of technical training institutes in Kenya; a survey of technical training institutes in Meru County.

3. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The study objective was to establish the influence of employees commitment on the performance of Technical Training Institutes in Meru County.

3.1 Research Hypothesis

The study alternative hypothesis is that there is a significant relationship between employee commitment and the performance of technical training institutes in Meru County.

3.2 Scope of the Study

This study was carried out in the four technical training institutes in Meru County.

These are Meru National Polytechnic, Nkabune TTI, Kiirua TTI and Mukiria TTI. All the management employees of the technical training institutes were used as the respondents. There were 74 respondents' management staff from the 4 technical training institutes in Meru County.

4. THEORITICAL REVIEW

This section contains the theories used in this study. The study has used theories like goal setting, commitment trust theory and balanced score card. These theories give theoretical foundation to the study.

4.1 The Balanced Scorecard theory

This theory was initially by Robert Kaplan and David Norton in 1995. Kaplan and Norton (1996) indicate that the Balanced Scorecard translates an organization's mission and strategy into a comprehensive set of performance measures that provides the framework for a strategic measurement and management system. This strategic management system measures organizational performance in four 'balanced' perspectives which includes the financial aspect that summarizes the readily measurable economic consequences of actions already taken.

Customer comes next. The measure contained here identifies the customer and market segments in which the business unit will compete and the measures of the business unit's performance in these targeted segments. There is the internal business process which measures the critical internal processes in which the organization must excel. Lastly, this theory looks at the learning and growth which measures the infrastructure that the organization must build to create long-term growth and improvement. In order to create a balanced scorecard an organization's management team needs to translate the mission, vision, and strategy of the firm into a scorecard. The measures used in a scorecard should represent both long-term and short-term success in the execution of the strategy. The scorecard should contain both outcome measures that indicate excellent prior performance, along with the performance-drivers that create successful future performance. This 'balanced' framework enables a management team to clarify and translate vision and strategy, communicate and link strategic objectives and measures, plan, set targets, and align strategic initiatives, enhance strategic feedback and learning. The four strategic management processes are the keys to the Balanced Scorecard theory. Kaplan and Norton found that implementation of strategy is as important as the development of strategy. The Balanced Scorecard is a change management program, enabled by the scorecard (Kaplan and Norton 1996). Performance appraisal is a strategy adopted by technical institutions in order to improve overall performance. Technical institutions is a service sector that is undergoing transformation from the old system of being a punitive center to a correctional and rehabilitation center. In order to offer services that are acceptable to the society, the four perspective of balance score card needs to be integrated by technical institutions in the implementation of performance appraisal. Adequate finances should be provided in order to ensure that there is readily measurable economic consequences of actions already taken by the institutes. The theory is helpful in technical institutions since the performance appraisal will require to look at all the aspect of the organization performance. This theory all in line with the study objectives since effective performance appraisal will requires employee to be commitment, setting achievable goals, management should support the whole issue of performance appraisal and there should be rewards systems where the performers are motivated and non-performers are punished.

4.2 Empirical Review

4.2.1 Employee Commitment

Dandira (2011) in his study found that employee's commitment is useful in organization performance and where an organization does not have qualified manpower she will be forced to outsource. Drucker (2009), noted that constant feedback is a requirement for success of any organization. This constant feedback will help one to know how organization performance will be improved. In this regard the opinion that the firm must appoint an executive committee which have a vision and a dream beyond everybody in the organization, and which is driven by results. For the organization to be able to perform effectively it must have the necessary manpower which is committed who possess effective communication skills, interpersonal skills, professional skills and ability to scan an environment in order to be able to predict future events.

Govindarajan (2010) found that performance is negatively affected by lack of clearly defined responsibilities between employees and the top management. Commitment of employees should be cascaded from top to bottom of the firm so that all employees are kept in the light on how the performance is being conceived and what is required of them. This means that managers should not hold back any information in their possession which can be helpful in strategic planning. The professional skills are necessary in strategic planning. Effective commitment is necessary tools for the leader to pass down the vision to all the employees and relevant stake holders. Continuous learning is very important for any person who wishes to get the skills to scan the environment.

A study by Sherman, Rowley and Armandi (2007) indicated that lack of career planning in most organizations is common problem experienced in Africa and that people appointed to positions are not committed since their career path is not clear. They cite a case where a former army general (who is used to autocratic style of leadership) is appointed to a position of a university administrator which requires democratic style of leadership. This leads to a mismatch between the personalities appointed with the strategies that can work well for the organization. To be able to ensure the performance is improved effectively, today's environment requires business minded and innovative employees who after analyzing the environment, can be able to commit themselves to the vision of the organization. Technical institutions are not exceptional from profit making bodies.

Gakure (2013) found that highly committed employees is requisite for organization performance. Gakure argues that there is need for having committed staff for organization is tied to empowerment of staff and organization needs to place great emphasis on recruiting and retaining the staff involved. Sami (2011) suggests that the key to service delivery in performance is to adapt to circumstances that are constantly changing and that the long-term winners are the best adapters, but are not

necessarily the winners of today's race for market share. Schaap (2008) argues that government institutions performance often fails because employees lack commitment and capacity for service delivery which requires specific skill levels and experience and lack of continuously learning. Hrebiniak (2011) concluded that maintaining organization performance is a difficult task for any management team especially if the employees do not have the requisite skills which improves commitment. It is clear that a poor skills can limit organization performance dramatically. Good execution cannot overcome the shortcomings of a poor performance. Allio, (2010) argues that necessary commitment that employees have will influence the effect of organization performance. Alexander (2010) believes that the need to start with a strategy that involves a good idea or concept is mentioned most often in helping promote successful organization performance. Mauborgne (2010) carried out a study on modern performance strategies. He found that the question of a performance itself is consistent and fitting or not is a key question for successful performance, but even a consistent performance strategy cannot be all things to all people. Bantel (2009) suggests that particular product/market performance strategies are effective at achieving particular performance goals to the exclusion of others. One of his conclusions, synergies between performance strategy capabilities that exist in employees should be exploited. The central conclusion of the research of Bantel (2009) is that the procedural justice of the organization performance ultimately affects the commitment, trust, and social harmony as well as the outcome satisfaction of managers in subsidiaries. Singh (2011) noted that employee commitment, trust in organization performance will need specific cognitive requirements and how they can be met with the help of software-based decision tools. The results indicate that computerized cognitive aids can successfully be designed into decision support systems to support decision makers, strategy execution process and that such aids have a significant positive impact on both decision-making efficiency and effectiveness. However, decision support systems is much more strongly rooted in strategy formulation and it requires employees to have the skills that will help them and the entire strategic formulation team succeed in formulating viable strategic plans. Chimhanzi (2009) suggests that cross-unit working relationships have a key role to play in the successful organization performance. Performance effectiveness is affected negatively by conflict and positively by communication and specifically, interpersonal, not written. In turn, these interdepartmental dynamics are affected by senior management support, joint reward systems, and informal integration. Executors are comprised of top management, middle management, lower management and non-management. Effectiveness of strategy formulation is affected by the quality of people involved in the process. Sweeney (2010) on his study on employee's factor in strategic management argues that public organizations should have the quality employees who can handle required task or position. This study findings indicate that strategy formulation success depends crucially on the human or people who are assigned the work to develop strategy and less on organization and systems related factors. Similarly, Harrington (2009) finds that a higher level in total organizational involvement during strategy formulation had positive effects on the level of formulation success, organization profits and overall organization success.

4.2.2. Conceptual Framework

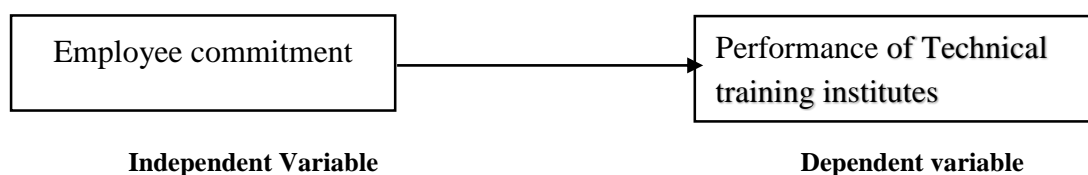


Figure 1

5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopted descriptive survey to gather data in order to answer questions concerning the current status of the research problem. This design helped the researcher to collect data by asking questions using questionnaires. The study targeted 74 respondents' from Management staff of the 4 Technical training institutes in Meru County. In choosing the members who participated in the study, the researcher focused on the management employees of four technical training institutes in Meru County. The Technical Institutes included, Meru National Polytechnic, Nkabune Technical Training Institute, Kiirua Technical Training Institute and Mukiria Technical Training Institute. This is because Management are the major players in the day-to-day operations and they are the ones that monitor performance in their respective departments. The study adopted census sampling design which allowed the use of a sample size of 74 respondents. Data was collected using questionnaire. The questionnaire were both open ended and closed ended questions. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistic such frequency and percentages. Multiple linear regression and Pearson correlation was used to establish whether there exists any relationship between employee commitment and technical institutions performance. The variable Y is usually defined as: $Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + e$

Where: Y= Performance;

β_0 = Constant;

β_1 = Coefficient of independent variables;

X1 = Target settings;

e = Error term of the mode.

5.1 Data Analysis, Presentation and Interpretation

The respondents were asked to indicate whether they have clearly defined responsibilities which are put in place and in the running of day to day affairs of the technical training institutes. Their responses were presented in the table below.

Table 5.1: Response on whether employees have clearly defined responsibilities

Employees have clearly defined responsibilities	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	10	15.8
Agree	13	20.8
Neutral	4	6.7
Disagree	33	45.0
Total	60	100

The data revealed that majority of the respondents 45% disagreed that employees have clearly defined responsibilities while 36.6% agreed that employees have clearly defined responsibilities. This implies that teachers do not have clearly defined responsibilities. These findings agree with those of a Govindarajan (2010) on performance appraisal who found that performance is negatively affected by lack of clearly defined responsibilities between employees and the top management.

5.2 Responses on whether there is Constant Feedback

Respondents were asked to indicate whether they are involved in constant feedback in their technical training institutes. This was significant for this study because it would help the researcher to know the extent to which the respondents could own up and implement the performance feedback. The responses given were presented in the table below

Table 5.2: Response on whether Constant Feedback

Constant Feedback	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	3	5.0
Agree	11	18.3
Neutral	3	5.0
Disagree	26	42.5
Strongly Disagree	17	29.2
Total	60	100.0

Data revealed from the respondents that 70 % disagreed that there is constant feedback while 28.3% of the respondents agreed that there is constant feedback in the technical institutes. It was also found that 5% of the respondents were neutral whether they are involved or not. This shows that in most cases, employees are not given constant feedback. These findings are in agreement with Drucker (2009) who found that constant feedback is a requirement for success of any organization. This constant feedback will help one to know how organization performance will be improved.

5.3 Responses on whether organization has created a clear career planning

The respondents were asked whether organization has created a clear career planning. This was important for this study because it would help the researcher to know the extent to which organization has created a clear career planning for teachers. The responses were presented in the table below.

Table 5.3: Responses on whether organization has created a clear career planning

Teachers have a clear career planning	Frequency	Percent
Agree	24	40.0
Neutral	1	.8
Disagree	33	54.2
Strongly Disagree	2	5.0
Total	60	100.0

The data revealed from all the respondents that 59.2% disagreed that organization has created a clear career planning for teachers while 40% agreed that there is clear career planning for teachers in the organization. This implies that at times teachers have no clear career planning. This finding concurs with those of Sherman, Rowley and Armandi (2007) who found that lack of career planning in most organizations is common problem experienced in Africa and that people appointed to positions are not committed since their career path is not clear.

5.4 Response on whether institution has created a learning culture

The respondents were asked whether the institution has created a learning culture that has increased the commitment of employees. This was significant for this study because it would help the researcher to know the extent to which organization has created a learning culture that has increased the commitment of employees to improve performance. The responses were presented in the table below.

Table 5.4 Response on whether organization has created a learning culture

Organization has created a learning culture	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	10	18.3
Agree	31	51.7
Neutral	2	3.3
Disagree	9	15.0
Strongly Disagree	8	11.7
Total	60	100.0

Majority of the respondents 70% agreed that organization has created a learning culture while 27.6% disagreed that organization has created a learning culture. This means that majority of the respondents have been able to further their studies and as a result such teachers were able to improve their performance. These findings are in agreement with those of Hatry (2011) who found that behavioral goals are likely to be more applicable than performance outcome goals for an employee if there is capacity to develop themselves and acquire more skills in order to enhance appraisal coaching purposes.

5.5 Hypothesis Testing

A hypothesis test is a statistical test that is used to determine whether there is enough evidence in a sample of data to infer that a certain condition is true for the entire population. A hypothesis test examines two opposing hypotheses about a population: the null hypothesis and the alternative hypothesis. The researcher used alternate Hypothesis so as to be able to conclude the statement is true. The sample data was tested using p-value in order to determine whether to reject the null hypothesis based on the level of significance of 0.05.

Table 5.5: Correlations of the dependent and independent variables

Independent Variables		Employee Commitment
Performance of TTI (Y)	Pearson Correlation (r)	0.796*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001

5.6 Test of Hypothesis of Employee commitment

A. Model Summary

Table 5.6: Below shows the model summary.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.533a	0.284	0.272	0.15574
a. Predictors: (Constant), Employee Commitment,				

B. Regression Coefficients

Table 5.7: Regression Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		β	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.193	0.159		7.486	0.00
	Employee commitment	0.409	0.03	0.204	4.639	0.00

Dependent Variable: Performance of technical training institutes

The study hypothesized that there is no significant relationship between employee commitment and performance of technical training institutes. The study findings showed a positive significant relationship between employee commitment and performance of technical training institutes ($\beta=0.409$, $t=4.639$ p value <0.05). This implies that an increase in performance of technical training institutes in Meru County is associated with increased employee commitment by 0.409.

6. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 summary

The data revealed that majority of the employees not given feedback by top management regarding their performance and areas of improvement, some of the respondents also agreed that organization has created a learning culture while others disagreed that organization has created a learning culture this implies that at times teachers have no clear career planning. It also revealed that majority of the respondents have been able to further their studies and as a result such teachers are able to improve their performance. From the above findings it is evident that there is a positive relationship between employee commitment and performance of technical training institutes.

6.2 Conclusion

It is noted that though the technical training institutes have started carrying out performance appraisals to their employees with the aim of measuring institutional performance from January 2016 as per the requirements of Teacher's Service Commission to enhance performance of the technical training institutes. The performance appraisal in these technical training institutes have not improved the overall performance of the technical institutes. It is concluded that the performance in technical training institutes is still a challenge and in most cases and as a result it affects the demand of technical training institute's graduates. This study concludes that there is a problem with the performance of technical training institutes in Meru County despite using employee commitment to enhance performance. It is also concluded that all the four variables influence performance of the technical institutes.

6.3 Recommendations

The study recommends that technical institutes' management should adopt the following mechanism to improve performance in technical training institutes:

- Conduct seminar and training to the members of staff in order to enhance employees' commitment and improve their organization performance.
- It is further recommended that the technical institute management should ensure that the target setting process is fair and inclusive of employees' views in order to ensure that employees own those targets and strive to achieve them for the benefit of organization performance.

- It is also recommended that the management teams of the technical institutes should come up with ways to support the staff and students in order to create a teamwork which will be able to achieve the desired performance for organization improvement.
- Finally the technical training institutes management and board should come up with rewards systems which will be able to motivate staff to work at least hard with dedication which will in turn result to increased performance.

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