
**STAFF DEVELOPMENT SCHEMES AND EMPLOYEE JOB PERFORMANCE AT
KIRINYAGA COUNTY GOVERNMENT, KENYA**

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ABSTRACT

Staff developments scheme is amongst the novel management strategies which organizations are increasingly, embracing in an attempt to improve efficiency and effectiveness in job performance. Staff developments scheme are important for career development for both the manager and employee. The manager can help guide the employee on the path to corporate advancement and consequently the employee gets a clearer understanding of what is expected on their daily job duties. Staff development has been a major challenge for the counties since their inception in 2010. In Kirinyaga County there is growing disquiet that employees have stagnated in the same job group for close to ten years. There has been raised concerns on whether it could be precipitating low staff morale. Therefore the study sought to establish the influence of staff development schemes on job performance among employees in Kirinyaga County Government. The study was anchored on two theories; Goal Setting Theory by Lotham and Locke (1979) and Expectancy Theory by Vroom (1964). The study sought; to review the current staff development schemes and its influence on job performance. The target population consisted of 306 employees of Kirinyaga County Government. Using a convenience sample of 62 employees, data was collected by means of a questionnaire and analyzed through both descriptive and inferential statistics. The study established that staff development scheme in the county government of Kirinyaga was very weak. The overall (staff development scheme) computed aggregate mean score (\bar{x} = 2.0423, s = .46535) which indicated that on average, employee staff development scheme rarely occurred. The study also established that there was no statistically significant relationship between employee job performance and the staff development scheme at Kirinyaga County Government. The researchers recommend that there is need to evaluate and improve the staff development scheme at the county with a view of enhancing employees' job performance.

KEYWORDS: Staff development scheme, job performance, management strategy

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In any organization, employees are considered among the essential strategic assets. Therefore,

employees could be a source of competitive advantage if their organization provides more attention and invest in developing employees' skills at the workplace (Zaharie & Osoian, 2013). Human Resource Management (HRM) is a function in organizations designed to maximize employee performance towards employer's strategic objectives. Al-Jabari (2013) pointed out that several external factors which indirectly influence HRM include socio-cultural values, religion, economic conditions and legal systems. Staff developments scheme is amongst the management strategies in many organizations and its main purpose is to improve efficiency and effectiveness in job performance (Mullins, 2010). In this context staff developments scheme as a system has been in existence for several decades. Baylis, Gray, and Wirtz, (2016) assert that evaluation of employees began in the 18th century in an attempt to improve performance through cost reduction, innovation to improve quality, productivity, and speed to market. According to Mullins (2010), the underlying objective of staff developments scheme is to improve the performance of the individual employee, thereby leading to improvement in the performance of the organization as a whole. Staff developments scheme is one of the strategies that can be used to manage performance effectively in that, it provides motivation of employee job performance. Staff developments schemes are also crucial for career and succession development. Performance review designed for workforce inspiration, position and conduct. Improvement, converse directorial aims, along with nurturing optimistic associations between supervision and workforce (Panagar, 2009). Staff developments scheme ought to be treated as an enduring developmental progression to a certain extent than a prescribed once-a-year review. By preparing physically conscientiously and signifying a keenness to work, together with ones reviewer to enlarge ones responsibility, an employee will craft an encouraging consciousness. Worker act, in common, submit to behaviour with the intention of applicable to directorial goals and with the intention to organize entity workforce (J.P et al. 1993) Job performance is an important subject area for researchers and practitioners of management all over the world. Job performance is equally relevant to public and private sectors and civil and military establishments. Staff developments scheme can act as motivation for an employee to improve his productivity. When an employee sees his goals clearly defined, his performance challenges identified and career development solutions in place to help advance his career, the effect is to motivate the employee to achieve those goals. Creating a comprehensive plan for employee development and giving an employee achievement to strive for will inspire a higher level of efficiency.

Departmental and individual objectives are then formulated which must be consistent with the organizational objectives. In staff developments scheme context, this dimension is related to the perceived fairness of performance ratings received by employees. Despite these variations, the performance management process generally involves some form of goal setting, performance appraisal/review and reward. In addition, training is often offered throughout the process (Madison, 2016). Staff developments scheme provides employee satisfaction with the appraisal system, and is considered the most consequential among all the variables that measure reactions to appraisal feedback

(Levy and Williams, 2004).

Khawaja and Nadeem (2013) observe that staff developments scheme is a central feature of organizational success and employee retention that involves a combination of all the factors such as staff development strategies, performance appraisal, reward and recognition systems are suggested and analyzed in order to improve performance. Motivation is equally relevant to public and private sectors and civil and military establishments. More and more companies are offering long service bonuses to retain skilled and competent staff and to minimize the rates of staff turnover (Ugwu, 2013). More and more companies of all sizes, large, medium or small are offering performance based incentives and rewards to keep their staff motivated. A work force which is not sufficiently motivated cannot meet the objectives of its organization whether the organization is a profit making organization or a non-profit making organization. Motivation is concerned with the human beings working in a particular place and companies all over the world are spending considerable amounts of money to set up an effective human resources (HR) department for their organization (Ugwu, 2013). Ken Lloyd from Performance Appraisals and Phrases for Dummies has tried to establish the relationship and as per his opinion, Motivation is the process that energizes employees and propels them to pursue their goals. Well-designed and well-executed performance appraisals have a strong motivational impact. Appraisals have the power to motivate employees because they provide a number of interconnected benefits. If employees don't have a clear understanding of how they've been performing, they can't be motivated to make any improvements.

Staff developments scheme is not only an important tool of HRM to develop their employees, but is also used by different companies to reward their employees in form of bonuses, promotions, and pay raise etc. Usage of staff developments scheme to reward employees is also used by different theories of motivation like reinforcement theory etc. (Talya&Berim, 2010). Job satisfaction amongst employees has been the subject of extensive study by many researchers. Aydogdu and Asikgil (2011) add that specific and timely feedback to performance appraisal has a positive emotional state experienced by an individual on his work, resulting in job satisfaction. The kind of environment that is created by the staff developments schemes optimizes the employees' work performance. Individual performance goals that are consistent with organizational goals provide guidelines to the employee on how their effort can lead to organizational improvement.

This study was conducted in Kirinyaga County because the functioning of the government depends upon how people work, therefore, an improvement in job performance is central to the government's strategy of maintaining and improving prosperity. Staff developments scheme are widely used within many areas of the public sector (Government of Kenya, 2005). Economic Recovery Strategy (2003) published by Kenya Government setting out a ten year transformational was to be measured by better

results. The civil service has embraced the promise of performance contracting and appraisal as a means to improve performance, spur innovations such as balanced scored card.

2.0 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Staff developments scheme is amongst the current management strategy in many organizations and its main purpose is to improve efficiency and effectiveness in job performance. Staff development schemes are widely used within many areas of the public sector as measures to ensure staff development and organizational transformational to a better, knowledgeable work force. In addition staff development schemes improve employee job performance and spurring innovations. However in Kirinyaga County there is growing disquiet that employees have stagnated in the same job group for close to ten years that has raise concerns whether this could be precipitating poor job performance. This creates the need to establish the influence of staff development schemes on employee job performance in the County.

3.0 THEORIES

The research is based on two theories which include goal setting theory by Lotham and Locke (1979) and expectancy theory by Vroom (1964). The goal setting theory emphasizes on the importance of employees' motivation through setting of targets and is widely recognized as a technique to improve performance. It emphasizes the need to agree and set targets which will act as standard of performance measurement. Accordingly, the theory was found relevant in relation to the variables of the study because the study sought to establish the effect of staff development scheme on employee job performance. Expectancy theory on the other hand advocates motivation as a function of personal effort to achieve high performance. The performance level achieved will lead to a reward, and this provides the basic feedback about ones strengths and weaknesses which is inevitable for formulating succession plans. According to Expectancy theory the perception of high performance is achieved where certain reward equally proportional is expected.

4.0 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The study was guided by the following objectives;

- (i) To review the staff development schemes of person's employed by the county government of Kirinyaga.
- (ii) To determine the influence of the staff development scheme on job performance among persons employed by the county government of Kirinyaga.

5.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study employed a descriptive research design to examine effect of staff development schemes on employee job performance in Kirinyaga County Government, Kenya. According to Kothari (2004) descriptive studies are intended to collect data pertaining to the prevailing status of a phenomenon and

draw deductions from the data collected without manipulating the research variables. Additionally, descriptive studies permit exploration of relationships between variables and make it possible for extensive collection of data over a wide area within a short period of time using the cross-sectional design (Kothari, 2004). The Target population of the study consisted of 306 employees in Kirinyaga County Government and a convenient sample of 62 respondents. Data was collected using a questionnaire with both closed and open ended questions. Data was analyzed by means of descriptive and inferential statistics with the aid of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 24.0.

6.0 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The study sought to establish the effect of staff development scheme on employee job performance in Kirinyaga County Government, Kenya. The first research objective sought to assess the staff development scheme for persons employed in the county government of Kirinyaga. The respondents indicated their views/opinions on a five point likert scale that ranged from; Not at all true (1), rarely true (2), sometimes true (3), mostly true (4), almost always true (5). The responses obtained were used to calculate a mean score (\bar{x}) of incentives and motivation scheme for the respondents on a scale of 1 to 5. The mean scores obtained were interpreted as follows; 1-1.99 (Not at all true), 2.00-2.99 (Rarely true), 3.00-3.99 (sometimes true), 4.00-4.99 (Mostly true), and lastly 5.00 (Almost always true). The findings are presented in Table 1.

Table1: Staff Development Scheme

	1	2	3	4	5	n	\bar{x}	s
1 My organization has a training and development policy applicable to all employees	21	15	24	2	0	62	2.11	.93
2 I find it easy to apply the training in my organization	15	30	16	0	1	62	2.06	.81
3 There are opportunities available for me to work with a mentor	18	13	27	2	0	60	2.22	.92
4 There are opportunities for me to cross-train and learn new skills	18	29	12	2	0	61	1.97	.80
5 Supervisor's efforts to identify your strengths and weakness	18	19	21	3	0	61	2.15	.91
6 The quality of orientation and training received for your current position	16	28	11	1	0	56	1.95	.75
7 The process for identifying candidates to fill open positions	20	14	22	0	0	56	2.04	.87
8 Supervisors make sure that employees have the opportunity for training	21	25	15	1	0	62	1.94	.81

9	Supervisors help employees set goals for work as a result of their training	17	17	23	0	1	58	2.16	.91
10	When employees arrive from training, they make use of skills learned from other people	23	24	15	0	0	62	1.87	.78
Aggregate mean (\bar{x}) = 2.0423		Std. deviation = .46535		n=62					

Majority of the respondents indicated that it is rarely true pertaining the following statements that; the organization has a training and development policy applicable to all employees ($\bar{x} = 2.11, s = .93$); employees found it easy to apply the training in my organization ($\bar{x} = 2.06, s = .81$); there are opportunities available for an employee to work with a mentor ($\bar{x} = 2.22, s = .92$); supervisor's tries to identify employees strengths and weakness ($\bar{x} = 2.15, s = .91$); the process for identifying candidates to fill open positions ($\bar{x} = 2.04, s = .87$) and Supervisors help employees set goals for work as a result of their training ($\bar{x} = 2.16, s = .91$). The respondents also indicated that it was not true at all about the following statements; there are opportunities for me to cross-train and learn new skills ($\bar{x} = 1.97, s = .80$); the quality of orientation and training received for your current position ($\bar{x} = 1.95, s = .75$) and that when employees arrive from training, they brief other people ($\bar{x} = 1.95, s = .75$). The overall computed aggregate mean score ($\bar{x} = 2.0423, s = .46535$) indicated that on average employee staff development scheme rarely occurred. The findings of this study concur with the findings of (Amadi, 2014; Heathfield, 2012; Wachira, 2013) whose studies established that training and development has a positive impact on both motivations of employees as well as performance.

The second research objective sought to determine the influence of staff development scheme on job performance among persons employed by the county government of Kirinyaga. To address this objective the researcher computed the regression model of employee staff development scheme and job performance. The findings are presented as follows.

Table 2. Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.120 ^a	.014	-.002	.46865

a. Predictors: (Constant), Incentives

Data presented in Table 2 provides the R and R² values. The R value represents the simple correlation and is 0.120, which indicates a very weak correlation between staff development scheme and employee job performance. The R² value indicates how much of the total variation in the dependent variable, job performance, can be explained by the independent variable, staff development scheme. In this case, 1.4% can be explained, which is very small. This is in agreement with Aziri (2011) whose study established that training and development will give benefits for employees such as better position and

better career life and may enhance the efficiency of the organization. Skilled employees will give a better performance.

Table 3. ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	.192	1	.192	.873	.354 ^b
	Residual	13.178	60	.220		
	Total	13.370	61			

a. Dependent Variable: job performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Incentives

Table 3 indicates that the regression model fails to predict the dependent variable significantly well. Here, $p < 0.354$, which is more than 0.05, and indicates that, overall, the regression model does not statistically significantly predicts the outcome. Therefore in this study the staff development scheme does not predict employee job performance.

7.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The findings of the study indicate that staff development scheme in the county government of Kirinyaga is very weak. The overall (staff development scheme) computed aggregate mean score ($\bar{x} = 2.0423$, $s = .46535$) indicated that on average employee staff development scheme it rarely occurred. The fitted regression model indicated a correlation and is 0.120, between staff development scheme and employee job performance which is very weak. The R^2 value indicated that only 1.4% of variations in employee job performance could be explained by variations in the independent variable (staff development scheme). This influence is almost negligible. The study also established that there was no statistically significant relationship between employee job performance and the staff development scheme at Kirinyaga County Government. The study concludes that the county does not have a well-defined staff development scheme which leads to poor staff performance.

8.0 RECOMMENDATION

The findings from this study have several implications for the management and employees of Kirinyaga County Government. It was recommended that there was need to address the relative low impact of staff development scheme on employees’ job performance in Kirinyaga County Government. It is also important to find out the causes of low levels of staff development schemes among employees in the county government. Further research should be undertaken among other county government employees in the other 46 counties since devolved governance is a new phenomenon in the country.

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