

An Assessment of Devolved Human Resource Management Practices on Service Delivery in Samburu County, Kenya

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Abstract: Globally, the devolution of personnel functions is a growing trend. Kenyan citizens have impressed this type of governance aiming at trickling resources down to the county governments. There are both beneficial and negative effects of devolution, as several authors have suggested. These difficulties show us that devolution of human resource management has its own drawbacks. This study's objective was to evaluate the impact of decentralized HR management methods on service delivery in Kenya's Samburu County. Research objective was determining the impact of devolved employee training on service delivery in Samburu County. This study was influenced by the Resource Based Theory of the Firm, Expectancy Theory, and Attraction Selection Attrition Theory. The research design used in this study was descriptive. Data gathering involved the use of a questionnaire. The 222 management staff members from the county's different divisions were the target population. A stratified sampling technique was utilized on a sample of 142 respondents. The magnitude of the interconnected relationship between independent factors and the dependent variable was attempted using regression. The results showed that service delivery in Samburu County was impacted by devolved human resources practices. This suggests that Devolved staff training and development had a significant beta coefficient in the model ($= 0.346$, $p 0.001$), showing that they had an impact on service delivery. Stating that decentralized staff training and development will increase by one unit, service delivery will increase by 0.346. The study made a conclusion that devolved human resource management practices have an influence that is significant on service delivery in Samburu County.

Keywords: Devolved Human Resources Management Practices, Service Delivery, County Government.

I. Introduction

Among the discussions about the approaches of the human resource management strategies are the benefits on transferring of human resource function (Budhwar&Khatri,2002). Initial studies suggest that a big number of organizations and institutions fully or partly devolving their human resource functions and that line managers are currently having far greater responsibilities. Majority of the institutions have their base in European countries as well as in the United States of America (Cascon-Pereira *et al.*, 2006).In Africa, human resource function is still a support function that is a service provider to its customers that are internal but which are continuously under challenge to add value to the quality of services provided and in return continue to nurture and further the development of organization (Heskett*etal*, 1994). The reforms in public segment that were intended to look at the challenges have yielded insignificant results (AAPAM, 2005).

Within Africa continent, interests of having a devolved system of governance has increased with time. Among the issues of ongoing discussion about human resource management methodologies are the advantages of transferring human resource function (Budhwar& Khatri, 2002).Among African countries, public service has faced by problems, thus limiting capability of delivering services (Lienert, 2003).Services include human resource management function that is related to less than enough work force, considering the number and competency requirement, not having applicable mindsets as well as socio- psychological outlooks. Limitations both financially and materially, which make it necessary for supporting effective and efficiency in service delivery, has been a perennial problem. Governments at county levels have also experienced poor corporate image both ethically and in accountability within public sector while delivering service to the citizen.

Omolo, Kantai, and Wachira (2010) claim that devolution gives county governments the freedom to devise novel methods of service delivery that are tailored towards their particular medical requirements, a lot of flexibility in choosing the top priority for their wellness system, and the authority to make decisions on their own. Garissa County already faces a scarcity of medical professionals, which is made worse by an elevated rate of turnover among those professionals. This condition makes it difficult for the County to provide quality healthcare services. For instance, according to Mwamuye and Nyamu (2014), there is currently a doctor for every 41,538 individuals and a nurse for every 2,543 people. One of the crucial components of an organization that lays the groundwork for excellent performance is organizational performance.

HRM practice is a significant factor, influencing on employees' behaviors regarding the delivery of good quality service as par organizational standards (Fun, 2010). Gamedze (2012) conducted study on the HRM procedures used by the South African Home Affairs Ministry. The analysis revealed that HRM practices are the go-to solution for all problems plaguing the Ministry as a result of paying insufficient attention to these practices. According to Gamedze, employees should be chosen, trained, and placed in jobs that will allow them to use their skills and abilities. With the introduction of the New Public Management and Decentralization model, the Tanzanian LGA established a high public demand for quality and reliable services, and that a productive human resource was required in the study on human resource development challenges facing the decentralized local government authorities (LGA) in Tanzania, (Lufunyo 2015) noted. achieving these needs. Thus, HR development has an impact on HRM inside Tanzania's decentralized units for effective contributions to vision achievement and effective service delivery. According to Mutiso (2015), research was done to determine the relationship between HRM practices and the provision of high-quality services. The study was conducted at secondary public schools in Kenya. The author discovered through a descriptive research design that factors such as teacher training, performance management, reimbursement management, and employee health and safety had an impact on the quality of educational services provided in Taita-Taveta County. According to Odiorne (1984), the hiring procedures used by a company determine the quality of new hires, and the quality of candidates attracted determines the relative effectiveness of the selection phase. According to Smith et al. (1989), the precise selection process becomes less significant after the recruitment process is complete. The first stage of this process includes a complete study performed by 23 staff members through various evaluations when the firm is hiring to fill open positions. Examining the various technical and administrative skills. This may have been accomplished through human resource planning procedures, particularly during the somewhat frequent process of recruitment.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Devolution is advocated on the grounds that institutions close to the people are more likely to understand their demands and respond to them (Onyango & Ondiek, 2015). On the other side, there are instances where local control and resource decentralization have not had the desired impact on service delivery. Malaysian counties continue to be under pressure to enhance their service delivery, according to Makanyeza, Kwandayi, & Ikobe (2013). According to Nannyonjo and Okot (2013), despite the fact that decentralization in Uganda started in 1997, local governments are still dealing with a number of problems that are affecting service delivery, such as inadequate funding, a dearth of skilled workers, nepotism, and corruption.

According to Onyango and Ondiek (2015), the county of Kisumu in Kenya experienced problems with service delivery due to, among other things, interference from members of the County Assembly, political scheming, graft, a lack of oversight and openness, a lack of sufficient input from the public, an unsatisfactory human resource policy, a shortage of employees in the county, incorrect planning, a failure to manage change, and poor monitoring and evaluation. According to Tilas (2014), devolved government was not required in Murang'a or other counties because they could provide insufficient services.

The author also mentions that the general people lacked faith in the county government's capacity to use public finances in a way that would meet their requirements for services. According to Makanyeza, Kwandayi, and Ikobe (2013), the County of Kajiado's service delivery was subpar due to a lack of qualified staff, extensive political involvement, and ineffective national government coordination. In light of this knowledge, the researcher wants to investigate Samburu County's human resource strategies and how they impact service delivery.

1.2 Research Question

To what extend does devolved employee training and development affect delivery of service in Samburu County?

II. Literature Review

In the section, theoretic reviews together with outcomes of past researches in relation to management of human resource are explained. Reviews of literature are in different parts; the empirical and the theoretical.

2.1 Empirical Review

This section provides a review of existing literature on the employee training and development.

2.1.1 Devolved Employee Training and Development on Service Delivery

Armstrong (2014). Training and development is the practice in which employees engage in various activities purposely to increase skills and knowledge and in the process improving required mind-set to perform. The concern of training as well as development is the procedure applied to instill skills, knowledge, and attitude that afterward assist workers to acquire confidence, enabling improvement in performance. Training and development in the present study was to be looked at as to whether employees have the skills to carry out their duties, and if career development opportunities are present at the counties for employees to training and be developed so as to perform their jobs to satisfaction.

Tukunimulongo (2016) took a research Mumias Sugar Company Limited is a case study of the impact of on-the-job training on employee performance in Kenya. The results of the experiment using the descriptive study methodology demonstrated that on-the-job training programs are more likely to improve employee capabilities than those without. In Kakamega County, Kenya, Khaemba (2017) conducted research on the impact of employee training on performance.. It was observe form study that training positively and significantly influences employee performance. Employees are able to adapt to new changes in their areas of work by training thus gaining skills and confidence in tackling unexpected events.

Al-Zoubi, Masa'deh and Twaissi (2022) Analyze the effects of mentoring, job rotation, structured on-the-job training (ST), and work environment elements on the transfer of tacit information acquired during training. The primary study variables were examined for causal correlations using quantitative research approaches. A questionnaire-based survey has been created to assess the study model by selecting a convenience sample of 239 employees from the Jordan-based Arab Potash Company. The findings showed that job rotation, mentoring, and ST adaptation had a direct impact on employees' capacities to learn and apply tacit knowledge from training to the actual work. These techniques for learning also strengthened employees' capacities to solve problems at work, thereby raising the level of client satisfaction and the caliber of goods and services.

Sahai (2021) delivers a functional fluency-based training paradigm for the millennial workforce. The framework provides the coach with compelling coaching questions based on the nine modes of the Functional Fluency model to help millennials become more effective in both their personal and professional lives. According to the research, coaching millennials entails educating them about how they use their energy. Based on a millennial's desire for coaching, a coach investigates their experience and uses impactful questions from one or more modes to generate plausible possibilities for the best course of action.

Mutegi, Nzioki & King'oriah (2021) conducted a study on influence regarding Huduma centers in Kenya train their staff to provide services to the public, with government regulations acting as a mediating factor. The Human Capital hypothesis served as the study's foundation. The 52 Huduma centers' branch managers, 1456 supervisors, and 1456 general public clients from the government ministries providing public services in Huduma center branches were the target population. The delivery of public services, staff training, and the mediating variable of governmental policy were all shown to have positive significant low linear relationships. As a result, strategic employee training has a big impact on how well Huduma centers perform public services.

2.2.1 Resource Based Theory

The Penrose-proposed theory offers a framework for examining the relationship between HRM practices and service delivery. According to RBT, employers must continually assess their staff in order to maintain a sustainable competitive edge and ensure that the correct individuals are employed and have the necessary capabilities (Barney, 2010). Furthermore, the use of appropriate recruitment, selection, training and performance management practices may enable firms make up for any deficiency. It is easy to acquire technology and capital unlike employees who are qualified and motivated (Sparrow et al., 2002). As a fact, technology, resources that are natural, and economies of scale are becoming easy to imitate as compared to HR. Firms that are in a position to generate human capital advantage

usually recruit, select, train and manage performance of individuals that are exemplary (Boxall, 1998). Researchers give much focus to RBV for investigating influence of HR practices on how organizations perform (Wright, Dunford and Snell, 2001). As Boxall & Purcell (2008) argues that organizations consider it cheaper To educate and mold the ideal person before hiring them directly from the process.

The RBT includes two essential presumptions, according to Helfat and Peteraf (2003), that assist it explain how firm-based resources provide durable competitive advantage and why some firms may continually defeat competitors by raising their level of competition. First, various businesses possess different resource bundles (Helfat & Peteraf, 2003). One of the pillars of RBT is the heterogeneity of resources and competences among a population of firms, which distinguishes the competitive advantage of each firm.

2.2.2 Expectancy Theory

In this theory, it is proposed; individual performance depends on the level of motivation, presence of skills and abilities required for the role at hand, and the knowing the role (Savaneviciene & Stankeviciute, 2010). It is an approach of specifying human resource management practices encouraging above average skills and abilities, such as carefully selecting and investing heavily towards training and motivation, such as in having employees involved in performance-related pay; provision of the right structure of the job and perception in the design of the job as well as communication feedback. Human resource practice and policies of different kind will have many effects on ability, motivation, as well as ability requirement (Katou, 2008). HRM policies are expected to affect performance ability. Job analysis plus design basically will determine ability requirements in addition to determining rewards offered.

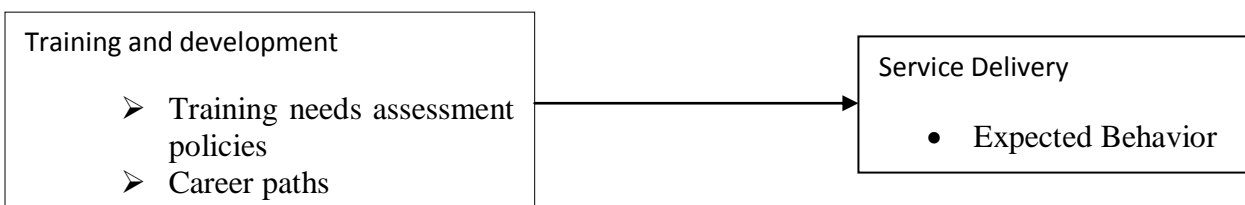
According to expectation theory, a person's driving force behind a course of action or objective is established by a series of assessments of the (1) valence, (2) instrumentality, and (3) expectations connected to the activity. Valence is the degree to which someone feels strongly about a result that is connected to their behavior. For instance, does the employee find the conclusion appealing or desirable? The idea that a specific performance, amount, or conduct was intended to bring about the desired outcome – whether that outcome is a reward, acknowledgement, or anything else – is known as instrumentality. Expectancy refers to the belief that the individual can effectively perform the behavior if they expend the effort. This theory helped to explain the reasons behind staffs in the organization feeling positive that they are able to develop while in that organization, making them want to remain there or look for development somewhere else hence leading to high turnover of staff.

2.3 The Conceptual Framework

This segment portrays study variables as provided in objectives. The framework shows the connection between the independent variable and dependent variable.

Independent Variable

Dependent Variable



2.4 Research Gaps

Existing studies illustrates ways by which human resources practice plays a significant task in the functioning of the organization, in particular in the industry if banking. Human resources management and its effect on performance of organization is gaining considerable amount of importance in past, indicating a clear link between human resource practice and organization productivity (Qureshi, et al., 2010). Hence, there should be desire to portray the way human resource is connected to other functions of management involving the practices of coaching, mentoring, training plus remuneration because these activities tend to expand potential of employees within the public sector. Governments of the county have experienced big workforce because of new staff being hired without consultation of the specific departments at both devolved level and national level. Whereas most studies have been undertaken within different regions, literature available has highlighted more studies having been done on performance of organizations and largely in first world countries. A small number of the study has taken place in Kenya relating to public sectors' devolved human resource function and performance of employees. More evidence in support of the devolved human resource function on performance in various sector and contexts is needed.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This study employed a descriptive design. Since the study's focus is centered on current difficulties in the field of delivering water services, the decision to employ a descriptive survey research methodology was made on the assumption that no factors would be modified. A descriptive study attempts to define or explain a topic frequently by creating an overview of a group of problems, events, or people from side to side, information gathering, and the presentation of rates and frequencies on investigative variables or their association (Cooper & Schindler 2003). In this study, the impact of devolved Human Resources management practices and service delivery in Samburu County, Kenya, was evaluated.

3.2. Target population

Current study was at Samburu County. The target population included 222 management staff of the different departments in Samburu County headquarter. The specific departments of the county were: Public Health department; Tourism, Trade, Enterprise Devpt&Co-operatives; Finance, Economic, Planning & ICT; Agriculture; Roads; Lands and physical planning; Water and Sanitation; Education & Vocational training.

3.3 Sample size and sampling

In getting size of sample to be for study, Yamane (1967)'s formula was used sourced. When used, it was confirmed that out from a target group of 222 management staff, a sample of 142 respondents was to be used. After dividing the population into eight strata in accordance with the County's ministries, a sample for the study was taken from each stratum. The sample size was distributed among the ministries using the stratified random sampling method.

3.4 Data Collection

The data for the study were gathered using a questionnaire that included both closed-ended and open-ended questions. The researcher's use of questionnaires allowed for the speedy and accurate collection of exact data. This research instrument allowed the researcher to interact with the Samburu County department employees. Using the Likert scale, the level of agreement or disagreement was determined.

3.5 Data presentation and analysis

With respect to that, the researcher endeavored to not only focus on the numerous statistical tests but also on what they mean with respect to the identified research problem. To achieve this, the researcher used both descriptive and inferential analysis to explain the information that was derived from the data. This information was presented in a summative manner that quickly provides required facts in the future. Information collected went through coding, tallying and summary, then presentation using tables. SPSS of version 21 was helpful in data analysis. Descriptive statistical measures of frequency and percentage were considered in analyzing data so as to give overview of relationship for the variables under study. Correlation was in use for determining the direction of effect that

independent variable bring to dependent variable. Regression was applied for establishment of cause-effect among the variables. Research model guiding analysis was in the following form

Devolved Training and development has no effect on service delivery in Samburu County. Was tested using

$$Y = a + \beta_1 X_1 + \epsilon$$

Where:

Y = Service delivery

a = y intercept

β_1 = strength of connection among variable.

ϵ = error term

IV DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND THE DISCUSSION

4.1 Correlation between devolved employee training and development on service delivery

| | | Profitability | Retained earnings |
|-------------------------|------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| Pearson Correlation@ | Service Delivery | 1.000 | 0.372 |
| | DETD | 0.372 | 1.000 |
| Sig. (2-tailed) | Profitability | . | 0.000 |
| | DETD | 0.000 | . |
| N= 131, $\alpha = 0.05$ | | | |

Results indicate that devolved employee training and development (DETD, SD) = 0.372, p 0.001, was positively and strongly linked with service delivery. These results development was also found to be positively and significantly correlated with service delivery at (DETD,SD)=0.372,p<0.001. It was observed from study that training positively and significantly influences employee performance.

4.2 Regression between devolved employee training and development on service delivery

Regression analysis was done to establish this relationship between devolved employee training and development on service delivery in Samburu County. It was assumed that devolved training and development has no effect on service delivery in Samburu County.

Table 2 regression result on devolved employee training and development on service delivery in Samburu County

| Model Summary | | | | | | |
|---------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|--------------|---------------------|--------|--------|
| Model | R | RSquare | Adj. RSquare | Std. Error | | |
| 1 | 0.382 | 0.156 | 0.153 | 0.56366 | | |
| ANOVA | | | | | | |
| Model | | Sum of Squares | Df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
| | Regression | 14.793 | 1 | 14.793 | 46.101 | 0.001 |
| | Residual | 42.294 | 129 | 0.328 | | |
| 1 | Total | 57.087 | 130 | | | |
| Coefficients | | | | | | |
| Model | | Unstand. Coefficients | Std. Error | Stand. Coefficients | t | Sig. |
| 1 | (Constant) | 2.365 | 0.214 | | 11.007 | <0.001 |
| | Administrative Devolution. | 0.346 | 0.052 | 0.373 | 6.824 | <0.001 |

Regression finding of Table 2 inform that the relation between administrative devolution and delivery of service is significant at $(F(1,129) = 46.563, p < 0.001)$. The outcome also shows that the coefficient of correlation (r) is 0.373. A coefficient of correlation at 37.3 % shows that devolved employee training and development is positively correlated to delivery of service. Through an R-squared of 0.156, the implication of the model is that approximately 15.6% of variance in service delivery within decentralized governments is explained by differences in devolved employee training and development. 85.4% of the variation represents other factors related to service delivery that are not taken into account in the model. The beta coefficient for devolved employee training and development in the model is significant ($\beta = 0.346, p < 0.001$) indicating that devolved employee training and development affects delivery of service. Meaning that for each unit upsurge in devolved employee training and development, delivery of service increase in about 0.346.

V. CONCLUSION

Results indicate that delegated staff training and development and service delivery have a good, significant impact on Samburu County. Findings show that there is a positive, significant effect of devolved employee training and development and service delivery in Samburu County. From the result the researcher was able to conclude that devolved employee training and development was significant in explaining service delivery in Samburu County.

VI. RECOMMENDATION OF THE STUDY

Because findings of the research confirmed that devolved employee training and development has an influence on service delivery in Samburu County, the study makes a recommendation to national government to advance autonomy of county government for promoting devolved training and development. Precisely, national government need to give decentralized government much autonomy in contracting services at the level of county, hiring county workers, signing contracts of employment and increasing knowhow of county employees. The central government in addition needs to make it possible for governments at counties to exercise power of administration with regards to contractors, workforce and supplier of counties.

VII. SUGGESTION FOR FUTURE STUDY

The evaluation of devolved human resource management methods for service delivery in Kenya's Samburu County was the main goal of the current study. Study puts a suggestion for studies of similar nature be extended in other counties. The study also suggests that a further study on some other factors that are likely to affect service delivery that were not covered in the study should be considered.

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