

Health and safety as an antecedent to service delivery in public institutions: a case of County Government of Trans-Nzoia Kenya

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Abstract

Occupational safety and health training remains a fundamental element in the workplace. Citizen's complaints of poor service delivery in government offices has been underscored and highlighted in the media on several occasions in Kenya. The density of these complaints has raised a lot of concern till the Kenyan government has moved to counties as a form of devolution for example the 2002 Constitutional Referendum which in part called for an overhaul of the civil service structure through various civil service Reform Programmes and major reshuffles. This paper therefore highlights the effects of health and safety on service delivery within Civil Servants in public offices in Trans-Zoia Kenya due to the inguaration of the new constitution in 2010: The study therefore adopted an explanatory research design giving a case of Trans-Zoia county public office. Stratified random sampling techniques were used to select 350 employees of Trans-Zoia county public offices. Data was collected through the use of questionnaires which were analyzed using both descriptive and regression analysis. Descriptive findings revealed that there was a low level of safety and health on service delivery for the employees of Trans-Zoia County. Further analysis indicated that safety and health had significant effect on Service delivery, thus the need for this study to address health and safety issues.

Keywords: Safety and Health and Service Delivery.

Introduction

Health and Safety among civil servants is very critical and important for quality service delivery to the public. These services if inadequate, will negatively impact on the performance of service delivery in the public sector. Hence proper mechanisms should be put in place to ensure that welfare services are adequately provided for to the civil servants. The relevance of the concept is heightened further as the work environment continues to change assisted by increasing migration (especially from less developed to more developed countries, globalization, the development of new technologies, the move from manufacturing to service-based economies, the ageing workforce and population, an increase in the number of women in the workforce, and the transformation of work patterns; these factors have led to a workforce for which psychosocial risks have increased in priority. Therefore, there is a need to keep employees healthier, which in turn could increase the length of time spent in the workforce and thereby assist with some of the factors mentioned above, such as the ageing workforce. Schulte *et al.*, (2010)

Problem Formulation

This research shows that the concept of health and safety and service delivery is illhealth in most organizations in the world especially in public services and is not consistent across countries. Previous research in this area has acknowledged that, in general, not only is the term ill defined, but many of the factors by which it is assessed lack a consistent and universally accepted definition. In moving forward with the concept it would be useful to acknowledge that the concept is dynamic and continues to change thus a need to explore its role in public institutions in order to give it an holistic approach.

Literature Review

Safety and Health in the Workplace and Service Delivery

Allender *et al.*, (2011) found that workplace health leads to job motivation and satisfaction despite providing health benefits to the employees. Eaton *et al.*, (2007) studied various employee welfare programs in United States institutions and its impacts on health behavior and status of faculty and staff. The data was collected through the application of computer-assisted telephone interviews, self administered mail questionnaires and computer-assisted personal interviews. 67.2% of the results reflected that health promotions can attract and retain skilled faculty and staff. The study concluded that employee wellness programs have positively impacted on the health and well being of employees increasing on service delivery.

Grawitch *et al.* (2007) examined the affiliation between diverse workplace practices which comprised of safety

and health practices and satisfaction level in terms of commitment and turnover intention in universities. A web-based survey was conducted on 152 university faculties and staff through a college distribution list. The results asserted that the health and safety practices are positively related to employee job satisfaction in terms of turnover intentions. As a result, it is significant to identify and understand the needs of human capital in order to enhance performance and service delivery in the form of individual basis and the organization as a whole. Haines *et al.*, (2007) studied on the effectiveness of the 12-weeks walking program in improving the health of employees. After attending a study orientation, 125 college faculties and staff are requested to complete Godin Leisure Time exercise questionnaires in order to seek their current physical activity status. The results emphasized that the health promotion programs have positively impacted on the welfare of employees and service delivery. This premise therefore leads to the following hypothesis;

H₀₁: Safety and health in the workplace has no significant effect on service delivery

METHODOLOGY

This section entailed, research design, target population, sample size, sampling procedure, and data collection instruments and data analysis techniques. The study adopted explanatory research design. Stratified random sampling techniques were used to select 350 employees of Nandi County, Kenya. Primary sources of data came from the field by using questionnaires .multiple regression and Pearson correlation was used to analyze data.

RESULTS

This section analyses and interprets the findings using factor analysis which is a general term for specific computational techniques, its main objective is to reduce to manageable number, many variables that belong together, and have an overlapping measurement characteristic. The predictor-criterion relationship that was found in dependence situation is replaced by a matrix of inter correlations among several variables, none of which is viewed as being dependent on another. (Cooper and Schindler, 2008)

Validity of research instrument is assessed by factor analysis. Validity is a test of how well an instrument that is developed measures the particular concept it is intended to measure; it's concerned with whether it measures the right concept. (Uma and Roger, 2011). Table 4.8 shows the factor loading for each item, they are sorted by size. Any item that fails to meet the criteria of having a factor loading value greater than 0.5, and loads on one and only one factor is dropped from the study (Liao *et al.*, 2007). The study ensured that all loading less than 0.4 are suppressed in the output, hence providing blank spaces for many of the loadings. Thus, from the findings all values for all the factors were more than 0.5 reflecting the accepted values of construct validity; the instrument measured the concept it was intended to measure.

Table 4.1 Factor Analysis

Safety and Health In The Workplace

We have social clubs in our company	0.795
Our company provides sports facilities	0.854
Our company has built canteen for personal meetings	0.834
The company provides Libraries	0.723
The company provides Gymnasium	0.72
The company provides Sick clubs	0.793

Correlation Results

Pearson Correlations results in table 4.2 showed that safety and health was most highly positively and significantly correlated to service delivery ($r=0.408$, $p<0.05$). Thus safety and health had 40.8% positive relationship with service delivery. These findings provided enough evidence to suggest that there was linear relationship between safety and health and service delivery among civil servants in Nandi public office.

Table 4.2 Correlation Statistics

	Mean	Standard Deviation	Skewness	Service Delivery	Safety and Health
Service Delivery	4.15	0.36666	-1.059	1	
Safety and Health	2.20	0.44117	-0.42	.408**	1

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Multiple Regression Results

4.3 Test of Multi-Co linearity

Table 4.3 shows that the values of tolerance were greater than 0.2 rule and those of VIF were less than 4. This shows lack of multi-co linearity among independent variables. Therefore, omitting variables with insignificant regression coefficients would be in appropriate.

4.3 Hypothesis testing

The regression results in table 4.3 shows that each of the predicted parameters in relation to the independent factors were significant; $\beta_1 = 0.240$ (p-value = 0.000 which is less than $\alpha = 0.05$) which implies that the null hypothesis does not hold hence there is significant relationship between safety and health and service delivery. This indicates that for each unit increase in the positive effect of safety and health, there is 0.240 units increase in service delivery.

Furthermore, the effect of safety and health was stated by the t-test value = 4.109 which implies that the standard error associated with the parameter is less than the effect of the parameter. The findings therefore concur with Allender *et al.*, (2011) that workplace health leads to job motivation and satisfaction and is of great benefit to employees. The findings are also in agreement with Eaton *et al.*, (2007) study in the United States institutions that employee health promotions can attract and retain skilled faculty and staff hence service delivery will be enhanced. In addition, Haines *et al.*, (2007) on their study of effectiveness of the 12-weeks walking program in improving the health of employees, results showed that the program positively impacted on the welfare of employees and service delivery.

The rule of thumb was applied in the interpretation of the variance inflation factor. From table 4.3, the VIF for the estimated parameter was found to be less than 5 which indicate the absence of multi-co linearity among the independent factors. This implies that the variation contributed by the independent factor was significant independently and it should be included in the prediction model. Study findings also indicated that the above discussed variation was significant as evidence of F ratio of 40.452 with p value 0.000 < 0.05 (level of significance). The findings indicated that the model correlation coefficient was 0.508 which indicated that the model predicted over 50.8% of the change in the independent variable. This relationship was significant considering the coefficient of determination value of 0.508. Thus, the model was fit to predict service delivery using safety and health.

Table 4.3 Empirical results

	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients			Co linearity statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
(constant)	2.414	0.159		15.223	0		
Safety and health	0.095	0.023	0.240	4.109	0	0.916	1.091
F	40.452						
Sig.	0.000						
R square	0.508						
Adjusted R square	0.495						

Dependent variable: Service delivery

Conclusion and Implications

There is evidence that wages and working conditions and also other policy elements, such as safety health services contributes to a great deal to service delivery. If this are catered for it will lead to service delivery of an organization. (Haipeter and Lehnhoff, 2009 and d'Archi *et al.*, 2009).These safety and health in the workplace (Kadir *et al.*,2010), is a great contributor to service delivery in these organisation.

Suggestions for further research

The study used only self rated questionnaire to collect data therefore more research on the same should be considered but with multiple methods such as interviews and observations and not only self-rated questionnaires when approaching data collection. In addition one should consider moderating these variables. Other staff welfare issues such as levels of sickness and absence, training and development should be considered. This gives real cause for concern because of the costs involved, the impact on service delivery and the consequences for individual staff since it is a key business issue, and indicator of how well an organization is managed.

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