

# Effect of Organization Structure on the Effectiveness of on Job Training Programs. A Survey of Public Service in Trans Nzoia County Government

Eugene Juma Khaemba \* Dr. Elizabeth Nambuswa Makokha Prof. Gregory S.Namusonge  
College of Human Resource Development, Department of Entrepreneurship and Procurement, Leadership and Management, Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology, P.O. Box 62000 - 00200, Nairobi Kenya

## Abstract

The purpose of the study was to examine the effect of organisational structure on job training programs in the Public Service of Trans Nzoia County Government. The study adopted a theoretical framework that made use of two theories namely the Human Capital Theory which postulates that education is a form of investment in Human beings. The theory holds that employees invest in specific training to further their career path prospects. The other theory is Mclelland's Need for Achievement theory. The study adopted descriptive survey with a target population of 1300 employees from Trans Nzoia County Government. The study used stratified sampling technique to identify employees into their respective strata or departments. Thereafter each stratum was subjected to simple random sampling to get respective sample frame to participate in the study. A sample of 478 employees was randomly selected; this number is made up of top, middle and lower level employees of Trans Nzoia County Government. The instrument of collecting data was questionnaire which was used to get both qualitative and quantitative data. The analysis of quantitative data was done to test hypothesis using a regression model. The results were significant to efficient administration of effectiveness of on job training programs in the County Government of Trans Nzoia and add a wealth of knowledge in the field of academia. The study results revealed that there was a significant relationship between organizational structure and effectiveness of on job training programs ( $p=0.000$ ); The study concluded that on job training enables employees to know their work expectations and therefore tend to exhibit desired behavior at work place. The county government provides all the necessary resources required to undertake training of employees. Supervision of employees is undertaken by respective departmental managers during all the training programs undertaken in the county. The study recommended that the county government should train its employees well to enable them be aware of the organizational goals and can help achieve them within the organizations target projections. The county government should put in place management plans for the training programs to be undertaken on the employees in the county all the time.

**Keywords:** Organisational Structure, Effectiveness Of On-The Job Training.

## 1.0 Introduction

A worldwide shortage of skilled workers has been forecasted for most of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. The presumed causes of this shortage include demographic shifts, the failure of most developed countries to pass comprehensive training programs to equip its manpower with up to date knowledge and skills, technological innovation, and globalization challenges (URT, 2012). The World Health Organization estimates that there is already a growing shortage of skilled workers worldwide due to lack of effective on job training programs in place, especially in developing countries (WHO, 2012). Even China and India, whose rapid economic growth supposedly created jobs at a rate sufficient to absorb the local unemployed, are reporting skilled worker shortages that has been attributed to ineffective on job training programs (Singh & Saldanha, 2013).

The experience shows that the current world belong to those organizations which are able to develop faster than their competitors offering the same goods and services. The organizational structure of the future is a learning organization which is focusing at creating and gaining knowledge for improved performance and building a competitive edge. The truly successful organizations of the future will discover how to tap people's commitment and capacity to learn at all levels (Singh & Saldanha, 2013). It is therefore important to consider training and management development programmes as crucial practices in improving employee and organizational capabilities. When the organization invests in improving the knowledge and skills of its employees, the investment is returned in the form of more productive and effective employees, thus the focus is on individual performance or team performance (Dominic *et al.*, 2012).

In Africa, the growth of its economies and organizations has been constrained by the major factors and this is the lack of capacity to carry out tasks that are necessary for such growth. Therefore due to role played by training in developing skills, knowledge and attitudes of employees, many African countries have launched to training employees in public sector organizations (URT, 2012). Capacity building is vital to the county's growth and development. Thus, various policies on training and development have been developed and large amounts of money have been injected on the phenomenon in order to have effective training programme.

Kenya has tried her best to create an enabling environment to ensure training and development is exercised in both public and private organizations. To ensure this is properly done it has put in place respective organizations to nurture this activity (Dominic *et al*, 2012). The Public Service Management is one of the key organizations. It is responsible for coordinating all public service employees training in the Kenyan government and it is fully consulted in initiating new training schemes, or to make substantial changes in existing training programmes (Singh & Saldanha, 2013). The training and development function in the Public Service Office involves an orientation exercise or induction course for all new entrants and a skill development programme that takes place each year or at least once in every two years for each employee. A programme is drawn specifically for each employee and for each different level of grade in accordance with a training needs assessment. This enhances the achievement of the organization objectives, officer's career progression, individual's performance appraisal and gender balance. There is also leadership training to prepare individuals for top level positions in the public service (Rugumyamheto, 2011).

Training policy of Kenya states that Kenya should be self-sufficient in trained and skilled manpower required to man its economy (URT, 2013). Normally training should take place locally; however where local organizations have inadequate training facilities or where local facilities are non-existent, efforts will be made to secure and utilize training opportunities and scholarships that may be made available by friendly countries and International Organizations (Wangwe & Arkadie, 2012).

Organizations which are dynamic in today's world that desire to maintain or make improvement towards competitive edge, need actively to utilize their resources at their disposal and thus the most critical one is the human resource (Ngirwa, 2013). As such, work organizations are seriously focused on how to provide quality product and services to their clients. Quality Training and Development of employees are pre-requisites for improvements, growth, prosperity, and stability of any work organization.

Training helps individuals to learn how to be more effective at work by modifying knowledge, skills or attitudes through learning experience to obtain effective performance. The expectation is that, a better training programme will, together with other factors act as motivation to an employee and improves his job performance which in the end will contribute to the growth of the organization (Salas & Stagl, 2009). The need to educate and train employees in Trans Nzoia County Government is critically essential, and this is because the achievement of organizational goals depends on the development of employees in accordance with environmental changes (Halim & Ali, 2008).

The aspiration to have effective on job training program is reflected in the Public Service Training Policy of 2012 (URT, 2012). The Policy requires every public organization develops an effective on job training program policy. The policy mentions that training will account for twenty percent of the wage bill, and there should be need identification for training which addresses organizational objectives against which performance will be assessed.

However, despite the good intentions of Public Service Management (PSM), anecdote evidence indicates that most employees in Trans Nzoia County Government fail to get avenues for training and sometimes for those who get training register some dissatisfaction on the nature and type of training they get (Dominic *et al*, 2012). While all public organizations are required to develop among others on job training programs, effective implementation of these programs is still desired in Trans Nzoia County Government. This is so because Training Need identification is hardly done, there is poor and inadequate allocation of training funds, unclear criteria for trainees' selection, inability to determine the type of training needed and no evaluation done on training and development (Dominic *et al*, 2012). Therefore to close the gap on this problem, the study focused on assessing the effect organizational structure on job training programs in Trans Nzoia County Government.

## **2.0 Effect of Organization Structure on effectiveness of on Job Training Programs**

The environment of the organization, the opportunities and constraints, threats and challenges that engulf the organization within the contemporary competitive environment influence training for the survival of the concerned organization (Tyson, 2011). Organizational goals and tasks and its levels of achievement are crucial determinants of on job training needs and activities. A flexible organizational structure is a paramount factor for on job training as it enables jobs to be designed and re-designed to facilitate work-based training and allow time for sharing and reflection upon training. On the other hand, if the organizational structure is not flexible to facilitate training, it acts as an inhibiting factor. The structure of organizations may determine or influence training (Brambly, 2010). For example, flexible and innovative structure will prefer training so as to cope with changes. Also the structure will determine the presence and role of the personnel function.

The size of the workforce, behavioral pattern, performance, occupational structure and learning needs all influence training (Brambly, 2010). He argues that where attitudes are positive, the investment in training can be dramatic. Where beliefs and attitudes towards training are not positive, training will be affected in an organization. The extent to which personnel at various levels are committed to training and personal views of line managers and top management on training issues can influence training in an organization. Evaluation of training aims to discover the value of training done. A challenge to complacency cited in Harrison, (2014) found that although

most managers expressed themselves satisfied with the training investment in the organization, most had no significant knowledge of exactly what training was being done, what it costed or what were its results and benefits. Neither did personnel, take a lead in providing such information or appear to see any need to do so. Thus the above circumstances could affect the training function in an organization.

For many different reasons adults learn differently than young people. Adults differ distinctly in terms of such factors as motivation, interest, values, attitudes, physical and mental abilities, and learning histories (Kennedy, 2012). These differences have triggered the implementation of adult learning theory in training adult professionals. Goad (2011) & Hanson (2012), presented important characteristics of adult learning indicating that learning is a process as opposed to a series of finite, unrelated steps that last throughout the entire lifespan of most people therefore for optimum transfer of learning, the learner must be actively involved in the learning experience, not a passive recipient of information. Each learner must be responsible for his/her own learning. This is because the learning process has an affective (emotional) as well as an intellectual component, and for that reason adults learn by doing as they want to be involved. Regardless of the benefits of coaching, one should never merely demonstrate how to do something if an adult learner actually can perform the task, even if it takes longer that way (Goad, 2011 & Hanson, 2012).

Adults relate their learning to what they already know. It is wise to learn something about the backgrounds of the learners and to provide examples that they can understand in their own frames of reference (Dominic *et al*, 2012). Usually an informal environment works best, and this tries to intimidate adults causing resentment and tension, and these inhibit learning. All five of the learners' senses must appealed particularly to those aspects identified by neurolinguistic programming; the visual, the kinesthetic, and the auditory thus a change of pace and a variety of learning techniques help to mitigate boredom and fatigue. Therefore, learning flourishes in a win-win, nonjudgmental environment. The norms of the training setting are violated by tests and grading procedures thus checking learning objectives is far more effective (Dominic *et al*, 2012).

Human resource training initiatives that incorporate adult learning theory should focus on the core areas of the training process (Scott, 2011). This includes needs assessment, motivation, reinforcement, retention, transference, and evaluation. Assessment of the needs of the organization and the individual employee is what begins in effective training programme. Needs assessments are designed to provide input on how to best structure training programs to enhance organizational performance. Not all employees within an organization may need training, while other may need significantly more. Carolan (2013) suggests three steps to needs assessment; those in leadership positions should identify job specific skills that need to be improved within the organization; secondly, the training program should be tailored to fit specific needs of individuals and departments, knowledge and ability should be considered as well as motivation and finally, managers and HR professionals should research to develop specific, measurable knowledge and performance objectives. One method of needs assessment is training gap analysis.

Chauldron (2012) proposed that human resource managers should define the gap between current employee knowledge and knowledge that the employee will need to know in the future and therefore managers first should let the employees know the organization is serious about training and development. Second, the manager needs to critically assess the informational needs of the organization and finally, managers should know what skill sets and knowledge each individual needs to excel at his/her position. The future of effective employee training programs depends first on successful needs assessments, therefore needs assessment provides a foundation upon which managers and corporate leaders can build a solid and useful training program.

In order for the training and development efforts of an organization to be successful, employees must be motivated to learn and develop new skills and competencies. When employees have a high level of motivation they will be more likely to take in new knowledge and seek opportunities to apply it (Lieb, 2010). The best way to motivate employees is simply to enhance their reasons for enrolling in a training program and decrease the barriers. In order to do this, managers must seriously consider employee needs in the design of the training program and learn why their employees are enrolled. Some common employee needs are advancement, maintaining job performance, and job security (Jurkiewics & Massey, 2012 and Jurkiewics, 2011). It is therefore the role of managers to make sure that employees are motivated to learn and this is by understanding that the training facilitator is a change agent whose responsibility is to present information or skills or to create an environment in which exploration can take place whereas the participants' responsibility is to learn.

According to Kodat (2012), using the Thorndike's law of effect shows that the frequency in which a certain behavior occurs depends on how much pleasant the consequence is, and if a consequence is unpleasant, the behavior becomes less likely to occur. Many managers are supposed to use this tactic with their employees. However, positive reinforcement has been cited as the most important factor in maintaining the behavior of trainees once they return to their jobs. Positive reinforcement from immediate supervisors is the most powerful maintenance system (Michalak & Yager, 2013), and therefore it must include appropriate rewards and consistency to truly become an essential element to learning.

Although people typically forget many things, training sessions should be designed so the employees can

retain and use the knowledge and skills they learn. Employees have a wide variety of life experiences that shape their interests and learning abilities as a result a trainer should build on the learners' experiences and established knowledge. By building on what the employees already know, the supervisor provides a familiar context which helps in retaining knowledge. Repetition aids people in both understanding information and retaining it, therefore practicing new skills is important in retaining knowledge and skills (Kennedy, 2012). Ability to use the information and skills attained through training in a new environment. Ideally, work environment is what is called transference where it can be positive when trainees actually put into practice the techniques and procedures learned in the training, or can be negative whereby trainees avoid doing what they are trained not to do. Therefore, the goal of training programs is for the highest possible amounts of transference to take place (Liebet *al*, 2010).

In order to insure that adults are learning effectively, training programs must be evaluated. Evaluation is to assign value to an object or process. In evaluating training then, it is important to know one's audience being the person or persons for whom the determination of value is to be made. There are several possible audiences for evaluation results. Evaluation is often looked at from four different levels; thus it includes the feeling of the learner about the training (reaction), knowledge and facts gained by the learner (learning), skills developed by the learner including new information used by the learner on the job (behaviors) and results occurred, that is if the learner applied new skills on the necessary tasks in the organization, and the results achieved (effectiveness). Evaluating results and effectiveness, is the most desired result from training, it is usually the most difficult to accomplish. Evaluating effectiveness often involves the use of key performance measures. Following such sound principles of performance management can be of great benefit to the organization (Kirkpatrick, 2011).

### 3.0 METHOD

The study adopted a descriptive survey design with a target population of 1300 employees comprising of top, middle and lower level staff across departments from Trans Nzoia county government with a sample size of 478 respondents were selected. The researcher used stratified sampling technique to select employees from various departments to be included in the sample. A questionnaire was adopted as a tool to collect data which administered questionnaires to the departmental managers and other staff of Trans Nzoia county government. A likert scale of strongly agree to strongly disagree was adopted. Data collected was coded and analyzed using a regression model.

### 4.0 Results

The study sought to determine the effect of organization structure on effectiveness of on job training programs. The study results were as follows;

**Table 4.7: Organizational Structure**

Statements		SD	D	U	A	SA	TOTAL	MEAN	SD
Supervision of employees is undertaken by respective departmental managers during all the training programs undertaken in the county	F %	0	0	37	277	138	452	4.22	0.58
	%	0	0	8.2	61.3	30.5	100	84.4	
Work design present in the county enables effective execution of the on job training program	F %	0	0	78	242	132	452	4.12	0.57
	%	0	0	17.3	53.5	29.2	100	82.4	
Line and departmental managers provide necessary equipment that boost the training programs in place	F %	0	0	193	253	6	452	3.59	0.52
	%	0	0	42.7	56.0	1.3	100	71.8	

The study results revealed that 8.2% were undecided that supervision of employees is undertaken by respective departmental managers during all the training programs undertaken in the county; 61.3% agreed that supervision of employees is undertaken by respective departmental managers during all the training programs undertaken in the county while 30.5% strongly agreed that supervision of employees is undertaken by respective departmental managers during all the training programs undertaken in the county.

The study results indicated that 17.3% were undecided that work design present in the county enables effective execution of the on job training program; 53.5% agreed that work design present in the county enables effective execution of the on job training program while 29.2% strongly agreed that work design present in the county enables effective execution of the on job training program.

The study results indicated that 42.7% were undecided that line and departmental managers provide necessary equipment that boosts the training programs in place; 56.0% agreed that line and departmental managers provide necessary equipment that boosts the training programs in place while 1.3% strongly agreed that line and departmental managers provide necessary equipment that boosts the training programs in place.

The study results on the effect of organization structure on effectiveness of on job training programs

revealed that 84.4% (mean=4.22) were of the opinion that supervision of employees is undertaken by respective departmental managers during all the training programs undertaken in the county; 82.4% (mean=4.12) were of the opinion that work design present in the county enables effective execution of the on job training program while 71.8% (mean=3.59) were of the opinion that line and departmental managers provide necessary equipment that boost the training programs in place.

These findings revealed that majority of the respondents were of the opinion that supervision of employees is undertaken by respective departmental managers during all the training programs implemented in the county. This shows that supervisors offer employees the necessary reinforcement on the ideas learned and gained in the training process. Employees have a wide variety of life experiences that shape their interests and learning abilities as a result a trainer should build on the learners' experiences and established knowledge. By building on what the employees already know, the supervisor provides a familiar context which helps in retaining knowledge. Repetition aids people in both understanding information and retaining it, therefore practicing new skills is important in retaining knowledge and skills.

These findings are in agreement with the findings by Michalak & Yager (2013) who noted that positive reinforcement has been cited as the most important factor in maintaining the behavior of trainees once they return to their jobs. Positive reinforcement from immediate supervisors is the most powerful maintenance system and therefore it must include appropriate rewards and consistency to truly become an essential element to learning. In order for the training and development efforts of an organization to be successful, employees must be motivated to learn and develop new skills and competencies. When employees have a high level of motivation they will be more likely to take in new knowledge and seek opportunities to apply it. The best way to motivate employees is simply to enhance their reasons for enrolling in a training program and decrease the barriers. In order to do this, managers must seriously consider employee needs in the design of the training program and learn why their employees are enrolled.

**Correlation Coefficients between the organisational structure and on the job training program**

**Table 4.10: Regression Model Analysis**

ANOVA							
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R	Std. Error of the Estimate	F	Sig.
1	.946 <sup>a</sup>	0.896	0.895		0.09437	958.443	.000 <sup>a</sup>

The study results indicated that the regression model was significant at  $p=0.000$  and that 89.6 percent of the data was used to compute the regression model. This implies that the regression model was correctly computed and therefore it was fit for the study.

**Table 4.11: Relationship between Study Variables**

Model	Coefficients <sup>a</sup>		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	Unstandardized Coefficients	Std. Error			
(Constant)	B 0.015	0.082	Beta	0.180	0.857
Organization structure	0.281	0.032	0.500	8.705	0.000

**a. Dependent Variable: Effectiveness of on job training Programs**

The regression equation indicated that organizational structure was the most important variable to effectiveness of on job training programs contributing 50.0 per cent followed by training policy which contributed 49.0 per cent to effectiveness of on job training programs, management support contributed 36.7% while training needs analysis contributed approximately 33.6 per cent to effectiveness of on job training programs.

The study results revealed that there was a significant relationship between organizational structure and effectiveness of on job training programs ( $p=0.000$ ). These study findings can be interpreted to mean that effectiveness of on job training programs depends mostly on the organizational structure in place, adopted in the organization.

**5.0 Discussion**

The study focused on the effect of organizational structure on job training programs in the public service of Trans Nzoia County Government. The study results on the effect of organization structure on effectiveness of on job training programs revealed that 84.4% (mean=4.22) were of the opinion that supervision of employees is undertaken by respective departmental managers during all the training programs implemented in the county; 82.4% (mean=4.12) were of the opinion that work design present in the county enables effective execution of the on job

training program while 71.8% (mean=3.59) were of the opinion that line and departmental managers provide necessary equipment that boost the training programs in place.

The study findings indicated that 81.8% (mean=4.09) were of the view that there is continuous process of determining training needs in the county government; 84.6% (mean=4.38) were of the view that there is a formal criterion in place for choosing of participants to undertake training that enables to carry out effective on job training of the selected employees while 81.8% (mean=4.09) were of the view that there is effective program coordination of the on job training programs in various departments.

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## 6.0 Conclusion and Recommendation

The present study concluded that on job training enables employees to know their work expectations and therefore tend to exhibit desired behavior at work place. This shows that having a training programme drawn specifically for each employee and for each different level of grade in accordance with training needs assessment enhances the achievement of the organization objectives, officer's career progression, individual's performance appraisal and gender balance.

The study concluded that the county government provides all the necessary resources required to undertake training of employees. This means that provision of necessary resources is important for the training to be effective on the trainees.

It was also revealed shown that supervision of employees is undertaken by respective departmental managers during all the training programs undertaken in the county. This shows that supervisors offer employees the necessary reinforcement on the ideas learned and gained in the training process. Employees have a wide variety of life experiences that shape their interests and learning abilities as a result a trainer should build on the learners' experiences and established knowledge. By building on what the employees already know, the supervisor provides a familiar context which helps in retaining knowledge.

Based on study findings the study made the following recommendations that the county government should train its employees well to enable them be aware of the organizational goals which can help achieve them within the organizations target projections.

The county government should put in place management plans for the training programs to be undertaken on the employees in the county all the time.

The county government should ensure that line and departmental managers provide necessary equipment that boost the training programs in place for all the employees in the county and especially those undertaking training. The county government should ensure that there is continuous process of determining training needs in the county government.

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