

## Determinants of Decentralization of Authority on Employee Performance at Kitale National Polytechnic

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### Abstract

The study aimed at analyzing the determinants of decentralization of authority on employees' performance in Kitale National Polytechnic. Employees' play a significant role in achieving the goals of an institution. The study was guided by the following research objectives: - to determine the determinants of training on employee's performance at Kitale National Polytechnic, to evaluate the determinants of motivation on employee's performance at Kitale National Polytechnic, to examine the determinants of working environment on employee's performance at Kitale National Polytechnic and to establish the effect of organizational culture on employee's performance at Kitale National Polytechnic. The study was conducted through a descriptive research design. One hundred and ninety one employees' of Kitale National Polytechnic was the target population. The whole population will form the sample size. A questionnaire will be the main tool for primary data collection. Descriptive and inferential statistics and regression analysis was used in interpreting the collected data. The study utilized both primary and secondary data. Validity was done by pre-testing the questionnaires using a sample of respondents' from employees in Kitale National Polytechnic. Reliability was through test retest method and by applying Cronbachs alpha coefficient of 0.7 which is acceptable. Data analysis was done through descriptive and inferential statistics which included mean, standard deviation and multiple regression analysis. The study was able to answer the hurdles that employees' face while performing decentralized tasks. The findings established in this study created a path to improve performance of employees' not only in Kitale National Polytechnic but all the national polytechnics in Kenya.

**Keywords :** Decentralization, Employee Training,

### 1.0. Introduction

Decentralization is the pattern of responsibility arising from delegation. Employees form vital component for organizational success and they act as the path for achieving the expected organizational objectives and mission. (Muda et al 2014). Decentralization is the process of redistributing or dispersing functions, powers, people or things away from a central location or authority. Free dictionary.com Feb,2013. In 1983, decentralization was identified as one of the ten key values of the Green movement in the United States. According to 1999 UN Development programme report: A large number of developing and transitional countries have embarked on some form of decentralization programmes. Decentralization of governance and the strengthening of local governing capacity is in part also a function of broader societal trends. These include, for example, the growing distrust of the government generally, the spectacular demise of some of the most centralized regimes in the world. Dr Mildred Wanner Feb 4 (2013).

Advocates of political decentralization hold that greater participation by better informed diverse interests in society will lead to more relevant decisions than those made only by authorities on the National Level World Bank Website Feb, 9 (2013). In developing countries decentralization has been a relatively successful tool for deterring conflict in some countries (such as Canada, Spain, Belgium, India). By empowering new set of players, decentralization inherently shifts the intrastate balance of power. Power shifts and disruptions can cause conflict (Putzel and Di John, 2012). A major promise of decentralization is that the more proximal command structure can produce better policy outputs by creating a closer match between local government outputs and local preferences (Faguet 2012).

It may be difficult for the central government to exert fiscal discipline if it has granted spending powers to sub-national governments, leading to macroeconomic problems, as explained by Jamanillo and Grazzi and Ardanaz, Leiras and Tommasi(2013), Faguet(2012) stresses, decentralization is not a switch that can be flipped but rather a process that consolidates overtime. A leader who announces decentralization at the start of her term is likely to see it fully implemented only towards the end of her term. Situma and Iravo(2015) asserts that the

people have an inborn dislike for work and tend to avoid it whenever an opportunity arises. According to them organizations should have proper laid down employee training programs to enhance employee performance in an organization. Decentralization is also a conscious process of systematic distribution of authority by the top management down the line to create operative levels and to make them autonomous in their functioning. According to Louis A. Allen decentralization is the systematic effort to delegate to the lower level all authority except that which can be explicated at the central points. Decentralization of authority is a management philosophy through which managers at middle level and lower level are given to take decision and actions on matters realizing to their respective area of work.

The top level of management retains the authority for overall coordination and controlling of their organization Decentralization of authority can therefore be briefly stated to be a process whereby a manager assigns duties to the lowest subordinates grant them authority to make commitments to be carried out, create an obligation on the part of each subordinates for the satisfactory performance of the job. Training can be defined as a developing process of employees' expertise in order to improve their performance by enabling employees to be more efficient and effective while performing their tasks. According to Wright & Geroy (2001) employees' competencies changes through effective training programmes.

According to Heathfield (2012), the right employee training programme development and education at the right time, provides big payoffs for the organization in increased productivity, knowledge, loyalty and contribution. According to Ivancerich (2010), training and development is a process that attempts to provide employees with information skills and understanding of the organization and its goals. Decentralization places extra demands upon junior management and develop well motivated and intelligent personnel. Urwick et al (2002). Motivation is the driving force/commitment people have for doing things Dictionary.com. Fredrick Herzberg performed studies to determine which factors in an employees work environment caused satisfaction/dissatisfaction. He published his findings in the 1959 book, *The motivation at work*. Motivation is the key feature of decentralization and arguably is the most important factor contributing to increased efficiency. Research shows that many people value greater independence and respond in positive manner to increased responsibility when linked to reward system of the organization Urwick et al (2002). Despite the theoretical underpinnings and advocacy for citizen participation in decentralized service delivery, evidence on the resulting impact is mixed at best. Available studies look at how decentralization enhances participation, design and emerging mechanisms of participation in sub-national governments Matovu, (2011); Joshi & Houtzager, (2012); and factors influencing citizen participation in local institutions ( Bay et al (2011); Michels (2012). However, few studies have examined the direct impact of participation on decentralized service delivery outcomes especially in developing countries. National polytechnics need to equip their employees with relevant skills and knowledge to enhance performance.

Decentralization cannot be achieved when the organization does not have capable managers. The study therefore sought to analyze the determinants of decentralization of authority on organization performance at Kitale National Polytechnic. The study will determine the determinants of training of employees on performance, evaluate the determinants of employees' motivation on performance, examine the determinants of work environment on employee performance and analyze the determinants of organizational culture on employee performance .This is evident in Kenya where in recent both the teaching labour unions and non-teaching labour unions front has overwhelmed with industrial unrest agitating for better incentives and working conditions.

## **2.0 Effect of Employee Training On Employee Performance**

The link between training and employees performance is continuous, and aims to keep employees from falling into a common trap where the skills that employees are able to present to employers have been studiously gained at the employer's behest and despite being valuable skills, they don't necessarily provide an accurate and comprehensive picture of the employee's overall abilities (Dyer, 2005). Training can be defined as a developing process of employees' expertise in order to improve their performance by enabling employees to be more efficient and effective while performing their tasks. Training is a type of action which is planned, systematic and it results in enhanced level of ability, knowledge and competency that are necessary to perform work effectively. Existing literature presents evidence of an existence of obvious effects of training and development on employee performance.

There is no deterministic relationship between product, process and HRM strategy, as Sung et al (2009) emphasise. Nonetheless, product, process and HRM strategy both determine the nature of labour to be recruited, in terms of the existing skills profiles of individuals in the external labour market (or entering into the labour market) seeking employment with the firm and the relative costs with which these skills profiles may be further developed in the future via appropriate training as circumstances require (Thurow, 1975). Furthermore, given that most of this subsequent training is job specific (Becker, 1964) designed to meet the requirements of the firm's internal labour market (Doeringer and Piore, 1985), the option of acquiring these same skills via the external labour market – as reflected in the make or buy strategic options associated with the transactions view of the firm

(Coase, 1937; Lazear and Oyer, 2004) – is rarely a practical alternative.

According to Wright & Geroy (2001) notes that employee competencies change through effective training programs. Training has been proved to generate performance improvement related benefits for the employee as well as for the organization by positively influencing employee performance through the development of employee knowledge, skills, ability, competencies and behavior (Appiah 2010). According to Heathfield (2012), the right employee training,

development and education at the right time, provides big payoffs for the organization in increased productivity, knowledge, loyalty and contribution. According to Ivancevich (2010), training and development is a process that attempts to provide employees with information, skills and understanding of the organization and its goals. Additionally training and development aids an employee to continue to make the necessary positive contribution to the success of employing organization in terms of his / her good performance on the job.

Skill requirements, therefore, are the consequences of these prior strategic decisions about product, process and policy, and, in turn, product, process and policy – and/or change in one or all of these – determine the firm's training needs, its demand for training. One possible outcome, of course, is that such are the prior choices made with respect to product and process, from the perspective of the firm, skills requirements on the part of the labour input may be negligible and training needs non-existent. The decision not to train can be rational, therefore.

### 3.0 Methodology

The study applied a descriptive research design. The target population of the study was all employees of Kitale National Polytechnic totaling to 191. A census was used because the population was heterogeneous and where each cadre of management composed the population since the population was not large, and there were well organized structures where the respondents can be found easily. A questionnaire was the main tool for data collection. pilot study was applied to test the reliability and validity of the research instrument. regression analysis was used in establishing the relationship between the variables under investigation.

### 4.0 Discussion

The first objective of the study aimed at determining the effect of employee training on employee performance at Kitale National Polytechnic. Wright and Geroy (2001) notes that employee competencies change through effective training programs. Training has been proved to generate performance improvement related benefits for the employee as well as for the development of employee knowledge, skills, ability, competencies and behaviour (Appiah 2010). The objective was assessed by use of statements in the questionnaire in which the respondents were required to state their position on the basis of a likert scale that was provided. The results according to the respondent's views are shown in table 4:6 below.

Training was selected as a critical component of employee performance. Proper and necessary training of staff while in-service like attending academic conferences, training in research and curriculum development is part and parcel of staff development initiatives in Kitale National polytechnic. A high level of training and development programmes for staff and managers is hypothesized to positively and significantly improve job performance and consequently be included in an effective employee performance tool. It is important that sufficient training be done to enhance high performance.

Results of analysis contained in table above, "training" show respondents who participated in the survey indicating they did receive sufficient training to do a good job, 89 percent. Data from table 4.9 shows that 50% and 39% of respondents strongly agree and agree respectively that they have received sufficient training to do their job effectively. 6% disagreed and 2% while 3% were neutral. The result shows that majority of the respondents received sufficient training to do their job effectively.

On training on improvement of skills the data revealed that 76 respondents and 73 respondents strongly agreed and agreed respectively on the item of being trained for improvement of skills. 26 respondents disagreed while 5 were neutral. The majority of the respondents 42% strongly agree while 41% agree that they are trained in quality improvement skills. 14% disagree while 3% were neutral.

Results for mentorship which traces the link between mentorship programmes and job performance indicate that a great majority of 130 respondents (72 percent) were not mentored to improve performance. Only 40 respondents (23 percent) were mentored for improved performance (table 4.9). About 9 respondents were unsure that they are attached to a mentor to facilitate career planning. Mentorship programmes are necessary for employee career development. It impacts skills that seniors may have developed over the years so that there may be a smooth transition in various positions of employment.

When employees receive training, it is also important to ensure the training is regular since skills development is a continuous requirement. Results shows that 31% and 29% respectively disagree and strongly disagree on an item of being trained on a regular basis while, 23% and 9% agreed and strongly agree on being trained on a regular basis.

A correlation coefficient table was then created to establish how the dimension(training) is related to the

scale total. In other words, how was the dimension correlated with training. The results indicated that the strongest correlation with employee performance in Kitale national polytechnic is the training which is highly correlated ( $r(100)$  which is 0.219,  $p < 0.473$ ). This means that training link very strongly and positively to employee performance. Therefore, in order to promote employee performance, attention must be paid to training. Table 4.1 of correlations explains the relationship between employee performance and its dimension Kitale National Polytechnic.

**Table 4.1 Correlation**

		scores for training	Scores for organizational performance
Scores for Training	Pearson Correlation	1	.022
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.946
	N	170	170
Scores for organisational performance	Pearson Correlation	.022	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.946	
	N	12	170

**Table 4.2. Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	.056	.364		.154	.882
Scores for training	-.016	.642	-.011	-.025	.981

a. Dependent Variable: Scores for employee performance

Linear regression analysis was used to determine whether independent variable; training affect the dependent variable which is employee performance in Kitale National Polytechnic. The results indicated that the strongest correlation with employee performance in Kitale national polytechnic is the training which is highly correlated ( $r(100)$  which is 0.219,  $p < 0.473$ ). This means that training link very strongly and positively to employee performance.

## 5.0 Conclusion and Recommendation

The aim of the study aimed at determining the effect of employee training on employee performance at Kitale National Polytechnic. Wright and Geroy (2001) notes that employee competencies change through effective training programs. Training has been proved to generate performance improvement related benefits for the employee as well as for the development of employee knowledge, skills, ability, competencies and behaviour (Appiah 2010). The objective was assessed by use of statements in the questionnaire in which the respondents were required to state their position on the basis of a likert scale that was provided. The result according to the respondent's views that majority of the respondents received sufficient training to do their job effectively. The majority of the respondents 42% strongly agree that they are trained in quality improvement skills. 40 respondents (23 percent) were mentored for improved performance. Mentorship programmes are necessary for employee career development. It impacts skills that seniors may have developed over the years so that there may be a smooth transition in various positions of employment. Also majority of the respondents disagreed on being trained on a regular basis. The results revealed that training is not a significant predictor of the employee performance in Kitale National Polytechnic. From the results, it was recommended that the management of Kitale National technical should provide training programmes to enable the employees to update their skills and knowledge during the *rapidly ever changing* environments. Wright (2001) notes that employee competencies change through effective training programs. Training has been proved to generate performance improvement related benefits for the employee as well as for the organization by positively influencing employee performance through the development of employee knowledge skill, ability, competencies and behaviour.

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