

EFFECT OF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE AT THE BUNGOMA COUNTY REFERRAL HOSPITAL, KENYA

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Abstract

The health sector in Kenya is ranked as one of the major basic needs and as one of the pillars of vision 2030 as well as the constitution, high priority is placed on the provision of health services and service delivery. The determinations of priorities in public hospitals systems include resource allocations, expenditure and human resource in areas of training and development, involvement, performance appraisal and compensation. The main objective of this study was to analyze the effect of human resource management practices on employee performance in Bungoma County Referral Hospital. The study set out to determine the effect of training and development on employees performance at Bungoma County Referral Hospital. The target population for the study was 99 respondents. Self-administered Questionnaires designed on a 5-point Likert scales range from strongly disagree to strongly agree were used to collect data from the employees working in different departments of the hospital. Questionnaires were distributed among the 99 targeted respondents to get the data required for conducting the analysis. Random sampling technique was used as sample selection method. Data analysis was done using descriptive statistics, namely percentages and frequencies. The study found out that the hospital has training policy programme to staffs, the hospital has a staff development programme in place, the hospital organizes seminars and workshops for its employees, the hospital has a budget for training every year while there is no assessment for training done before choosing employees to be trained and most staffs were uncertain about if the training employees improves their work performance. The study further established that hospitals allow employees to participate in key decision making. The solid foundation of any successful hospital is its staffs. Employees represent a source of knowledge and ideas, but oftentimes that resource remains untapped. Involving employees in the decision-making process not only empowers them to contribute to the success of an organization, but also saves the company time and money in increased productivity and reduced outsourcing. Hospital employees are consulted by management before making decisions on issues touching them and employee attitude surveys are carried out annually. Employees are involved in decision making and Suggestion boxes are placed in a central place for use by employees to contribute ideas for improvement. The study too found out that the hospital has a competitive reward and compensation system; Incentives given to employees motivate and enhance their performance.

Keywords: training, staff, employee, hospital.

Background to the Study

Most effective human resource management practices are performance appraisal, training and development, rewards and compensation, career planning and development, health and safety

(Ming 2012) and employee involvement. Past research shows a strong correlation between human resource management practices and employee performance. This is because, by following appropriate human resource management practices the employees are felt appreciated, satisfied, motivated and more engaged with training which will improve the performance and encourage employee retention Amin (2013)

At international, national and local levels, employee performance is key to the success of organizations. Therefore, management of such employees is also key as it determines productivity. The use of common human resource management practices aims to unify the conditions and expectation of employees (Coculova, 2015). There are many similarities existing amongst Nordic Health care systems whereby primary care sectors operate under very different scenarios. Countries within the block that embrace salaried systems do have also geographical responsibility consideration. They further also introduce incentives for private practice and allow room for more choices in regard to patients (Olsen, et al., 2016). It is of interest to note such flexibility within the Nordic countries especially in regard to one choosing the patients to attend to and also the freedom to engage in private practice as a form of incentives. The researcher wonders whether such an innovative style may be a solution to the strikes over better terms of service in Kenya.

Effective, fair, timely, and market-driven management practices can be motivational for managers and employees alike. Experience and research in the science of success reinforces the concept that effective and fair management practices can motivate and enhance employee's productivity. Employees expect 'fairness' i.e. reward proportional to their contribution from their employers. Perceptions of reward fairness have been found to impact on employees/organizational performance such as absenteeism, individual output and organizational output. Employees are constantly involved in a social exchange process wherein they contribute efforts in exchange for rewards. They also compare the effort or contribution they put, in accomplishing a certain task and acquiring a certain reward in exchange. The only way employees will fulfill their dream is to share in the dream. Hence, reward systems are the mechanisms that make this happen. The reward system is a key driver of the human resource strategy, business strategy and the organizational culture (M.O Aqwu, 2013). The implication here is that the human resource management practices can affect performance of employees.

Statement of the Problem

Internationally and also locally in Kenya, the world has continued to witness industrial unrest and there seems to be no end to it. Human resource management is key to any organization. In Africa, there are many complaints of dissatisfaction in regard to human resource management practices as witnessed over the years across Africa from the South to the North and also from the West to the East. Basically, an ideal scenario is where by implementing the human resource management practices, organizations will be able to achieve its goals. It is however not the scenario due to a myriad of complaints over; severe shortage of essential cadres, high human resource turnover, unsatisfied staff, lack of promotions, skill mismatch unfairness, poor housing and working conditions, delays in handling of employees

grievances, lack of performance management system for majority of health managers, weak Human resource information system, lack of skills inventory system, and inadequate or lack of essential tools and medical and non medical supplies are the critical challenges that are hampering employee performance at the Bungoma county referral hospital. This has resulted to poor quality of service to patients and loss of lives (Ekere & Amah, 2014). Literature from the WHO studies failed to address the key human resource management practices that influenced performance in the health sector. The problem that the researcher therefore set out to resolve in this study was the poor performance of employees.

Literature Review

Human resource management practices are defined as a process of attracting, motivating and retaining employees to ensure the survival of the organization (Schuler and Jackson ,1987) Human resource management practices are designed and implemented in such a way that human capital plays a significant role in achieving the goals of the organization (delery and doty1996). The appropriate use of human resource practices positively influence the level of employer and employee commitment (Purcell,2003). Human resource practices such as training and development, performance appraisal encourage the employees to work better in order to increase the organizations performance (Snell and dean 1992) . Human resource management practices are designed to facilitate and support the recruitment, hiring and development and management of employees (wood and wan 2002) with the goal of raising levels of employee's performance and satisfaction.

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According to Tzafrir, (2005), training is an important element in producing highly skilled human capital. Investing in training programmes makes employees feel indebted to the organization and contributes to their retention. Training enhances an organizations specificity of employment skills which is exhibited in increased employee performance and overall organization performance. When an organization trains its employees, the cost of selecting, recruiting and internalizing outsiders reduces leading to increase in their performance in a given organization (Mbugua, 2015).

According to wallen et al. (2013), training is administered in two ways; on the job training where employees are given training while at their place of work. This is a simple and cost effective way of training. Both proficient and non proficient employees can be trained

using this method. The method embraces learning by doing. It can be done through job rotation, enlargement and coaching.

Off the job training is another method where employees are provided with training away from their workplace in form of seminars, workshops and conferences. The method is costly but when training a large number of employees it is cost effective. According to Budhwar(2007), training has a positive effect on quality of work, influences participants knowledge, enhances organizational based self-esteem and in turn increases employees performance.

Employee involvement is increasingly important in the modern workplace. Involvement is one of the enablers of employee engagement and is significantly impacted on employee performance.

According to (Boxall & Purcell, 2011), employee involvement entails various kinds of opening where employees can air their views and influence workplace decisions. According to Gonzalel(2009), employees involvement is defined in different ways; firstly there is the individual dissatisfaction that is usually brought up by line managers or through grievance procedures; second definition states that it is an expression of collective dissatisfaction voiced by trade unions through collective bargaining or industrial action.; lastly it's a contribution to management decision making process through communicating upwards, problemsolving, suggestion schemes and attitude surveys.

According to Armstrong, (2009), management are to believe in employees and involve them in key matters that concern the organization. Management can also use attitude surveys that give information on what employees prefer, give warning of potential problem areas and solve causes of issues. Attitude surveys examine a variety of attitudes and behaviors such as beliefs, opinions, values, expectations and satisfactions. Examples of surveys can be done through interviews, use of structured questionnaires, combination of questionnaires and interviews and also through focus groups(Gonzalez, 2009). Exploring employees attitudes at work is important in creating a conducive environment for staff motivation which translates into positive performance,(kubaison et al.,2015)

According to Kagaari, (2013) participation is another mode that employees use to speak up. It is demonstrated when an employee plays a greater role in decision making process. According to Biswas (2007), involvement is when management allows employees to discuss matters that touch on them in order to enhance organizational commitment. Direct participation takes place in self-determination and goal setting plans by individuals, while at departmental level employees are formed into quality circles and work-in groups

Human resource for health has long been recognized as the cornerstone of the health sector to produce, deliver and manage services (WHO, 2013). Health in Kenya is ranked as one of the major basic needs and plays a big role in the realization of vision 2030, public service reforms and Millennium Development Goals (Health Sector, Human resource strategy, 2014-2018). High priority is placed on provision of health services where health professionals serve

as a life giving force to the nation. WHO report, 2012 indicate that the performance of the health workforce in Kenya is below 50%.It also ranks Kenya as one of the 57 countries in the world with a critical crisis in health workforce. A study carried out by ministry of health (MOH,2015)found out that 61% of health managers in hospitals were inadequately skilled, lacked knowledge and expertise for the management roles and this further affected service delivery as they led to unconsciously mismanaging health facilities ,financial mess and loss of lives.

According to Katua et al. (2014), behaviors in employees need to be motivated in an organization through reward and compensation. According to (oluoch et al.2013) a reward system is comprised of four components which include; rewards that need to fulfill the fundamental need of all employees. These rewards ought to be accessible to people in similar status and the distribution conducted in a fair and equitable manner.

According to Armstrong (2010), reward and compensation practices increase employee skills and attitudes, promote positive attitude and increase motivation. When this happens, improvement in employee performance is realized. According to Zachariah, (2011), a reward strategy enhances commitment, retention and employee engagement that eventually translates into employee performance. Paying for performance is a huge concern in current human resource management. Establishments have long thought that efficiency improves after pay is connected to performance.

A study was carried out by Duberg and Molen (2010) on reward systems within the health and geriatric care sector. The study sought to find out whether the reward systems affected the quality of healthcare and how the systems were designed and what their effects were on quality of health services provided by employees. Six (6) heads of both private and public organizations were interviewed. The study found out that salary was an important aspect in the reward system; however incentives like bonuses and shares were seen to generate an enjoyable workplace with happy workers. This motivated employees and improved their effectiveness.

Compensation systems are; skill based where an employee is paid based on the range depth and type of skills rather than for the job title he holds; performance based where pay is based on employees output. Efficient employees are motivated to perform (hameed, Ramza, zubair, ali, & Arslan, 2014) and merit based pay where performance is evaluated yearly and given remuneration increased.

Research Methodology

A mixed research design was employed in the study to analyze the key human resource management practices that affect employee performance at Bungoma County Referral Hospital. Creswell and Plano (2007) asserts that a mixed research design is a method that focuses on collecting, analyzing and mixing of both qualitative and quantitative data in a single study or a series of studies. Questionnaires with both open and closed ended questions were used to investigate the relationship between manpower planning, recruitment, training

and development, reward and compensation on employee performance This closed and open ended questions were used to collect quantitative and qualitative data in order to explore on the effect of training on employee performance at Bungoma county referral hospital. The study used self-administered questionnaires and interviews in collecting data from the respondents.

After the data was collected, it was analyzed using descriptive statistics which was computed on independent variable in order to describe the data. Quantitative data was presented using frequency tables and explanatory notes.

Findings

The respondents were asked to indicate if the hospital has a training programme policy to staffs. The results were tabulated as indicated in table 8 below.

Table 1: Indicate if the Hospital has a Training Programme Policy to Staffs

Item	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	75	75.8
No.	24	24.2
Total	99	100.0

Source: Field Data (2020)

According to Table 1, 75(75.8%) indicated that the hospital has training policy programme for staffs while 24(24.2%) of the respondents indicated no.

The respondents explained that for most hospitals training policy programmes are used to support decisions related to training and career development, compensation, transfers, promotions, and reductions-in-force or employment termination. Generally, the policy review process includes setting clear and specific programmes expectations for each employee and hospital and providing periodic informal and/or formal feedback about employee performance relative to those stated goals. Recent trends, however, include a less formalized process focusing more on feedback and coaching, rather than a time-consuming paper trail.

Most respondents also explained that many of the problems commonly associated with training management systems are similar to those that beset any other organizational initiative, but with potentially much greater consequences.

Many staffs were not committed. Without an organizational commitment to the process and a clear understanding of how it contributes strategically to the organization's successful performance, managers will view it as "busywork" of little value and a waste of time.

The respondents also indicated that after formulation of training policy programmes, a manager's specific expectations were set and became clear for all employees to be able to implement an agreed-on goal. Goals were set to direct attention, increase persistence and motivated the development of strategies or plans to attain those goals. Clarifying and

discussing the performance goals for the coming year became valuable use of a manager's time and helped to avoid miscommunication and surprises.

The respondents were further requested to indicate if they strongly agree (SA), agree (A), are undecided (U), disagree (D), or strongly disagree (SD) with the following statements about the human resource management practices at Bungoma county referral hospital.

Table 2: Statements about the Human Resource Management Practices at Bungoma County Referral Hospital

Item	Human resource management Practices and employee Performance	SA		A		U		D		SD	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
5	The hospital has a staff development programme in place	32	32.3	38	38.4	20	20.2	5	5.1	9	9.1
6	The hospital organises seminars and workshops for its employees.	25	25.3	28	28.3	26	26.3	20	20.2	0	0.0
7	The hospital has a budget for training every year	5	5.1	45	45.5	4	4.0	35	35.4	1	10.1
8	A needs assessment for training is done before choosing employees to be trained	5	5.1	5	5.1	26	26.3	35	35.4	2	28.3
9	Training employees improves their work performance	25	25.3	26	26.3	28	28.3	0	0.0	2	20.2

Source: Field Data (2020)

It table 2, majority 38(38.4%) of the responded agreed that the hospital has a staff development programme in place, 25(25.3%) strongly agreed that the hospital organizes seminars and workshops for its employees, 45(45.5%) agreed that the hospital has a budget for training every year, 35(35.4%) disagreed that a needs assessment for training is done before choosing employees to be trained and 28(28.3%) were uncertain about whether the training of employees improves their work performance.

The study found out that the hospital has facilities that allow employees to have some input into the training strategy. The training facilities enabled the hospital to nominate the areas which they believe would be most helpful for them. The hospital also increases their interest

and emotional investment in the training, since it becomes their own project rather than merely something their boss has ordered them to do.

Throughout the duration of a training course, participants give out regular feedback to make sure that the course is meeting their specific needs because Time is valuable and it is important to be constantly monitoring training activities so that they can be adjusted as quickly as possible if necessary.

Conclusion

The study concluded that the hospital has training policy programme to staffs, the hospital has a staff development programme in place, the hospital organizes seminars and workshops for its employees, the hospital has a budget for training every year while there is no assessment for training done before choosing employees to be trained and most staffs were uncertain about if the training employees improves their work performance.

The study also concluded that hospitals allow employees to participate in key decision making. The solid foundation of any successful hospital is its staffs. Employees represent a source of knowledge and ideas, but oftentimes that resource remains untapped. Involving employees in the decision-making process not only empowers them to contribute to the success of an organization, but also saves the company time and money in increased productivity and reduced outsourcing.

Recommendations

1. There is need for continuous training and employee development in any organization.
2. Employees should be actively involved in their performance appraisal.

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