



RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMPLOYEE COMMITMENT AND PERFORMANCE OF TECHNICAL TRAINING INSTITUTES IN MERU COUNTY, KENYA

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Abstract:

Performance contracting and teacher appraisal were introduced in schools in January 2016 (Daily Nation 2017) a report on teacher's performance appraisal systems noted that the current teacher Performance Appraisal system requires experienced teachers to be appraised every 3 years. It also noted that teachers received an overall rating of exemplary good, satisfactory, or unsatisfactory. If unsatisfactory rating, the principal and teachers would prepare an improvement plan outlining the steps that the teacher would take to improve his or her performance and the supports that would be needed in order to carry them out and the appraisal system is the mechanism that is used to translate the school's strategic plan into action. To determine the influence of employee commitment on the performance of Technical Training Institute in Meru County. This study adopted descriptive survey and targeted 74 respondents' from Management staff of the 4 Technical training institutes in Meru County. The study adopted census sampling design which allowed the use of a sample size of 74 respondents. Data was collected using questionnaire. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistic such frequency and percentages. There is a strong positive relationship between employee commitment and performance of technical training institutes. It was also recommended that the technical institutes' management should conduct seminar and training to the members of staff in order to enhance employees' commitment and improve their organization performance.

JEL: J21, J54, L25

Keywords: relationship, employee commitment, performance, technical training institutes

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1. Introduction

Performance appraisal is a branch of management science referred to as Management Control Systems and is an appraisal agreement to execute a service according to agreed-upon terms, within an established time period, and with a stipulated use of resources and performance standards. Performance appraisal is one element of broader public sector reforms aimed at improving efficiency and effectiveness, while reducing total costs (Capam, 2010). Performance appraisal system originated in France in the late 1960s. It was later developed with great deal of elaboration in Pakistan and Korea and thereafter introduced to India (OECD, 2009). It has been adopted in developing countries in Africa, including Nigeria, Gambia, Ghana and now Kenya.

The biggest challenge posed was to make performance appraisal a participatory process within the departments and cascade it to sub-departmental level (OECD, 2013). In United States of America, Technical Training institutes carried performance appraisal system which aimed at improving public sector performance using management indicators such as quality, mission productivity and efficiency. In the actual practice, directorates at local government were managed through performance appraisal and in return, performance was improved.

These changes were achieved by according directors and heads of local services in the local government a free hand to encourage initiative, delegation of responsibilities and decision making levels were close to staff and users (Palmer, 2009). Performance in Singapore organization was affected by most supervisors in Singapore companies filling out confidential forms for the last two years. However, the National Production Board of Singapore created an open appraisal system through seminars though several organizations continued to have a closed system of performance appraisal (Ghorpade, 2010).

In Kenya, Performance contracting and teacher appraisal were introduced in schools in January 2016 (Daily Nation 2017) a report on teacher's performance appraisal systems noted that the current teacher Performance Appraisal system requires experienced teachers to be appraised every 3 years. It also noted that teachers received an overall rating of exemplary good, satisfactory, or unsatisfactory. If unsatisfactory rating, the principal and teachers would prepare an improvement plan outlining the steps that the teacher would take to improve his or her performance and the supports that would be needed in order to carry them out and the appraisal system is the mechanism that is used to translate the school's strategic plan into action (Ontario 2011).

Technical training institutes in Kenya have administrative and professional faculty performance appraisal system designed to provide documented, constructive feedback regarding performance expectations, spur growth and development as well as provide a fair and equitable means to determine rewards for contributions to the Institutions. The senior staff and faculty staff are measured by their breadth of knowledge, understanding of roles and contributions to the university's strategic plan.

The appraisal process therefore offers a valuable opportunity to focus on work activities and goals as well as identify and correct existing problems, and to encourage better future performance. Thus, the performance of the whole organization is enhanced (Roger, 2014).

2. Statement of the Problem

Performance appraisal has over the years become a very crucial part of Human Resource Management in organizations and its benefits all over the world cannot be over-emphasized. It is an integrative process involving objective evaluation of employee's competencies, contributions, improvement opportunities, and potential for future growth in line with organizational objectives (Schermerhon et al. 2004).

Where performance appraisal tool has not been incorporated in the Technical Training institutes, Performance of such institutions has faced challenges ranging from low students enrollment rate, high students college drop-out rate from unattractive programmes offered, dissatisfaction with formal academic education for failure to provide the needed skills and training for employment, self-reliance and failure to satisfy technological advancement (UNESCO, 1990).

In Kenya, technical training institutes have started carrying out performance appraisals to their employees with the aim of measuring institutional performance from January 2016 (*Daily Nation*) as per the requirements of Teacher's Service Commission to enhance performance of the technical training institutes. The performance appraisal in these technical training institutes is meant to analyze existing lecturers' skills, quality of programmes offered, physical infrastructure and customer satisfaction. (Mwirigi, 2014). However, the performance in technical training institutes has remained a challenge and in most cases is as a result of lack of employees' commitment towards organizational goals. Gakure (2013) on performance appraisal noted that highly committed employees are a requisite for organizational performance. Performance of Technical training institutes is also affected when top management do not support employees towards achieving organizational goals as performance appraisal requires.

2.1 Specific Objective

To determine the influence of employee commitment on the performance of Technical Training Institute in Meru County.

2.2 Research Hypothesis

H₁: There is a significant relationship between employee commitment and the performance of technical training institutes in Meru County.

3. Literature Review

3.1 The Balanced Scorecard theory

The Balanced Scorecard is a theory and management approach first proposed in the Harvard Business Review by Robert S. Kaplan & David P. Norton (1995). As defined by Kaplan and Norton (1996), the Balanced Scorecard translates an organization's mission and strategy into a comprehensive set of performance measures that provides the framework for a strategic measurement and management system. This strategic management system measures organizational performance in four 'balanced' perspectives which includes the financial aspect that summarizes the readily measurable economic consequences of actions already taken.

The other aspect is the customer which contains measures that identify the customer and market segments in which the business unit will compete and the measures of the business unit's performance in these targeted segments. There is the internal business process which measures the critical internal processes in which the organization must excel. Lastly, this theory looks at the learning and growth which measures the infrastructure that the organization must build to create long-term growth and improvement. In order to create a balanced scorecard an organization's management team needs to translate the mission, vision, and strategy of the firm into a scorecard.

The scorecard measures should represent both long-term and short-term success in the execution of the strategy. The scorecard should contain both outcome measures that indicate excellent prior performance, along with the performance-drivers that create successful future performance. This 'balanced' framework enables a management team to clarify and translate vision and strategy, communicate and link strategic objectives and measures, plan, set targets, and align strategic initiatives, enhance strategic feedback and learning.

These four strategic management processes are the keys to the Balanced Scorecard theory. Kaplan and Norton found that implementation of strategy is as important as the development of strategy. The Balanced Scorecard is a change management program, enabled by the scorecard (Kaplan and Norton, 1996).

In this study, performance appraisal is a strategy adopted by technical institutions in order to improve its overall performance. Technical institutions is a service sector that this been undergoing transformation from the old system of being a punitive center to a correctional and rehabilitation center. In order to offer services that are acceptable to the society, the four perspective of balance score card needs to be integrated by technical institutions in the implementation of performance appraisal. Adequate finances should be provided in order to ensure that there is readily measurable economic consequences of actions already taken by the institutes.

In conclusion, this theory is helpful in technical institutions since the performance appraisal will require looking at all the aspect of the organization performance. This theory all in line with the study objectives since effective

performance appraisal will requires employee to be commitment, setting achievable goals, management should support the whole issue of performance appraisal and there should be rewards systems where the performers are motivated and non-performers are punished.

3.2 Empirical Review

A study done by Dandira (2011) found that employee's commitment is useful in organization performance and where an organization does not have qualified manpower she will be forced to outsource. Drucker (2009) noted that constant feedback is a requirement for success of any organization. These constant feedbacks will help one to know how organization performance will be improved. In this regard, the opinion that the firm must appoint an executive committee which have a vision and a dream beyond everybody in the organization, and which is driven by results. For the organization to be able to perform effectively it must have the necessary manpower which is committed who possess effective communication skills, interpersonal skills, professional skills and ability to scan an environment in order to be able to predict future events.

A study by Govindarajan (2010) on performance appraisal found that performance is negatively affected by lack of clearly defined responsibilities between employees and the top management. Commitment of employees should be cascaded from top to bottom of the firm so that all employees are kept in the light on how the performance is being conceived and what is required of them. This means that managers should not hold back any information in their possession which can be helpful in strategic planning. The professional skills are necessary in strategic planning. Effective commitment is necessary tools for the leader to pass down the vision to all the employees and relevant stake holders. Continuous learning is very important for any person who wishes to get the skills to scan the environment.

Sherman, Rowley and Armandi (2007) noted that lack of career planning in most organizations is common problem experienced in Africa and that people appointed to positions are not committed since their career path is not clear. They cite a case where a former army general (who is used to autocratic style of leadership) is appointed to a position of a university administrator which requires democratic style of leadership. This leads to a mismatch between the personalities appointed with the strategies that can work well for the organization. To be able to ensure the performance is improved effectively, today's environment requires business minded and innovative employees who after analyzing the environment, can be able to commit themselves to the vision of the organization. Technical institutions are not exceptional from profit making bodies.

According to study done Gakure (2013) on performance appraisal and employee performance in Kenya found that highly committed employees is requisite for organization performance. The study argues that there is need for having committed staff for organization is tied to empowerment of staff and organization needs to place great emphasis on recruiting and retaining the staff involved. Sami (2011) suggests that

the key to service delivery in performance is to adapt to circumstances that are constantly changing and that the long-term winners are the best adapters, but are not necessarily the winners of today's race for market share. Schaap (2008) argues that government institutions performance often fails because employees lack commitment and capacity for service delivery which requires specific skill levels and experience and lack of continuously learning.

According to a study by Hrebiniak (2011), maintain organization performance is a difficult task for any management team especially if the employees do not have the requisite skills which improve commitment. It is clear that a poor skills can limit organization performance dramatically. Good execution cannot overcome the shortcomings of a poor performance. Allio, (2010) argues that necessary commitment that employees have will influence the effect of organization performance. Alexander (2010) believes that the need to start with a strategy that involves a good idea or concept is mentioned most often in helping promote successful organization performance.

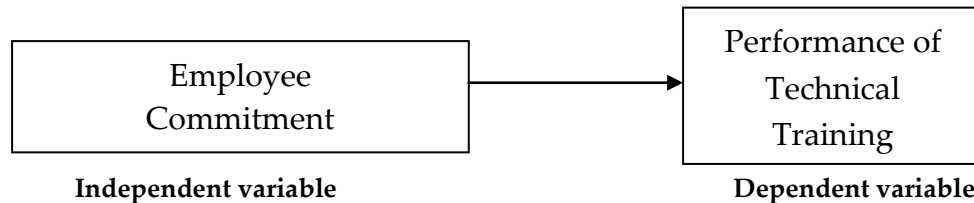
A study by Mauborgne (2010) on modern performance strategies found that the question of a performance itself is consistent and fitting or not is a key question for successful performance, but even a consistent performance strategy cannot be all things to all people. Bantel (2009) suggests that particular product/market performance strategies are effective at achieving particular performance goals to the exclusion of others. One of his conclusions, synergies between performance strategy capabilities that exist in employees should be exploited. The central conclusion of the research of Bantel (2009) is that the procedural justice of the organization performance ultimately affects the commitment, trust, and social harmony as well as the outcome satisfaction of managers in subsidiaries.

A study by Singh (2011) noted that employee commitment, trust in in organization performance will need specific cognitive requirements and how they can be met with the help of software-based decision tools. The results indicate that computerized cognitive aids can successfully be designed into decision support systems to support decision makers, strategy execution process and that such aids have a significant positive impact on both decision-making efficiency and effectiveness. However, decision support systems is much more strongly rooted in strategy formulation and it requires employees to have the skills that will help them and the entire strategic formulation team succeed in formulating viable strategic plans.

Chimhanzi (2009) suggests that cross-unit working relationships have a key role to play in the successful organization performance. Performance effectiveness is affected negatively by conflict and positively by communication and specifically, interpersonal, not written. In turn, these interdepartmental dynamics are affected by senior management support, joint reward systems, and informal integration. Executors are comprised of top management, middle management, lower management and non-management. Effectiveness of strategy formulation is affected by the quality of people involved in the process. Sweeney (2010) on his study on employee's factor in strategic management argues that public organizations should have the quality employees who

can handle required task or position. This study's findings indicate that strategy formulation success depends crucially on the human or people who are assigned the work to develop strategy and less on organization and systems related factors. Similarly, Harrington (2009) finds that a higher level in total organizational involvement during strategy formulation had positive effects on the level of formulation success, organization profits and overall organization success.

Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework



Source: Author, (2018)

4. Research Methodology

This study adopted descriptive survey to gather data in order to answer questions concerning the current status of the research problem. This design helped the researcher to collect data by asking questions using questionnaires. The study targeted 74 respondents' from Management staff of the 4 Technical training institutes in Meru County. In choosing the members who participated in the study, the researcher focused on the management employees of four technical training institutes in Meru County. The Technical Institutes included, Meru National Polytechnic, Nkabune Technical Training Institute, Kiirua Technical Training Institute and Mukiria Technical Training Institute. This is because Management are the major players in the day-to-day operations and they are the ones that monitor performance in their respective departments. The study adopted census sampling design which allowed the use of a sample size of 74 respondents. Data was collected using questionnaire. The questionnaire was both open ended and closed ended questions. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistic such frequency and percentages. Multiple linear regression and Pearson correlation was used to establish whether there exists any relationship between target settings and technical institutions performance. The variable Y is usually defined as:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + e$$

Where:

Y=Performance

β_0 = Constant

β_1 =Coefficient of independent variables

X_1 = Employee Commitment

e =Error term of the model.

5. Data Analysis, Presentation and Interpretation

5.1 Reliability Analysis

The reliability of an instrument refers to its ability to produce consistent and stable measurements. Kothari (2010) explains that reliability can be seen from two sides: reliability (the extent of accuracy) and unreliability (the extent of inaccuracy). The most common reliability coefficient is the Cronbach's alpha which estimates internal consistency by determining how all items on a test relate to all other items and to the total test - internal coherence of data. The reliability is expressed as a coefficient between 0 and 1.00. The higher the coefficient, the more reliable is the test.

Table 1: Reliability Test of Constructs

Variables	Reliability Cronbach's Alpha	Comments
Employee Commitment	0.904	Accepted

The construct depicted that the value of Cronbach's Alpha are above the suggested value of 0.5 thus the study was reliable.

5.1.1 Response on whether employees have clearly defined responsibilities

The respondents were asked to indicate whether they have clearly defined responsibilities which are put in place and in the running of day to day affairs of the technical training institutes. Their responses were presented in the table below

Table 2: Response on whether employees have clearly defined responsibilities

Employees have clearly defined responsibilities	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	10	15.8
Agree	13	20.8
Neutral	4	6.7
Disagree	33	45.0
Total	60	100

The data revealed that majority of the respondents 45% disagreed that employees have clearly defined responsibilities while 36.6% agreed that employees have clearly defined responsibilities. This implies that teachers do not have clearly defined responsibilities. These findings agree with those of a Govindarajan (2010) on performance appraisal who found that performance is negatively affected by lack of clearly defined responsibilities between employees and the top management.

5.1.2 Responses on whether there is Constant Feedback

Respondents were asked to indicate whether they are involved in constant feedback in their technical training institutes. This was significant for this study because it would help the researcher to know the extent to which the respondents could own up and implement the performance feedback. The responses given were presented in the table below:

Table 3: Response on whether Constant Feedback

Constant Feedback	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	3	5.0
Agree	11	18.3
Neutral	3	5.0
Disagree	26	42.5
Strongly Disagree	17	29.2
Total	60	100.0

Data revealed from the respondents that 71.7% disagreed that there is constant feedback while 28.3% of the respondents agreed that there is constant feedback in the technical institutes. It was also found that 5% of the respondents were neutral whether they are involved or not. This shows that in most cases, employees are not given constant feedback. These findings are in agreement with Drucker (2009) who found that constant feedback is a requirement for success of any organization. These constant feedbacks will help one to know how organization performance will be improved.

5.1.3 Responses on whether organization has created a clear career planning

The respondents were asked whether organization has created a clear career planning. This was important for this study because it would help the researcher to know the extent to which organization has created a clear career planning for teachers. The responses were presented in the table below.

Table 4: Responses on whether organization has created a clear career planning

Teachers have a clear career planning	Frequency	Percent
Agree	24	40.0
Neutral	1	.8
Disagree	33	54.2
Strongly Disagree	2	5.0
Total	60	100.0

The data revealed from all the respondents that 59.2% disagreed that organization has created a clear career planning for teachers while 40% agreed that there is clear career planning for teachers in the organization. This implies that at times teachers have no clear career planning. This findings concurs with those of Sherman, Rowley and Armandi (2007) who found that lack of career planning in most organizations is common problem experienced in Africa and that people appointed to positions are not committed since their career path is not clear.

5.1.4 Response on whether institution has created a learning culture

The respondents were asked whether the institution has created a learning culture that has increased the commitment of employees. This was significant for this study because it would help the researcher to know the extent to which organization has created a learning culture that has increased the commitment of employees to improve performance. The responses were presented in the table below.

Table 5: Response on whether organization has created a learning culture

Organization has created a learning culture	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Agree	10	18.3
Agree	31	51.7
Neutral	2	3.3
Disagree	9	15.0
Strongly Disagree	8	11.7
Total	60	100.0

Majority of the respondents 70% agreed that organization has created a learning culture while 27.6% disagreed that organization has created a learning culture. This means that majority of the respondents have been able to further their studies and as a result, such teachers were able to improve their performance. These findings are in agreement with those of Hatry (2011) who found that behavioral goals are likely to be more applicable than performance outcome goals for an employee if there is capacity to develop themselves and acquire more skills in order to enhance appraisal coaching purposes.

5.2 Hypothesis Testing

The sample data was tested using p-value in order to determine whether to reject the null hypothesis based on the level of significance of 0.05.

Table 6: Correlations of the dependent and independent variables

Independent Variables	Employee Commitment
Performance of	0.796*
TTI (Y)	.001

5.3 Test of Hypothesis of Employee Commitment

There is a strong positive relationship between employee commitment and performance of technical training institutes as indicated by correlation of 0.796 since the P values was less than 0.05, there was enough evidence to warrant rejection of the null hypothesis. Hence there is a significant positive relationship between employee commitment and performance of technical training institutes in Meru County. The above findings agrees with those of a Govindarajan (2010) on performance appraisal and noted that commitment of employees should be cascaded from top to bottom of the firm so that all employees are kept in the light on how the performance is being conceived and what is required of them.

6. Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

From the study respondents showed high level of dissatisfaction with feedback given by top management regarding their performance and areas of improvement, some of the respondents also agreed that organization has created a learning culture while others disagreed that organization has created a learning culture this implies that at times teachers have no clear career planning. It is also evident that majority of the

respondents have been able to further their studies and as a result, such teachers are able to improve their performance. From the above findings, it is evident that there is a positive relationship between employee commitment and performance of technical training institutes. It is noted that though the technical training institutes have started carrying out performance appraisals to their employees with the aim of measuring institutional performance from January 2016 as per the requirements of Teacher's Service Commission to enhance performance of the technical training institutes. The study recommends that should be adopted in order to ensure that performance of technical institutes is enhanced. It was also recommended that the technical institutes' management should conduct seminar and training to the members of staff in order to enhance employees' commitment and improve their organization performance.

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