



The Strategic
JOURNAL of Business & Change
MANAGEMENT

ISSN 2312-9492 (Online), ISSN 2414-8970 (Print)



www.strategicjournals.com

Volume 9, Issue 4, Article 094

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Accepted: November 5, 2022

ABSTRACT

The study was carried out in Wajir County in Kenya with a focus on establishing how four performance management practices had been implemented and consequently contributed to performance at employee level. The population was drawn from public sector employees of the Teachers Service Commission teaching in the schools distributed among the eight sub counties and a representative sample of 334 selected to participate in the research through a structured questionnaire. The four practices had been implemented uniformly to a high extent while the level of performance attained was relatively higher than the extent of implementation. The four variables explain a moderate level of variation in the achieved performance (Adj. $R^2=0.473$). Training and multi source feedback have a significant positive contribution towards performance, goal setting has a positive non significant contribution while employee recognition has a negative non significant contribution. The findings raised implications on the role of performance management as an employee management strategy and called on management to consider investigating the cause of the negative contribution of the recognition practice. Future research was called upon to consider expanding the scope of the current study by investigation how the two practices found insignificant can be better designed for positive contribution in organizations.

Key Words: *Performance Management; Practices; Training, multisource feedback, Goal setting, Employee Recognition*

CITATION: Ugas, A. H., & Kilika, J. (2022). Performance management practices in performance of teachers in the public sector. *The Strategic Journal of Business & Change Management*, 9 (4), 1359 – 1366.

INTRODUCTION

The ability of organizations to achieve desired goals through the implementation of strategic initiatives and management and development of workforce rests on their employee performance (Lawler & McDermott, (2003). Performance management is referred to as a strategic approach adopted to attain success for a value creating entity via enhancement of the performance of employees and building the capacities of teams and that of individuals working in the organisation (Ovidiu-Iliuta, 2012). Despite the importance of performance management system, there have been widespread dissatisfaction on its usage and implementation across organisations. As posited by Morgan (2006), an increasing number of companies had stated that their performance management systems did not result to desired expectations. In a similar vein, Hainnes and St-Onge (2012) averred that 80 – 90 per cent of HR professionals stated that their organisational performance suffers improvement as a result of the ineffective performance management systems. The reason for the ineffective performance management systems might be as a result of misalignment of good performance management practices.

Performance management systems have been embraced in the public sector to help in enhancing employee performance. Most public sector organizations in Kenya have adopted this approach in line with the broad strategy of attaining the expectations of Vision 2030 that seeks to achieve industrialization status of a middle income economy, with the education sector proposed to play a key role in its attainment. There has been much emphasis on this practice, but at the same time lack of fact based data to inform policy on the progress made and contribution arising from employee level. By undertaking this study, the author provides factual and empirical data from a hardship area that would contribute to balanced policy formulation and standardization of HRM practices across all regions in the country. Even though the Teachers Service commission embraced

performance management as an employee management strategy aimed at transforming its management style, the process has been slow and the uniformity of its implementation across diverse regions has not yet been ascertained.

The author drew inspiration from the inventory of studies investigating performance management practices and performance at various organisational levels that have shown both significant and insignificant relationships most done in western contexts (Hainnes & St-Onge, 2012), which has remained anecdotal in the context of non-western economies. It thus prompted a need to examine the effect that performance management practices have on performance at employee level among teachers working in Teachers Service Commission, Wajir County, Kenya. The study sought to answer two objectives. First to establish the extent of performance management practices implementation in the hardship area of Wajir County and secondly to determine the contribution of each of the selected practices towards performance at employee level among teachers working in public sector schools in Wajir county.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Performance Management Practices

Performance management practices refer to the various interventions designed and implemented at directing and supporting employees so as to be effective and efficient as possible in line with the needs of the organisation (Kagaari, Munene, & Ntayi, 2010). The set of practices vary from one organisation to another but the result of significant relationship on performance management practices has been registered in the literature (Hainnes & St-Onge, 2012). There have been a lot of inconsistencies in the indicators of performance and performance management practices investigated in literature, and besides, the studies investigating if there exist a relationship between the said practices and performance of employees are scanty in literature in most contexts.

Organisations are increasingly concerned on the means of improving the performance of their employees as the overall desired organisational performance hinged on the employees. The design and implementation of strategic performance management practices have therefore been identified as a means through which performance is enhanced by investing in employee characteristics (Moduli, 2015). According to Andrea (2015) performance management should lead to companies' success, thereby ensuring that they have positive impacts on workers. Employees should understand their expectation and be able to give feedback to the management throughout the year on matters regarding the improvement of the company. Companies should be able to express clearly their expectations to their employees in order to ensure that both are able to enjoy motivation.

As posited by Armstrong and Baron, (1998), performance management entails a system that intends to utilise the capability and potential of human capital by eliminating barriers by motivating organisational members. Performance management leads to attaining competitive advantage by developing and getting employees motivated (Kandula, 2006). In an attempt to find whether performance management practices create the desired success in the organisations, scholars have investigated typologies of performance management practices, and these practices include: performance management training, employee recognition, multisource feedbacks, organisation culture, goal settings, employee involvement, and among others (Hainnes & St-Onge, 2012; Ovidiu-Iliuta, 2012). These practices have been employed in western contexts and there is need to examine the contribution of these practices to performance in the context of non-western economies. The author adopted four performance management practices, namely training, multi source feedback, employee recognition and goal setting.

Performance management training is a practice designed and implemented to ensuring managers

or supervisors get involved in the process of performance planning, coaching, assessment and review (Hainnes& St-Onge, 2012). The process of performance management rests on the shoulder of managers and other superiors in the organisation and the need for them to be trained becomes of utmost importance. As averred by performance experts, training interventions improve justice perception and may make leaders to become more effective and this will lead to proper communication of performance messages or coaching to the subordinates in the organisations. Performance management training, according to Gorman and Rentsch, (2009), has the potency to improve the accuracy of supervisory performance rating.

The performance of the employee needs to be directed towards a specific target which requires that there be clearly stated and understandable goals. Clear and measurable goals have been identified in literature as a means through which ambiguities can be eliminated and avoided in an organisation. A clear and achievable goal should be set before the employees start to perform their duties, and the goal set must be measurable. As posited by Ehtesham, Muhammad, and Muhammad (2011) clear and measurable goal should be among culture to be adopted in an organisation and it will endear the desired performance on the part of the organisational workforce.

Multisource feedback practices give the platform through which multiple sources of feedback is accorded different perspectives to performance management process. Multisource feedback as it is often called 360 degree practice allows rating of employees to be done by several stakeholders including the subordinates, superiors, and sometimes other external such as clients and suppliers (Brutus & Brassard, 2005). Evidence from empirical studies have shown that multisource feedback approach is associated with increased performance at various organisational levels (Maylett & Riboldt, 2007).

Employee recognition has been described as a non-monetary reward through which appreciation of work done is recognised in an organisation (Paré & Tremblay, 2007). Organisation implements recognition practices to induce and reinforce behaviours desired from the employees in the organisation (Hainnes& St-Onge, 2012). Employee recognition has been identified to a vector of motivation, and evidence from empirical studies has also shown that a positive relationship exists between employee recognition and performance of organisational managers at different level of an organisation (Pare & Trembaly, 2007; Kwamboka & Sang, 2019).

Performance

The concept of employee performance has remained an important subject of discussion in literature mainly because of its non-uniform definitions. Scholars in literature have tried to conceptualise performance as either financial or non-financial performance (Savaneviciene & Stankeviciute, 2012). The financial performance aspect is often identified and measured in objective terms perhaps as a result of the availability of quantitative data, and on the other hand, non-financial performance is often measured subjectively due to its nature of non-availability of quantitative data (Kim, 2004). Performance in an organisation, irrespective of its conceptualisation, denotes success that a firm or any institution desires (Kagaari, Munene, & Ntayi, 2010).

Financial performance as measured in literature encompasses metrics such as productivity, sales growth, returns on investments (ROI), market share leadership among others (Moduli, 2015). These indicators of performance can be quantified because of the available data but performance in a not-for-profit making organisation and institution has been argued to be difficult to measure (Kim, 2004). Scholars have therefore posited that subjective measures are a good metric of measuring performance in a public sector organisation using evidence from studies that have confirmed positive correlation between objective and subjective forms

of measuring performance (Van & Vermeeren, 2017).

In public sector organisations or institutions that seek to ensure provision of services at no cost or for financial gains, performance needs to be measured in such a way that reflects that the needs have been met. The basis of this argument is that performance should be measured beyond conventional means of profitability and efficiency but must include metrics that reflects the democratic needs of the society (Van & Vermeeren, 2017). In line with the positions of scholars, performance has therefore been measured in literature as perceived performance beyond conventional means of profitability to include effectiveness, efficiency, competency, legitimacy, and fairness (Kim, 2004). Drawing from the preceding explanation, this study measured performance in a public sector setting where respondents were teachers employed and working in public schools in Kenya. The human resource management function for all teachers in the public sector is handled by an independent body on behalf of the ministry of Education, the Teachers Service Commission. Performance was measured using metrics of effectiveness, efficiency, and fairness.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design: Research design is a general plan for data collection which describes how a researcher intends to answer research questions or test research hypotheses (Jankowicz, 2006). In this study, both descriptive and explanatory designs were made use. From the position of Saunders, *et al*, (2009), descriptive design explains characteristics of survey data. While the causal relationship or association between the constructs of a study can be established via explanatory research design (Saunders, *et al.*, 2009).

Population and Sampling Design: The targeted population of this study was the overall number of teachers in public primary and secondary schools in eight sub-counties in Wajir County, Kenya. Wajir County is covering eight sub counties which are: Wajir South, Wajir North, WajirEast, Wajir West,

Tarbai, Eldas, Buna and Habaswein. A total of 2,034 teachers from the sub counties (eight sub counties) formed the population of this study. The study sample size obtained was therefore determined using Yamane Statistics for proportion. Using Yamane formula for sampling size proportion, the sample size was determined as follows; $n = 1 + N / N (e)^2$. The sample size for this study was 334 participants. The study participants were selected using stratified sampling method. The strata were the sub counties of Wajir County.

Data Collection Procedures: The study relied on primary data and the platform through which the data were collected was structured questionnaires given that as a tool for data collection in management science is seen to be more superior as compared to other tools. The questionnaire had closed questions. The questionnaire was divided into two sections "Section 'A' and section 'B'. Section A" sought to obtain data on attributes of the respondents. Section "B" focussed on the items establishing the effectiveness of the performance management practices at the TSC and was further divided into various parts to clearly measure the respective tenets of the performance management practices and employee performance under study.

Data collected were analysed using quantitative procedures. The quantitative information obtained for this research was analysed using statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) software. The study employed a self-administered instrument of a total of 334 questionnaires given out to the respondents, and from the total administered, 231

were successfully filled and returned while 103 were not returned. The successfully filled and returned represented 69.2% response rate and a total of 30.8 accounted for unretrieved questionnaires, and these unresponded questionnaires were due to the busy respondent's schedule.

The result on the distribution of the respondents years of service showed that the larger part of the respondents at 63.6% had experience in relation to work between 1-10 years, 26.0% had experience of 11-20 years of service, 9.1% had 21-30 years of work experience and 1.3% had 31 years and above years of experience.

RESULTS

The findings of the study were presented in line with the objectives of the study. The section first presents findings on the extent of implementation of the performance management practices then followed by the contribution of each practice to performance at employee level.

Extent of Implementation of Performance Management Practices

The objective was measured using a 5-point likert type scale in the questionnaire on each performance management practice. Respondents were presented with several statements on each practice and required to rate the extent they had experienced each dimension from their supervisors and among themselves. Measures of central tendency and dispersion were used to analyse the responses which are summarised in table 1.

Table 1: Extent of Performance Management Practice Implementation

Variable	No. of Items	Alpha (α) Score	Mean	Std. Dev
Employee Training	7	0.706	3.5455	0.9671
Multisource Feedback	6	0.803	3.5476	1.0893
Employee Recognition	6	0.878	3.5801	1.0678
Goal Setting	7	0.813	3.7236	0.9664
Employee Performance of TSC	10	0.905	3.8195	0.8573
Overall α Score	36	0.821		

The findings indicate that the level of performance achieved was perceived to be at the level of 3.8.

According to the scale used this performance was interpreted to imply that performance was

achieved to a high extent. The descriptive statistics on each of the practices indicate that the lowest implemented performance management practices were training, feedback and recognition at a mean of 3.5 which tends towards high extent while the highest implemented was goal setting with a mean of 3.7. Overall, it is observable that the situation of performance management practice in the county has been implemented uniformly at a mean of above 3.5 with a relatively low variability as demonstrated by the standard deviation.

The Contribution of Performance Management Practices

The second objective sought to establish the contribution of each of the four practices towards the achieved level of performance. Multiple regression analysis was used to measure the effect of each of the practices and the results interpreted using the coefficients at $p < 0.05$. Table 2 presents the regression analysis results.

Table 2: Regression Results

Model Summary						
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson	
1	.694 ^a	.482	.473	4.31567	1.539	
Anova						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	3920.980	4	980.245	52.631	.000 ^b
	Residual	4209.253	226	18.625		
	Total	8130.234	230			
Coefficients						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		β	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	17.750	1.562		11.360	.000
	Training	.286	.134	.237	2.125	.035
	Multisource feedback	.547	.109	.450	5.013	.000
	Employee recognition	-.147	.125	-.132	-1.177	.240
	Goal setting	.187	.115	.168	1.631	.104

The model coefficient in Table 2 shows that by holding other factors constant, performance management training has a positive and significant effect on employee performance in the teachers service commission in Kenya ($\beta=0.286$, $P < 0.05$). The result also shows that a unit increase in performance management training results to an increase of 0.286 points in employee performance hence the study concludes that there is a significant positive contribution of performance management training on employee performance.

The second practice was multisource feedback. As shown in Table 2 multisource feedback was

statistically significant at ($\beta = .547$, $p = .000$), at 95% level of significance, multisource feedback has a statistically significant contribution to employee performance in TSC in Kenya. The result therefore indicates that a unit increase of multisource feedback is responsible for an increase in employee performance in TSC by 0.547 points hence the conclusion posited by this study is that multisource feedback has a significant contribution to employee performance of TSC in Kenya.

The third practice was employee recognition. The results of the regression analysis, as shown in Table 2, indicate that the regression coefficients had

values of $\beta = .147$, and $p > 0.05$ respectively. These results indicate that the practice has a negative contribution towards performance that is not statistically significant. This study fourth practice was goal setting. Drawing from the results of the analysis on data collected in this study, the regression parameters showed values of $\beta = 0.187$, and $p > 0.05$. These results indicate that goal setting practice does not have a significant contribution towards employee performance.

Discussions

The objectives of this study were to investigate the extent of implementation of performance management practices and the contribution of each of the four practices studied towards performance at employee level. The particular practices that the study examined were: management training, multisource feedback, employee recognition and goal setting.

The study reported that with regard to the first objective, the practices have been implemented to a high extent. Two of the practices have a significant contribution while two do not have a significant contribution towards employee performance. The literature relied on argued that performance management practices are crucial for organizations to enhance performance. This is partly observed from the extent of the implementation of the four practices as well as the achieved level of employee performance. The inferential results indicating an overall contribution of the variation in performance explained at $\text{Adj } R^2$ of 0.473 is evidence that performance management practices have a role to play in the teaching fraternity among public sector schools. Two of these practices require management attention as a result of the positive contribution, training and

multisource feedback system. The other two practices on goal setting and recognition do not make a significant contribution. Management may want to investigate further why the recognition practice has a negative contribution even though it is not significant but it is implemented to a high extent.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of the study was to establish the extent that four performance management practices had been implemented in public schools and how that extent had contributed to the level of performance attained at employee level. The findings reported that all the practices had been uniformly implemented to a high level of extent and the extent had contributed to a relatively higher level of performance. The four practices explain a moderate level of the variation in performance. Two of the practices significantly contribute positively toward performance while two of the practices have non-significant contribution. The study concluded that the four performance management practices investigated are relevant for adoption in informing HRM strategies by the TSC among its workforce. The findings of the study were limited in contextual scope to the county where the study was done. The study did not offer plausible explanation on the cause of the insignificant contribution by two of the practices as well as the source of the negative contribution by the practice of employee recognition. Future research needs to consider these aspects as possible research areas that can expand the scope of the current study to investigate how employee recognition and goal setting can be better designed to offer positive contribution towards performance in organizations.

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