



INFLUENCE OF EMPLOYEE MENTORSHIP ON ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT WITHIN HEALTHCARE ORGANIZATIONS IN KAKAMEGA COUNTY

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to establish the influence of employee mentorship on organizational development within healthcare organizations in Kakamega County. The study was anchored on social learning theory. The study adopted descriptive research design. The target population was 853 healthcare workers derived from 36 private hospitals in Kakamega County. The target population comprised of 813 employees and 40 front line managers. The study adopted census technique to incorporate all the 40 first-line managers and Slovincs' formula to get the sample size of 268 employees. Questionnaires and interviews were used for data collection. Questionnaire was used to collect data from employees while interview schedules were used to collect data from first line managers. The qualitative data was analyzed using themes and patterns and quantitative using excel spreadsheets. Frequency distribution tables were used in data presentation. SPSS was used to generate data using means and standard deviations. Linear regression analysis was utilized for numerical data and interpreted to generate information that was used to depict the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. From the findings the researcher concluded that employee mentorship showed a significant positive correlation ($r=0.858$, $p<0.01$); with organizational development within healthcare organizations in Kakamega County. The researcher recommended that healthcare leadership ensure the mentorship programs in place are formalized and accessible to all employees to enhance their professional growth and the overall organizational development.

Key Words: Employee Mentorship, Organizational development and Healthcare organizations

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INTRODUCTION

The healthcare sector is facing many challenges that forces them to try and find ways of mitigating to be able to maintain a competitive advantage. Such challenges include Advancement in medicine, technology, change in statutory regulations, rising cost of healthcare services shortage of healthcare workers and financial difficulties in financing healthcare facilities. Employee mentorship has become part of the efforts in mitigating the challenges to ensure high quality healthcare delivery for organizational development, (McDavid & Hawborn, 2019). Employee mentorship is a structured and supportive relationship in which experienced healthcare professionals guide, support, and develop less experienced employees to enhance their professional growth, performance, and integration within the healthcare system, (Mohamed, Elsayed & Farag, 2022).

Employee mentorship serves as a vital link between individual professional development and broader institutional goals, ensuring that staff possess the necessary skills, confidence, and engagement levels to contribute to organizational success, (Nwokoro, Nwagwu & Chinyere, 2023). In healthcare settings, where teamwork, competence, and rapid decision-making are critical, mentorship promotes knowledge transfer, reduces turnover, and nurtures leadership potential, thereby reinforcing organizational resilience and performance (Chen, Watson, Zhou, Huang, 2020). Mentorship programs cultivate a culture of continuous learning and collaboration, improving not only employee satisfaction but also patient care outcomes. This alignment between professional development and institutional goals underscores the strategic value of mentorship in healthcare organizational development (Swardt, Toit, Cronje, Merwe & Botha, 2022).

In Australia, mentorship within healthcare organizations has emerged as a strategic approach to address workforce challenges such as staff shortages, retention issues, and the need for continuous clinical competence, (Kaunonen,

Akerjordet, Debesay, Kappelin & Strandås, 2022). Mentorship programs, especially in rural and remote healthcare settings, are seen as critical to supporting early-career healthcare workers and aligning their growth with the needs of the organization. Through structured mentorship, Australian healthcare institutions foster strong professional identities, reduce feelings of isolation, and improve organizational commitment, (Perry, Hodgins & Stone, 2019). These outcomes have a direct influence on organizational development, enhancing service delivery and ensuring workforce sustainability (Tran, Hall, Edenborough, Christy, 2020).

In Nigeria, healthcare organizations face significant challenges including workforce attrition, skill mismatches, and limited managerial capacity. Mentorship has increasingly become a focal strategy in mitigating these issues and driving organizational development, (Ajayi, Alabi & Okunlola, 2021). Nigerian healthcare institutions implement mentorship programs to bridge the gap between formal education and practical experience, enhance professional confidence, and prepare the next generation of healthcare leaders. These programs contribute to organizational goals by improving employee morale, increasing staff retention, and supporting the implementation of healthcare reforms (Ajayi, Alabi & Okunlola, 2021).

In Kenya, employee mentorship within healthcare organizations is increasingly recognized as a strategic tool to enhance human resource capacity, service quality, and institutional effectiveness. Given the dynamic and often under-resourced healthcare environment, mentorship provides a mechanism for knowledge sharing, skill enhancement, and employee engagement that aligns with organizational objectives, (Wanjiku, Njenga & Gikera, 2023). It contributes to organizational development by fostering leadership, improving performance, and enhancing employee satisfaction, which are critical for healthcare reform implementation and achieving universal health coverage goals (Wanjiku, Njenga &

Gikera, 2023). Furthermore, mentorship programs in Kenyan healthcare institutions are designed to empower health workers in both clinical and administrative roles, thereby strengthening decision-making capacity and ensuring institutional resilience (Mule, Akinyi & Omondi, 2021).

Statement of the Problem

In Kenya, healthcare organizations often face significant organizational development challenges, including poor leadership, inadequate staffing and inefficient systems, which hinder service delivery (Kenya Ministry of Health, 2022). Kakamega County exemplifies these issues, with reports indicating that 45% of health facilities lack trained management staff, and 60% operate without strategic plans, leading to suboptimal performance (Kakamega County Health Department Report, 2023). Weak OD practices contribute to low employee morale, with 35% of healthcare workers citing poor supervision and unclear career progression, while patient satisfaction remains at just 58% due to systemic inefficiencies (World Bank, 2023). These OD gaps directly undermine performance management, as poorly structured accountability mechanisms and unaligned individual-objective linkages result in inconsistent service quality and unmet health targets. Strengthening OD frameworks is thus critical to enhancing performance management and achieving healthcare goals in Kakamega County. Therefore, the current study seeks to establish the influence of employee mentorship on organizational development within healthcare organizations in Kakamega County.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Review

The study will be anchored on the Social Learning Theory. The theory by Bandura (1977) on social learning theory postulates that acquisition and imitation are the main processes of learning and the reasons for them. The majority of human behavior is picked up via observing and imitating: One can learn the basics of new behaviors by

modeling, and then use this encoded information to actually conduct the actions when the time comes (Bandura, 1977). Social learning can be employed at the workplace to learn what productive behaviors should be emulated. In the context of healthcare organizations, employees can observe and learn from the behaviors of their colleagues, supervisors, and leaders. For instance, observing effective communication techniques, problem-solving strategies, or teamwork skills demonstrated by peers can influence employees' own behaviors and performance, which this study will consider its contribution towards organizational development.

Employee Mentorship and Organizational Development

Performance management can be effective in revealing the aspects in which the employee requires development so that he or she can meet his or her performance targets (Armstrong & Baron, 2000). This is because performance management systems can help build individual development plans, which determine an employee's learning, growth, skills, behaviours and other abilities required in present and future positions. In addition, performance management systems can also include career development of employees for them to be able to have their own career map (Fey, Bjorkman, Pavlovskaya, 2020).

Armstrong's (2022) identified that; coaching, feedback, and recognition are the core activities of the effective performance management system. Coaching is more structured and systematic and includes systematic and planned interactions between employees and their managers with the purpose of developing the individual by modifying behavior and/or enabling the employee to deal with a difficult context (Lindbom, 2017). While generally, coaching is done with an aim of predicting behavior in future, feedback is more oriented to providing details to the employee about his/her performance in the past with a view of encouraging certain behavior or correcting/changing it, Hillman, Schwandt, Bartz, (2020). Recognition is one of the reward strategies that are

provided in response to desirable behaviors intended to influence and enhance performance; typical forms of recognition are; being mentioned in a meeting, having a note included in the company newsletter, or receiving various gifts (Haines, and St-Onge, 2022).

Managers engage in performance management on an ongoing basis to determine their employees' strengths and areas for improvement, and then to implement strategies to boost both individual and team output, Marchington (2023). In this regard, performance management is also done with an aim of ascertaining whether the existing employee competencies and skills, the systems, structures, and processes are useful in the enhancement of the accomplishment of the set and agreed strategic goals and objectives of the firm. Most importantly, performance management is done with the primary objective of evaluating the degree of fit between individual employee performance and the overall strategic plan and direction of the organization.

A cross-sectional study to establish the performance management effectiveness among high performing organizations in the real estate industry, Malebo (2021), pointed out that performance management was done with the intention of building up the employees; and that no matter the current sound organizational performance, there should be improvements towards making the assessment of the individual

employee performance fairer. This would make it easier for the evaluator to ascertain the areas of the employees of weakness and strength so that the interceptive development measures that can be used to enhance the performance of the employee and at large the organization performance. In a study that aimed at determining the role of employee mentoring on performance management of Banks in Scotland, Armstrong & Reilly (2021) noted that effectiveness in the enhancement of the general organizational performance is achieved through the improvement of the performance of the employees. The study pointed out that the banks that had a planned process to change employees' attitude, knowledge, skills and behavior through learning experience had better performance and thus organizational development.

Carrying out a study in cement manufacturing companies of Liberia, Bing, Kehrhahn (2023) found that training programmes that include efforts to improve workers' proficiency with new tools or software, for example, in order to write better reports or letters, strengthen the organization's ability. The study also observes that training was associated with development programs for the individual and/or the organization where it may be used to help with career advancement and creation of skills which may not be necessary at the time, but useful in the future to enhance on performance.

Conceptual Framework

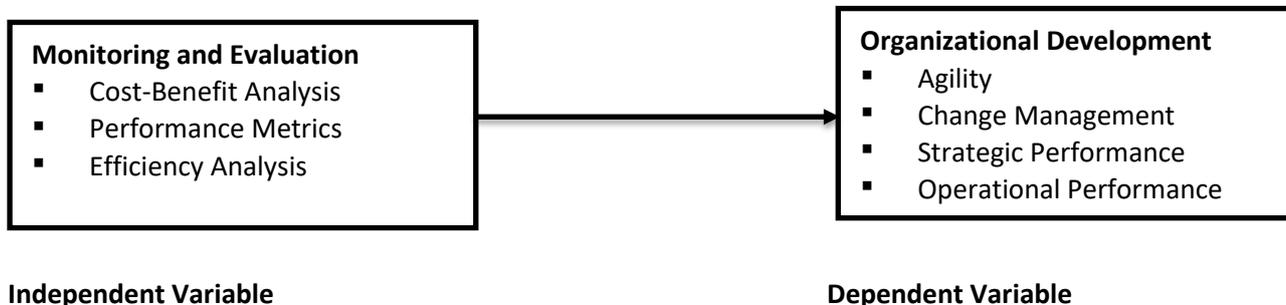


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a descriptive research design. The target population comprised of 813 employees and 40 front line managers. The study adopted census technique to incorporate all the 40 targeted first-line managers. For the employees the study adopted Slovinc's formula to get the sample size of 268 employees. Questionnaires and interviews were used for data collection. The interview guides were structured to collect qualitative insights from first-line managers. The study adopted content validity. To determine the reliability of the study the researcher conducted a pilot study in the neighboring Bungoma County where he distributed 27 questionnaires to health workers. Data collected was both quantitative and qualitative in nature. The qualitative data was examined through themes and

patterns and how they relate. Quantitative data was analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistical methods. Descriptive analysis involved the use of frequency, percentage, means and standard deviations. Inferential statistics involved the use of Pearson's Product Moment correlation and multiple regression models to determine the nature of the relationship between the variables.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Employee Mentorship on Organizational Development

The researcher sought to find out the influence of employee mentorship on organizational development within healthcare organizations in Kakamega county. The findings were as indicated in table 1.

Table 1: Employee Mentorship on Organizational Development

Statement on Employee Mentorship	SA %	A %	N %	D %	SD %	Mean	STD
The healthcare organization has a formal employee mentorship program in place	35.1	35.1	13.5	16.2	0.0	3.8919	1.07455
The hospital positively perceives the role of employee mentorship is fostering organizational development	27.0	51.4	10.8	10.8	0.0	3.9459	.91122
Specific areas or skills are the most beneficial for employees during organizational development	37.8	37.8	13.5	10.8	0.0	3.9189	1.23330
Employees mentorship programs are effectively measured	29.7	32.4	10.8	24.3	2.7	3.6216	1.23269
Mentorship relationship is effectively established and maintained within the healthcare organizations	18.9	54.1	16.2	10.8	0.0	3.8108	.87679

In analyzing the data on employee mentorship and its influence on organizational development within healthcare organizations in Kakamega County, several key findings emerged. According to the results, 35.1% of respondents strongly agreed, and 35.1% agreed that their healthcare organization had a formal employee mentorship program in place, while 13.5% remained neutral, and 16.2% disagreed. None of the respondents strongly disagreed with this statement. The mean score for this statement was 3.8919 with a standard

deviation of 1.07455. This implies that a substantial portion of healthcare organizations recognize the importance of having formal mentorship programs in place to foster organizational development. These findings are in agreement with those of Acharya (2018), who found that formal mentorship programs significantly contributed to improving organizational outcomes in healthcare.

Regarding the role of mentorship in fostering organizational development, 27.0% of respondents strongly agreed, 51.4% agreed, while 10.8% were

neutral, and another 10.8% disagreed. The mean score for this statement was 3.9459, with a standard deviation of 0.91122, indicating a generally positive perception of the role mentorship plays in organizational development. This is in line with the findings of Turner and Boje (2020), who noted that organizations that invest in mentorship programs tend to experience higher levels of employee engagement and development.

When asked about the specific areas or skills most beneficial to employees during organizational development, 37.8% of respondents strongly agreed, 37.8% agreed, 13.5% were neutral, and 10.8% disagreed. The mean score was 3.9189, with a standard deviation of 1.23330, suggesting that a significant number of employees believe that mentorship enhances their skills in ways that contribute to organizational development. These results correspond with the study conducted by Kimani (2019), who found that mentorship programs focusing on skill development led to a notable improvement in employee performance within healthcare settings.

Concerning whether mentorship programs are effectively measured, 29.7% of respondents strongly agreed, 32.4% agreed, 10.8% were neutral, 24.3% disagreed, and 2.7% strongly disagreed. The mean score was 3.6216 with a standard deviation of 1.23269. This suggests that while some healthcare organizations measure their mentorship programs effectively, others may lack robust mechanisms for evaluating mentorship outcomes. This finding is consistent with research by Sharma (2021), which highlighted that while mentorship programs are widespread, effective evaluation practices are often lacking.

Finally, on whether the mentorship relationship is effectively established and maintained, 18.9% strongly agreed, 54.1% agreed, 16.2% were neutral, and 10.8% disagreed. The mean score was 3.8108 with a standard deviation of 0.87679, implying that most organizations establish and maintain effective mentorship relationships. These findings align with

those of Mungai (2017), who observed that well-maintained mentorship relationships are key to successful organizational development in healthcare.

The researcher sought to determine if a formal mentorship program is in place for employees. M11 revealed that *"A structured mentorship program exists, pairing senior staff with junior employees to foster professional growth and knowledge transfer"*

This shows that the healthcare organization has established a structured mentorship program aimed at facilitating professional development. By pairing senior staff with junior employees, the organization fosters knowledge sharing and leadership

The researcher sought to know how employee mentorship has contributed to professional growth. M4 revealed that *"Mentorship has enhanced their skills, built confidence, and improved career progression. Many junior employees have moved into leadership roles as a direct result of strong mentorship relationships"*

This indicates that the mentorship program has had a meaningful impact on skill development, confidence-building, and upward career mobility. Employees have not only gained professional competencies but also progressed into leadership roles. This shows that mentorship is a catalyst for individual advancement and organizational leadership development.

The researcher sought to learn about success stories in mentorship. M8 revealed that *"Several junior staff who participated in the mentorship program have risen to senior management positions. This success has positively impacted the organization's culture and development by fostering leadership continuity"*

This shows that mentorship has led to measurable success, with junior staff advancing to senior management positions. These advancements have strengthened the organization's leadership pipeline and contributed to a positive work culture. This

indicates that mentorship plays a vital role in sustaining organizational development and

Organizational Development

The researcher sought to find out the influence of organizational development within healthcare

leadership continuity.

organizations in Kakamega county. The findings were as indicated in table 2.

Table 2: Organizational Development

Statement on Organizational Development	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	STD
	%	%	%	%	%		
Employee remain motivated to go to work daily	3.7	6.4	19.5	33.8	36.6	4.0270	1.01342
Leaders inspire and motivate employees through their leadership skills	4.1	8.2	17.3	35.7	34.7	4.1081	1.10010
Information is through clear communication of why change is required when is it initiated	6.4	9.4	24.2	36.1	23.9	4.0270	1.01342
Support throughout the change process is assured	6.3	8.9	18.5	34.8	31.5	4.1622	1.01416
The organization has a strong vision and mission	27.0	35.1	27.0	10.8	0.0	3.7838	.97568
The organization has done and extensive SWOT analysis to identify its strength, weakness, opportunities and threats.	29.7	32.4	18.9	16.2	2.7	3.7027	1.15145
The organization values collaboration and teamwork in all activities	16.2	32.4	32.4	18.9	0.0	3.4595	.98867

According to the findings, only 3.7% of respondents strongly agreed, and 6.4% agreed that employees remained motivated to go to work daily, while 19.5% were neutral, 33.8% disagreed, and 36.6% strongly disagreed. The mean score for this statement was 4.0270, with a standard deviation of 1.01342, indicating a significant lack of motivation among employees. These findings are in agreement with those of Njuguna (2019), who found that employee motivation was a major challenge in healthcare organizations, largely due to working conditions and leadership issues.

Regarding whether leaders inspire and motivate employees through their leadership skills, 4.1% of respondents strongly agreed, 8.2% agreed, 17.3% were neutral, while 35.7% disagreed, and 34.7% strongly disagreed. The mean score was 4.1081, with a standard deviation of 1.10010. These results suggest that leadership in many healthcare

organizations within Kakamega County may not be effectively motivating employees. This is consistent with the findings of Mungai (2020), who observed that ineffective leadership skills contribute to poor employee morale and performance in healthcare institutions.

With respect to clear communication during times of change, 6.4% of respondents strongly agreed, 9.4% agreed, 24.2% were neutral, 36.1% disagreed, and 23.9% strongly disagreed that communication about why change is required was clear. The mean score for this statement was 4.0270, with a standard deviation of 1.01342, indicating that communication issues are prevalent during periods of change. These findings are in line with the study by Otieno (2018), who found that poor communication during organizational changes leads to resistance and inefficiencies in healthcare settings.

When asked whether support throughout the change process was assured, 6.3% of respondents strongly agreed, 8.9% agreed, 18.5% were neutral, 34.8% disagreed, and 31.5% strongly disagreed. The mean score was 4.1622, with a standard deviation of 1.01416. These results suggest that many employees feel unsupported during change processes, which could hinder organizational development. This finding agrees with the work of Karanja (2021), who found that insufficient support during transitions in healthcare organizations led to increased employee dissatisfaction.

Concerning whether the organization has a strong vision and mission, 27.0% of respondents strongly agreed, 35.1% agreed, 27.0% were neutral, and 10.8% disagreed. None of the respondents strongly disagreed. The mean score for this statement was 3.7838, with a standard deviation of 0.97568, indicating a relatively positive perception of the organization's vision and mission. These results align with Mwangi (2017), who found that a strong and clear vision and mission are crucial to organizational success and employee alignment.

In terms of conducting extensive SWOT analysis to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, 29.7% strongly agreed, 32.4% agreed, 18.9% were neutral, 16.2% disagreed, and 2.7% strongly disagreed. The mean score for this statement was 3.7027 with a standard deviation of 1.15145, suggesting that while SWOT analysis is

Correlation Analysis

The correlation analysis provided insights into how these independent variables relate to

Table 3: Correlation Analysis

		Employee Mentorship
	N	222
Organizational Development	Pearson Correlation	.858**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	222

Employee mentorship also showed a significant positive correlation with organizational development ($r = 0.858$, $p < 0.01$). This finding

common, there are variations in its effectiveness across different organizations. These findings are supported by Onyango (2019), who found that strategic planning tools like SWOT analysis are essential for identifying areas of improvement in healthcare.

Regarding collaboration and teamwork, 16.2% strongly agreed, 32.4% agreed, 32.4% were neutral, and 18.9% disagreed. None of the respondents strongly disagreed with this statement. The mean score was 3.4595, with a standard deviation of 0.98867, indicating that while collaboration and teamwork are valued to some extent, there is still room for improvement. These results correspond with the findings of Chege (2020), who observed that fostering teamwork in healthcare organizations leads to better organizational outcomes.

Finally, 35.1% of respondents strongly agreed, and another 35.1% agreed that suggestions and ideas are valued as key contributors to organizational success, while 13.5% were neutral, and 16.2% disagreed. None of the respondents strongly disagreed with this statement. The mean score was 3.8919, with a standard deviation of 1.07455, suggesting that there is a positive culture of valuing employee input within these organizations. This is in line with the findings of Kariuki (2021), who emphasized the importance of valuing employee contributions in enhancing organizational development.

organizational development within healthcare organizations in Kakamega County.

indicates that mentorship programs play a crucial role in facilitating professional growth and development within healthcare organizations.

Mentorship not only enhances the skills and competencies of employees but also fosters a culture of collaboration and knowledge sharing. Research has demonstrated that organizations that invest in mentorship programs tend to have higher employee satisfaction and retention rates, ultimately contributing to their overall success. The findings agree with those of Wainaina and Ndungu

(2021) who found that mentorship programs in healthcare settings significantly enhance employee skills and competencies, ultimately leading to organizational development. Their research in Nairobi-based hospitals showed that structured mentorship programs improve employee satisfaction and retention, reinforcing the current study's findings.

Overall Model

Table 4 shows the overall significant test results for the hypothesized research model.

Table 4: Regression Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.330	.248		5.372	.000
Employee Mentorship	.115	.120	.157	.954	.007

The interpretations of the findings indicated follow the following regression model.

$$Y = 1.330 + 0.115X_1 + \epsilon$$

This equation reveals that the baseline level of organizational development is 1.330 when the predictor variables are absent. The findings also indicated that a unit increase in employee mentorship leads to a 0.115 increase in organizational development, these findings highlight the significant positive influence of employee mentorship on organizational development within healthcare organizations in Kakamega County. The findings agree with Kibet (2022) who argue that organizational development positively affects organizational performance within healthcare organizations by driving continuous improvement, fostering innovation, and aligning resources with strategic goals. OD involves the planned and systematic process of improving an organization's effectiveness through interventions in its structures, processes, and people. In the healthcare context, this means enhancing service delivery, operational efficiency, and patient care quality.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The researcher concluded that employee mentorship showed a significant positive correlation with organizational development. This implies that mentorship programs are essential for fostering professional development and organizational growth in healthcare institutions. Mentorship enhances employee skills, competencies, and satisfaction, ultimately contributing to higher retention rates and improved organizational outcomes.

The researcher recommended that healthcare leadership ensure the mentorship programs in place are formalized and accessible to all employees to enhance their professional growth and the overall organizational development. Mentors should be selected based on clear qualifications and regularly evaluated to measure the effectiveness of the mentorship relationships. The researcher also recommended that healthcare organizations focus on expanding the scope of mentorship programs to cover a broader range of skills and knowledge areas that contribute directly to both individual and organizational success.

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