

EFFECT OF TRAINING FEEDBACK ON THE PERFORMANCE OF NON-TEACHING MANAGEMENT EMPLOYEES AT SELECTED PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN KENYA

Dr. Scholastica Khakayi Wamwayi (PhD)¹

Human Resource Management, Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology, Nairobi, Kenya¹

Abstract- The aim of this study was to establish the effect of training Feedback on the performance of non-teaching employees in selected public universities in Kenya. The study was conducted in eight of the twenty-two public universities in Kenya with a sample size of 176 non-teaching employees. The study was both qualitative and quantitative. Qualitative due to descriptive statistics which were used in interpreting data and, quantitative due to data obtained from questionnaires that was interpreted using statistical packages like SPSS V 20, and Stata V 12, and analysis was done by regression and correlation. The study used open and closed ended questionnaires and a Likert measurement scale of 1 to 5. The study results revealed that training feedback (p value = 0.001) was statistically significant and therefore had influence on the performance of non-teaching employees at the selected public universities in Kenya.

Key Words- training, performance, non-academic, training feedback

1. INTRODUCTION

Higher education in Kenya can be traced back to 1922 when the then Makerere College in Uganda was established as a small technical college which was then expanded to meet the needs of the three East African countries i.e. Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika and Zanzibar, as well as Zambia and Malawi. In the 1940s and early 50s it is only this college that was providing university education in East Africa. This lasted until 1956 when the Royal Technical College was established in Nairobi. In 1963, the Royal Technical College became the University College in Nairobi following the establishment of East Africa University with three constituent colleges in Nairobi, Dar es Salaam and Kampala (Makerere). The East Africa University offered University of London's programmes and degrees till 1966. In 1970, the East Africa University was dissolved to create three autonomous universities in Nairobi, Dar es Salaam and Makerere (Chacha, 2004). The University of Nairobi was thus established as the first university in Kenya offering degrees in Bachelor of Arts, and Bachelor of Science in Engineering under the University of London (Kipkebut, 2010).

Kenyatta College that offered Diploma education became a constituent college of UoN. Since 1980, a great expansion of public universities was experienced and, with high demand for university education, six more universities were established for instance Moi University was established in 1984, following recommendation of a working presidential party chaired by Professor MacKay. Kenyatta University was elevated to university status in 1985, and is well known for offering degrees in education.

Following the same demand for university expansion and for reasons of political expediency, two more universities were set up within two years: Egerton University and Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology. Between that time and now, two other universities have been established: Maseno University and Masinde Muliro University (Odhiambo, 2011). About twenty three private universities were also established to help to alleviate the pressure of demand for university education in Kenya and operated under Commission for Higher Education (Mwiria et al., 2007)

Universities are expected to make contributions to national development through training and development of human resources in various professions for the labor market (Mwiria et al., 2007). According to UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education (1998), low funding from the exchequer, increased enrolment, limited access compared to the population level, increased enrolment

without commensurate improvement in available facilities, gender inequality, and a low research capacity, are some of the problems facing universities in the region.

These problems have led to extreme pressure on the human and physical resources making it difficult for universities to maintain reputable levels of performance in relation to their core mandate of teaching and research. Employees' dissatisfaction because of various monetary and non-monetary factors is another major area of concern for public universities because it is resulting in high turnover rates among academics while those who have remained are actively involved in moonlighting activities to supplement their income (Kipkebut, 2007).

Abagi et al. (2007) also posits that Kenyan Universities have destroyed middle level colleges in a bid to extend university education to the public especially in remote regions. Universities should involve other stakeholders if they have to survive for instance government, private sector and international community. They should also observe quality, excellence, equity, responsiveness, governance and management (Kipkebut, 2007).

Kipkebut (2007) found that academic staff lacked respect for non-teaching employees. Administrators were most appreciated or acknowledged for skill or knowledge in their everyday work (a case of Australia). In the case of USA, UK, Finland and Netherlands, Dobson et al. (2000) cited lack of appreciation of differences in nature of work between administrators and faculty caused tension.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The Adult learning training was developed by Knowles (2013), out of a specific theory of how adults learn. The most popular mode of learning has been for youth and children (Pedagogy). Pedagogy gives the instructor major responsibility for making decisions about learning content, method and evaluation. Students are seen as generally being passive recipients of directions and content, bringing few experiences that may serve as resources to the learning environment. Educational psychologists recognized limiting factors in formal education theories and hence developed andragogy (Noe, 2010).

Andragogy the theory of adult learning (Knowles, 2013), is highly associated with adult learning theory. Knowles theory is based on the assumptions that adults have the need to know why they are learning something, have a need to be self-directed, bring more work related experiences into the learning situations, enter into a learning experience with a problem centered approach to learning, and, are motivated to learn both by extrinsic and intrinsic motivation. The learner and trainer are both involved in creating the learning experience and ensuring that learning occurs.

At the completion of any training, the trainer conducts an assessment by interviewing and administering questionnaires to the learner so examine whether the training matched the expectations of the learner since in andragogy the trainee is involved in creating the learning experience as well; and this is part of feedback. Upon successful completion of the training, the employee can be promoted, appraised and recommended for better placement or remuneration. The environment of Andragogy must be safe and there should be a sound relationship between trainer and learner for effective learning and development (Jones, 2016).

The study revealed that Reinforcement theory was dominant as it emphasized the power and control of simple learning principles. First, the **Stimulus** must be identified and **Response** follows after which **Output/reward** is administered as indicated (S \longrightarrow R \longrightarrow O). The reward may be reinforced in case of positive stimuli or withheld in case of negative stimuli but punishment may be administered instead. In the case of negative stimuli, the reinforcement inform of punishment fails to motivate the learner to perform. Such a learner may never appreciate the effect of either the positive or negative reinforcement and therefore the learner continues to perform poorly.

In the course of training session, the learner must follow instructions step by step until the process is complete. Sometimes assessment is carried out to establish whether learning took place. The trainees who pass assessment are rewarded by some incentives such as compliments, acknowledgement certificates, promised promotion, secondment or salary increase. Coupled with knowledge and skills attained during training, the trainees are motivated to perform better in their areas of operation (Noe, 2010).

According to Opu (2008), feedback is the last step in the training process whereby trainees are asked to fill a form expressing their experiences during the training. The questions seek to establish aspects of the training communication effectiveness on the part of the trainer, relevance of topics, and whether training objectives were achieved.

Akala (2010) observed that during performance appraisal and performance contract exercises, non-teaching employees are evaluated against agreed organizational goals and objectives. The strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the employees' performance evaluation outcome are determined and appropriate action taken. The action may be promotion, transfer, granting of awards, and recognition, further training, as incentives to make the employee perform better. Sometimes employees may suffer due to the biased nature of appraisal systems. Noe (2010) contends that advanced technology, coupled with affordable costs for accessing technology has influenced delivery of training, making it real and has enabled employees to choose convenient places of work.

3. METHODOLOGY

The study adopted the Survey design and Correlation research designs. Survey strategy allows collection of quantitative data which can be analyzed quantitatively by use of descriptive and inferential statistics.

Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) also indicate that Correlation research design is basically concerned with assessing relationships among variables. It is thus based on the premise that if a statistically significant relationship exist between two variables, then it is possible to predict one variable using the information available on another variable.

The sampling method was chosen according to Kothari (2008) who maintain that stratified random sampling helps to achieve intended representation from various sub-groups in any given population, and guarantees minimal bias. In the study, the population was divided into meaningful, subsets that do not overlap and, the subjects were chosen from each subset. The study used stratified random sampling because the population is heterogeneous. The total population of non-teaching employees in the target population was 450.

The Sample given was statistically determined using the indicated formula, since the total population was less than 10,000 (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003).

$$n = \frac{z^2 p q}{d^2}$$

Where:

n= the desired sample (if the population is greater than 10,000).

z= the standard normal deviate at the required confidence level

p=the proportion in the target population estimated to have characteristics being measured.

q=1-p

d= the level of estimated significance set.

For instance, a target population with a characteristic .50, the z - statistic is 1.96, and desired accuracy at 0.05 level, the sample size will be:

$$n = \frac{(1.96)^2 (.50) (.50)}{(0.05)^2} \\ = 384$$

In this case, the target population was less than 10, 000, and the required sample size was smaller. To get the sample size therefore, the formula given by Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) has been adapted in this study.

$$nf = n / (1+ n)/N$$

Where:

nf= desired sample size when the population is less than 10,000

n = desired sample size when population is more than 10,000

N= the estimate of population size

For instance:

$$= 384 / (1+450) / 384$$

$$= 384 / 1+ 1.17$$

$$nf = 176$$

$$\text{Percentage} = 176 / 450 * 100 = 39\%$$

The study worked with 39%. Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), recommend that 10% of the accessible population is adequate, and at least 30 cases are required per group, for statistical data analysis.

The accessible population or the respondents were drawn from the 8 out of the 22 public universities in Kenya. A sample of (36%) 8 public universities out of the total 22 public universities were selected for the purpose of this study. The study used Non-probability sampling specifically purposive sampling technique to select the 176 non-teaching staff in management level at public universities. Table 3.1 below illustrates the sampling frame developed by the researcher of the 8 selected public universities operating in Kenya.

Table 3.1 Sample Frame

Name of selected public university	No of Non-Teaching Employees at management level	Grades of the Non-Teaching Employees at management level			Sample Size
		13	14	15	
JKUAT	67	11	11	5	27
KU	65	12	11	4	27
MOI	63	11	10	3	24
Eldoret	50	9	8	3	20
UoN	66	11	11	3	25
Egerton	54	9	9	2	20
Maseno	35	5	5	3	13
MMUST	50	9	8	3	20
TOTAL	450	77	73	26	176

A structured questionnaire was used to obtain the data. A Pilot study of 10% (17 respondents) of the desired sample size of 176 respondents will be carried out at Kenyatta University, Nairobi University and Jomo Kenyatta University. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) the purpose of the pilot study is mainly to pretests the instrument to ensure that the items in the instrument are stated clearly and have the same meaning to all the respondents. The pretest enabled the study asses the clarity of the instrument and asses the time taken to administer the instrument. The reason for choice of 3 universities: Kenyatta, Nairobi and Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology is because they have similar characteristics and features as the other universities in Kenya. The pretest was subjected to the internal consistency technique using the Kuder-Richardson (K-R) 20 Formula which is as follows:

$$KR20 = \frac{K(S^2 - \sum s^2)}{(S^2)(K-1)}$$

Where:

- KR20= Reliability coefficient of internal consistency
- K = Number of items used to measure the concept
- S² = Variance of all scores
- s² = Variance of individual items

A high coefficient will imply that items correlate highly among themselves indicating that there exists consistency among the items in measuring the concept of interest (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003).

Data was analyzed using quantitative analysis. The first step described and summarized the data by use of descriptive statistics. This enabled the researcher to meaningfully describe the distribution of results depending on the variables in the study and the scale of measurements used. Descriptive statistics such as Measures of central tendency (Mean, Mode and Median) and Measures of variability (range, standard deviation, frequency distribution, histograms, frequency polygons, bar charts, percentages and relationships) was used in analyzing the data. Inferential statistics on the other hand was used to make inferences about the population based on results obtained from samples. In this study, the researcher used regression and correlation tests which attempted to establish the relationship between independent variables and the dependent variable. The questionnaires were coded and the data was keyed into the computer using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS V-17) as well as STATA (10/12) Statistical Software. The statistical software's were used to analyze both descriptive. The results were presented using charts, graphs and tables.

4. RESEARCH FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

4.1 Respondents view on Training Feedback from Likert Scale

The study sought to establish the extent to which observations made by trainer and shared with the employees' improved performance. 1.8% of the respondents strongly disagreed, 2.3% disagreed, 2.3% were not sure, 35.0% agreed and 58.6% strongly agreed that observations made by trainer and shared with the employees' improved performance. Generally, 4.1% disagreed, 2.3% were not sure, and 93.6% agreed that observations made by trainer and shared with the employees'. The study agreed with Irawanto (2015) who argued that employee involvement in decision making is a strategy that enhances employee satisfaction (sharing decisions with employees), and culminates in accomplishment of organizational goals, reduces on stress and conflict but promotes and encourages organizational goal attainment, commitment, and acceptance of change.

In Table 4.1, the study sought to establish the extent to which Performance Appraisal practiced at the university helped identify areas to improve employee skills. 2.0% of the respondents strongly disagreed, 2.0 % disagreed, 2.3% were not sure, 16.7% agreed and 77.0% strongly agreed that Performance appraisal practiced at the university helped identify areas to improve employee skills. Generally, 4.0% Of the respondents disagreed, 2.3% were not sure, while 83.7% agreed that Performance appraisal practiced at the university helped identify areas to improve employee skills. This study complied with Prowse and Prowse (2009); Wilson and Western (2001) who revealed that appraisal is a tool for improving individual employees in attainment of university/organizational goals by helping managers to execute effective management. Appraisal should therefore be conducted frequently according to set goals. The sentiments echo goal setting theory which stipulates that the learners must agree on and accomplish the set goals on time (Locke & Latham 2006).

The study sought to establish the extent to which employees get interviewed immediately after training. 5.7% of the respondents strongly disagreed, 9.2% disagreed, 2.7% were not sure, 52.9% agreed while 30.5% strongly agreed. Generally, 14.9% of the respondents disagreed, 2.7% were not sure, while 83.4% of the respondents agreed that employees get interviewed immediately after training. This study agrees with the works of Anna and Bierstaker (2009); Ohman and Svanberg (2013); Stewart and O'Leary (2011) who all posit that there is a general belief that feedback can improve performance although not much evidence has been envisaged.

The study sought to establish the extent to which employees always completed filling questionnaires after training, and the trainer gave immediate reports. 5.2% of the respondents strongly disagreed, 2.3% disagreed, 2.9% were not sure, 58.0% agreed, while 31.6% strongly agreed that employees always complete filling questionnaires after training, and the trainer gives reports immediately. Generally, 7.5% disagreed, 2.9% were not sure, and 89.6% agreed that employees always complete filling questionnaires after training, and the trainer gives immediate reports.

The study sought to establish the extent to which the trainer conveys his observations timely after training. 7.5% of the respondents strongly disagreed 4.0% disagreed, 1.7% were not sure, 43.1% agreed, 43.7% strongly agreed that the trainer conveys his observations timely after training. Generally, 11.5% disagreed, 1.7% was not sure, 86.8% agreed that the trainer conveys his observations timely after training. The study realized that successful assessment for learning strategies result in improved learner progress on a continual basis and the value of the feedback is dependent on the quality of the feedback, and how learners receive and ultimately use it.

The study sought to establish the extent to which results of performance appraisals have greatly helped employees undergo various trainings in the university. 9.8% of the respondents strongly disagreed, 4.0% disagreed, 4.0% were not sure, 42.5% agreed, while

39.7% strongly agreed. Generally, 13.8% of the respondents disagreed, 4.0% were not sure, while 82.2% agreed that results of performance appraisals have greatly helped me to undergo various trainings in the university. Managers across the University already support staff to take paid time off to attend staff training and development activities such as courses, workshops and conferences.

The study sought to establish the extent to which employees are usually given evaluation reports in relation to the knowledge, skills and competencies acquired after training. 3.0% of the respondents strongly disagreed, 5.0 % disagree, and 3.0% were not sure, 37.0 % agreed, while 52.0 % strongly agreed that employees are usually given evaluation reports in relation to the knowledge, skills and competencies acquired after training. Generally, 8.0% disagreed, 3.0% were not sure, while 89.0% agreed that employees are usually given evaluation reports in relation to the knowledge, skills and competencies acquired after training. The study is in agreement with Mullins (2010) who stated that results of evaluation of training would consider the extent to which the training contributed to enhanced organizational performance, effectiveness, quality and prospects of employees. When employees are deemed to be competent, then automatically, their skills and knowledge are acceptable for the required, expected and improved performance.

The study sought to establish the extent to which employees after training, discuss their interview results with their trainer. The study revealed that 10.0% of the respondents strongly disagreed, 9.0% disagreed, 19.0% were not sure, 19.0% agreed, and 43.0% strongly agreed that employees after training discuss their interview results with their trainer. Generally, 19.0% disagreed, 19.0% were not sure, and 62.0% agreed that employees after training discuss their interview results with their trainer. The environment of Andragogy must be safe and there should be a sound relationship between trainer and learner for convenient learning and development (Jones, 2016). The learner and trainer are both involved in creating the learning experience and ensuring that learning occurs (Knowles, 2013).

Table 4.1: Training Feedback

	SA	A	NOT SURE	D	SD	Total %
Performance Appraisal practiced at the university helped identify areas to improve my skills	77.0	16.7	2.3	2.0	2.0	100
I always get interviewed immediately after training	30.5	52.9	2.7	9.2	5.7	100
Observations made during training sessions improved my performance	58.6	35.0	2.3	2.3	1.8	100
I always complete filling questionnaires after training, and the trainer gives immediate reports	31.6	58.0	2.9	2.3	5.2	100
The trainer conveys his observations timely after training	43.7	43.1	1.7	4.0	7.5	100
Results of Performance appraisals have greatly helped me to undergo various trainings in the university	39.7	42.5	4.0	4.0	9.8	100
I am usually given evaluation reports in relation to the knowledge, skills and competence acquired after training	52.0	37.0	3.0	5.0	3.0	100

After training I appreciate discussing 43.0 19.0 19.0 9.0 10.0 100

my interview results with the trainer training

4.2 Descriptive Statistics on Training Feedback

Table 4.2 highlights the respondents' views on training feedback. The statistics show that the respondents viewed performance appraisal as a way to improve skills (Mean = 4.76, SD = 0.47). Most organizations conduct a performance appraisal specifically to gauge performance deficiency from the employee. This performance deficiency can be due to lack of skills or skills mismatch and thus appraisal measures detect these anomalies. Once appraised, the individual will know the level of skill deficiency.

Employees prefer to get interviewed immediately after training (Mean = 3.95, SD = 1.09). A feedback after training serves to alert the trainer of the training gaps or effectiveness of the training to the individual employee. The feedback may be in the form of suggestions, questions and follow-ups from an interview

The employees would also prefer to be observed and observation reports shared with them for improving performance. (Mean = 4.54, SD = 0.64). Feedback in the form of observational reports improves productivity and performance.

Statistics show that the respondents get evaluation reports in relation to knowledge, skills and competencies after training (Mean = 4.10, SD = 0.94). The respondents alluded to the fact that the presence of training policy assisted in matters touching on training (Mean = 3.99, SD = 1.22). A good training policy would help govern the training agenda within the organizations. Lack of it would likely lead to skill deficiency, skills mismatch and haphazard training regimes. Most employees affirmed that they were comfortable with their jobs and that the training acquired adequately prepared them for challenging duties. This shows that the training they received gave them relevant skills that match the jobs demand.

There appropriate ways suggested by respondents were; improvement in working condition, specialized training (skills deficiency), promotion, recognition, remuneration and incorporation in decision making. From the answers given, it can be deduced that there are many underlying structural issues affecting the respondents; which may include the workplace design which affected the ergonomic aspect at work place, skills deficiency on those who required specialized training, and their being incorporated in decision making.

Table 4.2: Descriptive Statistics on Training Feedback

	N Statistic	Mean Statistic	Std. Deviation Statistic
Performance appraisal improves skills	173	4.7572	.46882
I always get interviewed immediately After training	173	3.9535	1.0887
Observation made during training	173	4.5407	.63391
Sessions helped improve performance			
I am usually given evaluation	173	4.1047	.93695
Reports in relation to knowledge, skills and competencies after training			
Time allowance for reflection learning	173	4.1214	1.13212
Training policy help in training	173	3.9942	1.2211

4.2 Conclusion

The study revealed that training feedback plays a significant influence on the performance of non-teaching employees at management level in selected public universities in Kenya. Most of the respondents agreed that appraisal practiced at universities helped identify areas to improve skills. The study therefore established that employees required frequent feedback; as positive reinforcement was the most desired and effective form of feedback.

4.3 Recommendations

Public Universities must give timely training feedback to employees after attending trainings. Delayed feedback is of no use to employees. Feedback should be relayed with caution and in a humane manner to encourage positive reception and taking of action.

REFERENCES

1. Abagi, N., & Yego, H. (2016). Challenges facing higher education in management of privately sponsored student programs in Kenya. *British journal of education*, 4 (8), 52-62.
2. Akala, H. S. (2012). *Factors influencing employee retention among the non teaching staff at the University of Nairobi*. University of Nairobi. Nairobi: University of Nairobi.
3. Anna, M., & Bierstaker, J. (2009). The Effect of Performance Feedback and Client Importance on Auditors Self and Public Focused Ethical Judgements. *Managerial Auditing Journal*, 24 (5), 45-474.
4. Chacha, N. (2004). *Reforming Higher Education in Kenya Challenges, Lessons and Opportunities*. Nairobi. Interuniversity Council for East Africa press.
5. Dobson, S., & Khatiri, N. (2000). Cognitive therapy: Looking backward, looking forward. *Journal of clinical psychology*, 56 (7), 907-923.
6. Irawanto, D. (2015). Employee Participation in Decision Making: Evidence from a State owned Enterprise in Indonesia. *Journal of Management*, 20 (1), 159-172.
7. Jones, R. (2016). *Innovation, research and the UK's productivity crisis*. London: Sheffield Political Economy Research Institute.
8. Kipkebut, D. J. (2010). *Organizational Commitment and Job Satisfaction in Higher Educational Institutions: The Kenyan Case (PhD Thesis)*. London: Middlesex University.
9. Knowles, M. (2013). *Informational Adult Education*. Chicago: Association Press.
10. Kothari, C. R. (2008). *Research Methodology-Methods and Techniques* (2nd Ed.). New Delhi: New Age International Publishers.
11. Locke, E. & Latham, G. (2012). The effect of sub-conscious goals on organizational behaviour. *International review of Industrial and organizational psychology*. NJ: John Willey & Sons Limited.
12. Mugenda, O., & Mugenda, A. (2003). *Research Methods Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches*. Nairobi: ACTS Press.
13. Mullins, L. (2010). *Management and Organizational Behavior* (9th Ed.). London: Pearson Education Limited.
14. Mwiria K., Ng'ethe N., Ngome C., Ouma, D., Wawire, V. & Wesonga, D. (2007). *Public and private universities in Kenya: New challenges, issues and achievements*. Nairobi: East African publishers.
15. Nachamias, D., & Nachamias, C. F. (2009). *Research Methods in the sciences* (5th Ed.). London: Hodder Education.
16. Noe, R. A. (2010). *Employee Training and Development* (5th Ed.). Singapore: McGraw Hill.

17. Odhiambo, G., & Waiganjo, E. (2014). Role of Human Capital Management Strategies on Employee Mobility in Kenya's Public Universities: A Case Study of Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture, Science and Technology. *International Journal of Business and Social Sciences*, 5 (6), 185-189.
18. Opu, S. (2008). *Motivation and Work Performance: Complexities in Achieving Good Performance Outcomes: A Study Focusing on Motivation Measures and Improving Workers Performance in Kitgum District Local Government: Uganda*. Erasmus University (MA Research Paper in Human Resource and Empowerment. Erasmus: Erasmus University.
19. Prowse, P., & Prowse, J. (2009). The dilemma of performance appraisal. *Journal of measuring Business Excellence*, 13 (4), 69-77.
20. Stewart, W. (2011). Horizontal inequalities: A Neglected Dimension of Development. *Working paper Number 81*.
21. Wilson, & Western, S. (2001). Performance Appraisal: An obstacle to Training and development? *Career Development. International Journal of European Industrial Training*, 6 (2), 93- 100.