SUPERVISION MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT PRACTICE INFLUENCES EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE IN ORGANIZATION; A CASE OF KENYAN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES

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Abstract

Universities in Kenya face management shortfall due to failure to meet the set goals and adhering to the laid down procedures. The situation calls for the need to equip management employees with skills, knowledge; capabilities and abilities to perform in the organization. The study was a comprehensive literature and theoretical review. The study adopted descriptive survey research design and targeted top management both in academic and administrative divisions in the universities. Sample size comprised 400 management employees. Respondents were grouped into two strata; teaching and administrative. Respondents in each group were chosen using simple random sampling method. Data was analysed using simple and multiple regression, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA =F test) and t-test were used to analyze the data. The test results indicated that variation in employee performance in Kenyan Public universities could be explained by variation in supervision management development practice. The β was significant (β =5.858, t= 15.377, p > 0.05). The evidence therefore indicated that the model could be used in explaining the influence of supervision management development practice on employee performance in Kenyan public universities. There was a profound influence of supervision on employee performance.

Key words: Supervision, Management, Development, Performance

Introduction

The education sector globally has undergone unexpected changes that have hard-pressed the universities to embark on a range of initiatives to stay afloat. Many universities are turning to human resource development as a strategy to enhance their employees' knowledge, skills and capabilities so that they can compete and maintain a competitive advantage [1]. A well-developed employee development scheme enables an organization to achieve in-house employee development through, supervision for this guarantees that the expertise, knowledge, experience and objectives available are harmonized with the requirements of the organization for enhanced performance.

Management development brings about employee empowerment and employee involvement. It is management's response to an increasingly complex and competitive environment. Employee empowerment is deemed critical to organizational efficiency, innovativeness and effectiveness since empowerment initiatives are geared towards enhancing management performance [2]. Supervision is a management development practice that specifies how managers guide employees to perform in their roles in the organization and involves assessing and monitoring competency levels and performance in the organization. Supervision thus, prescribes how managers plan, communicate, organize, and control their job requirements to perform better [3].

According to Scontrino and Bullock 2021[4] supervisor support is the degree to which organizational leaders value their employees' contributions and care about their welfare. Benard (2005)[5], described supervision as the supervisor`s ability to influence behaviors and actions of subordinates towards achievement of a particular goal. Worldwide, supervision plays a significant role in safeguarding effective employee productivity and performance in a workplace. Subsequently, it is opined that supervision should be prioritized for progression of employee performance [6,7]. Essentially, for organizational outcomes to achieve their intended goals, every business leader should be extremely concerned about the performance of their employees. Notably, it has been observed elsewhere that organizational performance and business success can be attributed considerably to supervision [8].

Knowledge regarding the possible association between supervisor-employee relationship and job performance would enable the implementation of more effective systems for management, and subsequently, better productivity for the organization through increased job performance. Because supervisors are responsible for not only meeting corporate goals, but also bridging the gap between upper management and front-line employees. A good supervisor/supervisee relationship is not only beneficial to the individuals but critical to the success of the organization [9].

Laporte (2012) [11] did an exhaustive study in Ghana and noted that businesses that were more autocratic had dipping productivity levels and therefore advocated for a robust and empowering supervision process. Efficient supervision and appraisal criteria had a positive effect on employee productivity [10].

Purpose of the Study

This study determined the effect of employee supervision on job performance of employees working in public universities in Kenya.

Empirical Literature

Carter and Little (2007) [12] conducted a research survey on employee supervision. The study included a sample of thirty-three participants who were business executives in an American technology based industrial products company. Supervision used within the company for high potential employees was underpinned by robust theoretical models originating from the field of clinical psychotherapy, and the supervision process used followed a four-stage process. The programme was focused on enhancing emotional competence to support effective leadership and some of the reported outcomes included: more effective leaders, enhanced inter-relations skills, improved commitment, enhanced performance management, increased productivity which are positive indicators of effective supervision and lend support, in particular, to the role of an insight-oriented approach to supervision underpinned by self-awareness.

Apenteng (2012)[13] studied the effect of supervision on staff performance in the Ga South Municipal Education Directorate and observed that while provision of infrastructure and personnel are vital for ensuring quality staff performance; absence of supervision could lead to low performance. The outcome of the study indicated that while majority of internal supervisors preferred and advocate for greater emphasis on internal supervisors, the external supervisors preferred the promotion of both systems in the Education Directorate. It also came to light that supervision cannot be overlooked since it is a major tool for better staff performance giving the right supervisors, right tools and right resources. The study showed that Supervision has effect on performance, supervision contributes to staff job satisfaction for improved performance, supervisors must make staff job satisfaction their top priority.

Elsewhere, Housman (2014) [14] assessed the Influence of Supervisors on Employee Performance and observed that the way supervisor's work, act, and communicate has profound effects on their employees. This has been proven empirically and resonates with most employees anecdotally. The study used two different companies that provided data on 1,400 supervisors and 3,000 employees across the US and Philippines. Applying a variety of econometric techniques, it was observed that managers do indeed have a very large impact on performance of their employees. Thus, across both the US and the Philippines, supervisors that were referred to their job by another employee perform better than those who were not. However, the study highlighted differences in impact of supervisor education thus more supervisor schooling predicted significantly shorter transaction handling times in North America, but the same measure predicted longer transaction handling times in the Philippines.

Vann (2017) [15] analyzed the Relationships between Job Satisfaction, Supervisor Support, and Profitability among Quick Service Industry Employees, In the United States and observed that low levels of employee job satisfaction and low employee perceptions of supervisor were associated with decreased organizational profitability. These findings indicated that improving employee perceptions of supervisor support lead to high levels of employee job satisfaction could affect behavioral social change to enhance the health and wellbeing of employees and the wealth and sustainability of Quick Service franchise locations.

Liu, X. and Batt, R. (2010) [16] assessed how supervisors influence performance using a multilevel study of coaching and group management in Technology-Mediated Services. The study examined the role of supervisors in improving employee performance using coaching and group management practices. It examined the individual and synergistic effects of these management practices. Results showed that the amount of coaching that an employee received each month predicted objective performance improvements over time. Moreover, workers exhibited higher performance where their supervisors emphasized group assignments and group incentives and where technology was more automated.

Saeed and Nosheen (2015) [17] examined employees' perception about the results of supervision and distinguished certain salient forces which do injure fruitful application of supervision. The study was descriptive in nature and sampled 120 employees at management stages of the manufacturing sector in Punjab area in Pakistan. Results showed that the selected employees were cognizant of the practicality and worth of the supervision. However, they did not have the knowledge of applying an efficient supervision. There were also significant differences in employee perception about supervision at the organization. As far as appraisal criteria is concerned, a reliable and accurate technique through which current and contemporaneous levels of performance is determined must exist. This is then compared with laid down acceptable and conversed standards so as to offer reliable measurements (Sing et al, 2010) [8]. There is consequently a need to have quantifiable standards associated with job descriptions and expected outcomes.

Humble (2016) [18] did an explanatory study to look at supervision criteria in the service industry in the UK and noted that a performance standard as a declaration of the circumstances which exist when tasks are achieved is needed. He suggested that when an organization should consider setting standards that relate to quality, quantity, time, process and cost.

Elsewhere, Najeeb (2011) studied supervision in Pakistan targeting the Habib Bank Limited in a descriptive design using inferential statistics and observed that clear and reliable appraisal system is important in an organization and the outcomes accruing from supervision positively impacts employee performance significantly. The study also highlighted a need for objective criteria for appraisal to achieve fairness and reliability.

Theoretical framework

The theoretical underpinning of the study was organizational support theory

Organizational Support Theory

According to organizational Support Theory (OST), perceived organizational support is largely dependent on employees' provenances concerning the organization's goals in regard to receiving either favorable or unfavorable treatment. Organizational support theory posits that both self-improvement and social exchange are a consequence of affective organizational dedication. On the subject of personal improvement, Meyer et al. (2006) [20] argue that organizational identification arises from POS effectively leading to affective organizational commitment through enactment of shared values thus promoting stronger bonds among employees and organizational leaders.

Research Methodology

This study adopted descriptive survey research design and targeted top management both in academic and administrative divisions in the universities. Sample size comprised 400 management employees. The study grouped respondents into two; teaching and administrative, within each group chosen using simple random sampling method. Data was analysed using simple and multiple regression, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA =F test) and t-test.

Results

Respondents were asked to indicate to what extent they agreed with the various statements that defined best practices in supervision for management development and they responded to various aspects under the variable on a five point Likert scale (5= very large extent, 4= large extent, 3= moderate extent, 2= less extent and 1= not at all) and the research findings are in the table 1 showing the means and standard deviation for the variables.

Table 1: **Best practices in Supervision for Management Development**

Best Practices in Supervision for Management Development	**N**	**Mini-Mum score**	**Maxi-mum score**	**Mean**	**Std. dev.**	**Ranking**

The university has a policy's on how manager should be monitoring, assessing performance and competence levels of other managers in alignment to organizational goals.	209	1	5	3.77	.844	To a large extent
The university has a policy on how manager should define and communicate job requirements and expectations of other managers to accomplish the goals of the university	209	1	5	3.54	.876	
The university's policy provides job-related instructions on performance management to other managers to accomplish the university goals.	209	1	5	3.28	.868	
The university has a policy on how manager should take corrective and formative feedback and providing consequences for poor performance to other managers to accomplish the goals of the university	209	1	5	3.28	.855	
The university's policy on how manager should be directing or guiding other managers has led to increased commitment to the university.	209	1	5	3.27	.4594	To a moderate extent
The university has a policy on how manager should plan, organize and control the job tasks of other managers to accomplish the goals of the university.	209	1	5	3.04	.7516	
The university's policy on how manager should be directing or guiding other managers has led to the development more effective leaders.	209	1	5	3.02	.2713	
The university's policy on arranging and evaluation the work environment to other managers to accomplish the goals of the university	209	1	5	2.80	.5474	
The university has a policy on how manager should achieve the role of self-efficacy, communication style and interpersonal style to other managers	209	1	5	2.78	.5129	

to accomplish the goals of the university						
The university's policy on how manager should be directing or guiding other managers has led to improved interpersonal skills.	209	1	5	2.789	.4840	
The university has a policy on how manager should be directing or guiding other managers to accomplish the goals of the university.	209	1	5	2.789	.5222	
The university's policy on how manager should be directing or guiding other managers has led to positive impact on the university's bottom line.	209	1	5	2.779	.4696	
The university has a policy on how manager should achieve self-awareness and responsibility to other managers to accomplish the goals of the university	209	1	5	2.531	.8988	
The university's policy on how manager should be directing or guiding other managers has led to increased productivity.	209	1	5	2.296	.5076	To a less extent
Grand Mean				2.801		

Table 1. shows the results of the Likert scale analysis (3.77≥Mean≥ 3.28, with sign. standard deviation. ≥0.85). From the observation that the university has a policy on how manager should be monitoring, assessing performance and competence levels of other managers in alignment to organizational goals.

To a less extent with (Mean ≥ 2.296, with sign. standard deviation ≥0.50) the university's policy on how manager should be directing or guiding other managers has led to increased productivity

Results indicated that the public universities in Kenya adopt best practices in supervision for Management Development at a moderate extent with an overall mean of 2.801.

These findings support observations of Apenteng (2012) [13] who studied the effect of supervision on staff performance in the Ga South Municipal Education Directorate and argued that while provision of infrastructure and personnel are vital for ensuring quality staff performance; absence of supervision could lead to low performance. Thus, supervision cannot be overlooked since it is a major tool for better staff performance giving the right supervisors, right tools and right resources.

Regression analysis of Supervision and employee performance

In light of the descriptive statistics above, parameters of workplace supervision were regressed against employee performance to confirm the results obtained from descriptive statistics as well as testing the direction of the relationship. In order to confirm the relationship between supervision and employee performance, a regression was run on supervision against employee performance. The extracts are presented below;

Table 2: Model summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					Durbin-Watson
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change	
1	.730a	.533	.531	1.361	.533	236.459	1	207	.000	2.379

a. Predictors: (Constant), Supervision

b. Dependent Variable: Employee performance

Results presented on table 2 above, depicts a simple linear regression model summary and overall fit statistics. The adjusted R square estimated the population R square for the model used in this study and subsequently presented a more accurate indication of its predictive power. Adjusted R squared of 0.531 showed that supervisor support, supervision greatly influence the model predicting employee performance. Adjusted $R^2 = .531$ at a standard error of 1.361 indicated the amount of variance in employee performance that can be explained by application of supervision. This meant that multiple regression explained 53.1% of the variance in employee performance confirming supervision is a significant determinant of employee performance. The more the public universities implements supervision as a management development practice, the more its employee performance will improve and when supervision variable is not implemented well, employee performance will decline.

Table 3: ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	438.139	1	438.139	236.459	.000[b]
	Residual	383.555	207	1.853		
	Total	821.694	208			

a. Dependent Variable: Employee performance

b. Predictor (constant), Supervision

Data on Table 3. above present the F-test results which were used to determine whether the model is a good fit for the data, and to explain the variance in the dependent variable. F-test of 236.459 was statistically significant, thus it can be assumed that the model of supervision demonstrated a significant variance in employees` performance with p-value (0.000< 0.01) at 99% confidence level. If this test was significant at 1%, the model in general had good predictive capability of employee performance. A statistically significant correlation was established between supervision and employees` performance demonstrating that efficient implementation of supervision as a management development practice influence employee's performance.

Table 4: Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-7.621	1.147		-6.642	.000
	Supervision	5.858	.381	.730	15.377	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Employee performance

As indicated on table 4 above, beta coefficients value of 0.730 and t-value of 15.377 greater than 0.000 < 0.01 demonstrating that supervision is a significant predictor of employee performance in public universities in Kenya.

Discussion of the findings

This study demonstrates that supervision had a significant impact on service delivery (Adjusted R Square = 0.531, F= 236.459, p >0.05). Thus, the service delivery outcomes in Kenyan Public universities could be explained by variation in supervision management development practice. The β was significant (β =5.858, t= 15.377, p > 0.05). Thus, it is crucial for supervisors to actively ensure that employees feel valued and supported by the organization, so that they can respond with increased engagement (Eisenberger et al., 2001) [21]. Furthermore, Bakker et al., (2008) [22] noted that because supervisors are widely perceived as organizational agents responsible for coordinating employees` performance, their feedback is often perceived and interpreted by employees as a reflection the organization's feelings towards them.

Conclusion

Results of this study provide conclusive that Supervision management development practice significantly predict service delivery outcomes in Kenyan public universities. The practice ensures improvement of performance of all key factors by focusing on multiple management perspectives which include finance and stewardship, operations, service delivery and non-financial and dynamic/qualitative aspects and using weighted and composite scores to measure the performance. In order to achieve even higher outcomes, there is need for supervisors to acknowledge and appreciated employee achievements since this motivates employees and reinforces positive behaviors during goal setting, performance reviews, and development discussions for both high and low performers.

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