



FACTORS AFFECTING EMPLOYEE EMPOWERMENT IN THE PARASTATAL SECTOR: A CASE OF KENYA WILDLIFE SERVICE

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Abstract

Over time, public organizations have been adopting employee empowerment with the aim of improving performance and job satisfaction and promoting innovativeness. The study's understanding of employee empowerment has been hindered by a dearth of empirical research on its uses and consequences in the public sector. Employee empowerment has been among an influential management concepts by various literature. Notably in the areas concerning reshaping of the relationship between managers and those they are responsible of managing. The need to improve the performance of public organizations in order to give value for money to tax payers has become pertinent hence the need for maximum utilization of the labor capital. Many factors have been said to contribute greatly to employee empowerment which has become widely studied in the recent past as one of the ways organizations may use to turn around their performance. This study analyzed four of these factors that influence employee empowerment in an organization. The focus was on the Parastatal sector in Kenya with particular focus on Kenya Wildlife Service and assess the extent to which the concept has been embraced by the latter. The paper also sought to find out to what extent Kenya Wildlife Service has embraced the concept and identify the hindrances. The specific objectives of the study included determining whether training influences employee empowerment, the role of information sharing in enhancing employee empowerment, how the organizations culture influences employee empowerment and the role of compensation in enhancing employee empowerment in Kenya Wildlife Service. The Descriptive survey method was be applied to carry out the research. The population comprises selected employees working in Kenya Wildlife Service. Data will be analyzed by using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS version 16) after which appropriate interpretation was be done. The study found that The value employee training as a compensation and benefits packages increases the performance human resource outcomes normally increases the performance, satisfaction and productivity also stay there and attracting. The perception of employee about the organization benefits policy. If pay is tied to employee performance good quality and quantity of work done. Organization pay directly influences to employee voluntary turnover employee when compared to their pay available in other organization. People stay or leave the company more reasons when they are not satisfied with their job promotional opportunity and work environment.

Key words: competency development, information sharing, organizational culture, employee remuneration.

Introduction

Attending to the factors that diminish the existing inabilities of employees in performing their job tasks is among the focused issues in improving individual's performance. Individual differences such as self-confidence, creativity and innovation, positive-thinking etc. are of particular importance in overcoming these problems. To achieve such goals there is need to employ appropriate and relevant scientific tactics. Empowerment is one of the most important tactics to develop these features in individuals. Empowerment goes along with confidence; support each other, respect and creating motivation in development and improvement of skills.

Today's organizational is predominantly dynamic that pose enormous opportunities and challenges to the corporate practitioners and policy makers. Understanding such dynamism is crucial to pursue the organizational strategic objectives. The primary aim of this research was to examine the impact of organizational culture on employee performance and productivity from the perspectives of state parastatals.

One of the fundamental tasks in human resources management is compensation management. It is a complex task that occurs periodically, demand accuracy and must not be delayed. Compensation management requires integrating employees' processes and information with business process and strategies to achieve optimal organizational goals and objectives. This can be attributed to the fact that compensation management is an essential tool to integrate individual efforts with strategic business objectives by encouraging employees to do the right things with ever improving efficiency.

A recurrent economic problem in organizations is how to use available knowledge efficiently. Information, however, is often dispersed among agents, which prevents optimal decisions if communication is absent. One important consequence is that organizations operating in markets requiring specialized knowledge can underperform (Aucoin & Peter, 1995).

The effects of improved communication on productivity are in fact not obvious ex ante. On the one hand, low-skill agents may ask others for direction, thus communication might improve performance through a learning effect. On the other hand, high-skill agents might spend a larger fraction of their time helping others, which could negatively affect their performance, via a substitution effect as they swap information provision tasks for work completion tasks.

Companies can reap the rewards of providing training for their employees because well-trained workers help increase productivity and profits. Investing in employee training should improve worker retention rates, customer satisfaction and creativity for new product ideas. Effective training saves labor by reducing time spent on problem-solving and saves money in the long run by producing a better workforce.

Objectives of the Study

The General objective of the study is to analyze the factors influencing employee empowerment and the extent the concept has been embraced by the Kenya Wildlife Service.

Specific Objectives of the Study

- i. To investigate extent to which competency development affect employee empowerment
- ii. To assess the effect of information sharing towards employee empowerment

- iii. To find out the effect of organizational culture on employee empowerment
- iv. To investigate the effect of employee remuneration towards employee empowerment.

Literature Review

Hales and Klidas (1998) state when you share your authority and power with your underlings you are practicing empowerment. Empowerment is a construct associated to the employee's confidence on their selves and the motivation and inspiration to work Conger and Kanungo (1988). (Silva, HUTCHESON and WAHL, 2010) tells us that Employee's commitment reaction is strongly related with the employee empowerment. Employee's abilities and qualification matters and it really depends on the Job for which the employee is being hired, if answer is positive then the employee would effort passionately and would have better sense of belongingness to the firm.

Employee Empowerment is a way to improve the employee satisfaction. Wrong hiring for the organization could impact the productivity negatively and could increase turnover percentage, employees will be more willing to leave the organization sooner, and giving them a sense of empowerment can raise their motivations and performance.

Cultural understanding refers to feelings or ideas of public employees about surrounding factors in their work: those concerning the regional context resulting in capability in communication between the public employees and the service receivers. This includes their understanding in cultural sensitivity toward their work and their coworkers.

Cultural sensitivity reflects sociohistorical factors representing personality, value and beliefs

concerning their daily life. Ritz (2009) showed that the native language had the positive relationship with the organizational performance ($\beta = 0.107, p < .01$). It was also found that the native language had the negative relationship with attraction to public policy making ($r = -0.10, p < .01$). Puck, Mohr, & Rygl (2008) had conducted a study on public employees with different cultural background, different native languages and roles of communication that influence adjustment in work of public employees. Results showed that cultural sensitivity was one influential factor in adjustment to working of public employees at a significant level ($\beta = 0.470, p < .01$). It can be said that native language had an influential effect on public service motives.

Lack of communication skills of the government employees can lead to the factors of compassion, self-sacrifice and commitment to the public interest in serving the public which will in turn affect the job satisfaction of public employees and the work of the organization. In the meantime, positive attitude toward cultural had an effect on public service and adjustment in working of public employees was in accordance with the findings of Pruegger, & Rogers (1994) found that cultural understanding can be used to adjust attitude and work behavior of public employees.

For increased performance to occur, new information needs to be disseminated continually to key individuals within organizations and as a result is treated as an economic resource (Berry, Towill, & Wadsley, 1994; Fairchild, 2006; Phan, 2002; Wagner, 2006). If information is an economic resource (Fairchild, 2006), it has a number of characteristics that make it unique. Li and Lin (2006), in an empirical study of the impact of environmental uncertainty, intra-organizational

facilitators, and inter-organizational relationships on information sharing and information quality in supply chain management, conclude that information sharing is a key ingredient for any supply chain management system. They further observe that information sharing is fostered by top management support, trust among work groups or individuals, and shared vision among supply chain partners.

Useful information and knowledge reside within individuals who create, recognize, archive, access, and apply information in carrying out their tasks (Grant, 1996; Nonaka & Konno, 1998). The movement of information across individual and organizational boundaries into organizational routines and practices is dependent on employees' information sharing behaviors. Limited information sharing across an organization is most likely to result in information gaps (Baird & Henderson, 2001; Teece, 2000). Information exchange within organizations generally involves networks of organizational members (Barua et al., 2007; Hatala, 2006).

Members with high-intensity networks are more likely to access higher-quality information (Parker, Cross, & Walsh, 2001; Sinkula, 1994) than those with lower-intensity networks. Information may be acquired from direct experience, the experiences of others, or organizational memory. Seeking and obtaining information from others encompasses common practices such as benchmarking, forming joint ventures, networking, making strategic alliances, and working with lead customers and other important stakeholders (Fiol & Lyles, 1985; Li & Lin, 2006; Slater & Narver, 1995).

Research methodology

This study used a descriptive research design. This design involves gathering data that describe events and then organizes, tabulates, depicts and describes the data. Descriptive studies portray the variables by answering who, what and how questions (Babbie, 2002) since this study investigated the factors influencing employee empowerment in the Parastatal sector, descriptive research was therefore be useful in description of information without interference with the actual data collected from the field (Creswell, 2006).

The target population of the study will be 860 employees of Kenya Wild life Service. The target population to be studied comprised respondents' from all levels of personnel in the KWS.

The sample frame in this study was drawn from senior and middle management of KWS and also a number of employees from all departments from 6 departments.

A random sample of a population in which the population is first divided into a strata population, random samples are then taken separately from each stratum. The sample size of this study was therefore be Stratified random sampling whereby the respondent was divided into strata as per their departments. Hence the research had 6 strata and the respondents from every department were picked as per the size of the department to create a total sample of 41 respondents.

The questionnaires was presented to the employees of the various departments whereby each department had some employees representing the entire department. The feedback received from the selected samples was be inferred to be the opinion of the entire population hence that's why every department in the organization was represented.

To ensure relevance, reliability and comprehensiveness, a pilot study of 10 KWS employees was carried out. This aided in redesigning for convenience to the respondents. Expert opinion was sought on representativeness and suitability of questions. The data collected from the pilot test helped to identify the key areas of the study. The employees who were involved in the pilot test comprised the top management and some of the senior employees who are expected to have a better understanding of this subject.

Results

Competency Development and Employee Empowerment



Figure 4.10: Effect of training on performance

The study found all Employees in any level of the organisation have received training. Managers in the same regard contend that the extent of training is related to performance. Ballentine (2003) states that the purpose of rewarding

employees is to recognize excellent job performance, provide feedback, make it easier to get work done, encourage employees to be more productive and help management achieve their goal.

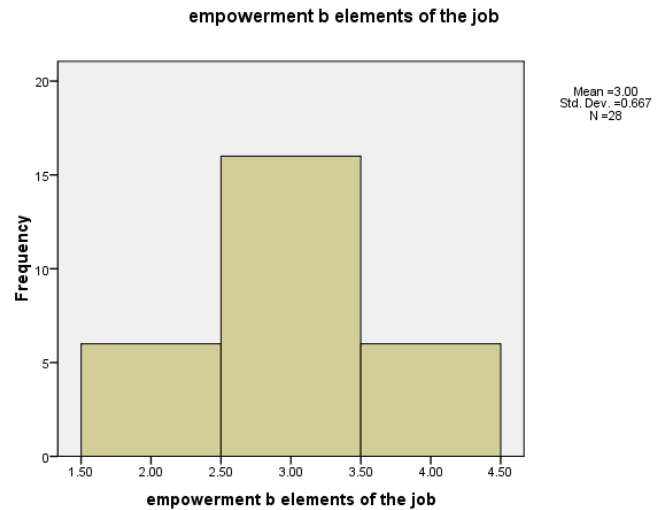


Figure 4.11: Effect of Various Empowerment Elements of the Job

When level of empowerment was compared to the job training, the sample was neutral on how job training improve on staff empowerment. The findings however does not tally with (university, 2015) which states that business enterprises now spend as much on the equipment that supports the manipulation of business information as on the machinery and equipment on which it has depended for the last century and more for all aspects of industrial production is striking evidence of the central role now played by information processing in the economic system.

Information Sharing Towards Employee Empowerment

Table 4.13: Impact of information sharing and organizational operations

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Valid	strongly disagree	3	10.7	10.7
	disagree	3	10.7	10.7
	neutral	3	10.7	10.7
	agree	11	39.3	39.3
	strongly agree	8	28.6	28.6
Total		28	100.0	100.0

Majority of the respondents agree that the effect of information sharing contribute more to better operations in the organisation. (Odunlade, 2012) Notes that for corporate body organizations where special libraries and information centres form part of the organization and compensation and benefits will depend on the annual appraisal or job satisfaction based on criteria spell out in their organization's handbook. Moberg et al. (2002) observe that information sharing is a key ingredient for organizations seeking to remain competitive. The understanding and practice of information sharing is becoming increasingly essential for organizations to stay competitive and boost profitability.

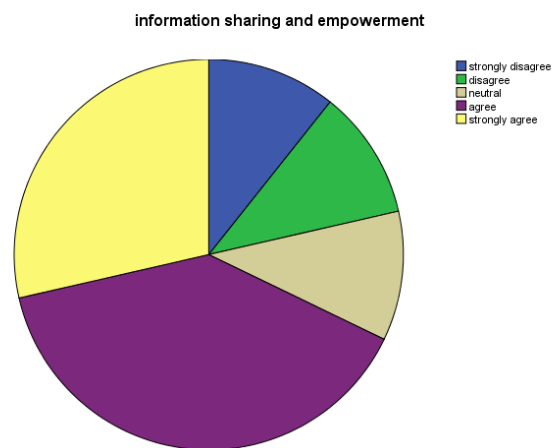


Figure 4.12: Effect of Information Sharing and Empowerment

Majority of the employees 75% agree that a platform for sharing information provide better empowerment and motivation. The upper percentile of employees is in agreement that empowerment being contributed by information sharing is greater. The free flow of information relates to the movement of information or data between members of an organization (Lutta, 2014).

Organisational culture and employee empowerment

This study adopted the managerial approach to empowerment rather than the psychological one. The latter approach's value is recognized, however. The causal mechanism by which the different empowerment practices influence performance could very well be increased task motivation or feelings of self-efficacy, as Thomas and Velthouse (2000) and Conger and Kanungo (2008) suggest, respectively. The subordinates of managers using an empowerment approach could exert greater effort because of the intrinsic rewards derived from performing a task because they have a higher expectancy of accomplishing it. In addition, empowerment practices, especially those aimed at granting discretion and providing knowledge to employees, might improve performance by encouraging risk taking and creative rule breaking. Finally, the similarities between Bowen and Lawer's empowerment practices and Hacksman and Oldham's (2006) job design model suggest the possibility that empowerment practices could improve performance through greater employee job satisfaction.

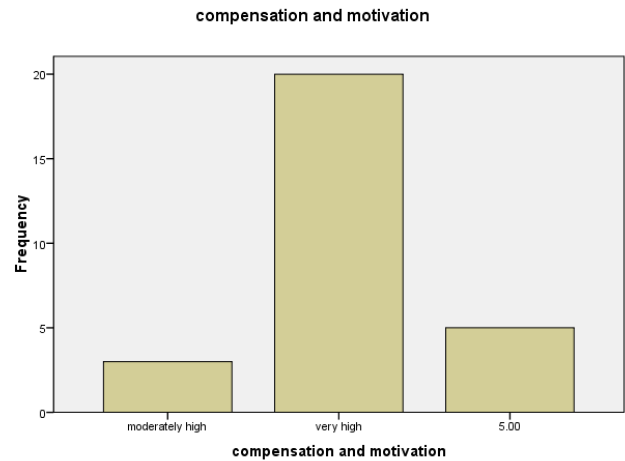


Figure 4.14: Effect of Compensation, Motivation on Employee Empowerment

Fair Compensation greatly is positively correlated to the level of motivation to the employees. This is confirmed by 18 of 28 respondents tallied. Owing to this unique nature, employees' performance upon service delivery is an important determinant for customer satisfaction and loyalty, as the quality of service encounters between employee and customer determines the level of customer satisfaction (Hurley & Estelami, 2007).

Table 4.16: Impact of salary administration employee empowerment

		salaries improve empowerment			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	agree	10	35.7	35.7	35.7
	strongly agree	18	64.3	64.3	100.0
	Total	28	100.0	100.0	

The factor that motivates employees keeps on changing depending on a composite number of intrinsic or extrinsic factors. Majority of the tallied respondents agreed that a properly remunerated staff has more productivity than an under remunerated staff. Kovach (1987)

observed in his study on factors that motivates employees, as an employee's income increases, money becomes less of a motivator and that as an employee gets older, interesting work becomes more of a motivator.

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics			Sig. F Change
					R Square Change	F Change	df1 df2	
1	.728 ^a	.5297	-.048	.70147	.107	.692	4 23	.605

a. Predictors: (Constant), employee empowerment, Competency development, information sharing Organizational culture, Employee remuneration

In an effort to determine whether the predictive variables (Competency development, information sharing Organizational culture, Employee remuneration) when taken together as a set predict the perception employee empowerment, model summary and analysis of variance were performed. Therefore in the model summary $R^2 = .5297$

Taken as a set, Competency development, information sharing Organizational culture,

Employee remuneration account for 52.97% of the variance in employee empowerment. The study can account for 47.3% employee empowerment. R^2 is the measure of the amount of variance in the dependent variable that the independent variable or predictors account for when taken as a group. R^2 is significantly greater than zero. 47.23% of variability in growth of housing units is explained by other factors not studied.

ANOVA^b

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1.361	4	.340	.692	.605 ^a
	Residual	11.317	23	.492		
	Total	12.679	27			

a. Predictors: (Constant), employee empowerment, Competency development, information sharing Organizational culture, Employee remuneration

b. Dependent Variable: empowerment

$F(.34, .492) = 0.692$ $p > 0.001$ $R^2 = 0.5298$

At $p > 0.01$ all the variables are significant

Model	Coefficients ^a								
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval for B		Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Tolerance	VIF
1(employee empowerment)	4.580	2.797		1.637	.955	-1.207	10.366		
Competency development	.086	.208	.099	.412	.904	-.344	.515	.676	1.478
information sharing	-.001	.158	-.002	-.008	.994	-.329	.326	.423	2.362
Organizational culture	-.306	.418	-.218	-.731	.902	-1.170	.559	.438	2.281
Employee remuneration	.196	.156	.263	1.256	.852	-.127	.519	.888	1.126

a. Dependent Variable: employee empowerment

Employee empowerment (**Y**) = **4.580** + **0.086** (Competency development) - **0.001** (information sharing) - **0.306** (Organizational culture) + 0.196 (Employee remuneration) + ϵ

Summary

Employee empowerment involves a variety of practices aimed at sharing power, information, and resources with frontline employees. Since the 1990s, public as well as private organizations have adopted this management approach with the aim of improving performance and promoting innovativeness. The research's understanding of empowerment has been hindered by a dearth of empirical research on its uses and consequences in the public sector.

The study found that certain empowerment practices, such as providing employees with job-related knowledge and skills and granting them greater discretion, positively influence employee perceptions of performance. On the other hand, empowerment practices aimed at rewarding employees based on their performance and providing them with more information about organizational goals and performance appear to

have no meaningful influence on perceived performance. Effective use of employee empowerment hinges, therefore, on managers' knowledge of the array of empowerment practices available to them and the impact of these different practices on performance.

To the increase in quality of their performance, training; the process of civilizing the skills, skills and knowledge of people which moulds employees' thinking and hints. it is a constant process of great significance for most of the studies. Training is vital for both employee and organizational improvement. To achieve individual development Employee training provides prospects for employees to broaden their knowledge and capacities for more well-organized teamwork (Jun et al., 2006).

An effective remuneration, especially the compensation package will result in attracting,

retaining and motivating the employees who understand the details of the organization. This allows the organization to compete at a much higher level than it currently does. The right compensation package is different for every organization. For the compensation of an organization to succeed, the goals of the organization must be aligned with the goals of the employees whom the organization wishes to attract.

Conclusion and recommendations

Working condition was found to be the one most important factor impacting employee satisfaction in this research. Management could create work effectiveness by creating comfortable and advanced working conditions for the ease of employees to be able to work in an efficient and effective manner. The work places should be designed in such a manner that increases employee's productivity and adds to the health and welfare of employees. At one side good working conditions smooth communication and teamwork is enhanced in the presence of elegant work environment and at the other hand it definitely contributes in increasing the satisfaction level of employees. So in order to increase the satisfaction of employee's and their job performance level organization should provide stretchy, modifiable and convenient workplaces. Pay and promotion greatly affects the level of satisfaction of employees founded by this research. The organizations that pay their employees fairly

according to the duties and responsibilities they perform on their job perceives a higher level of employee satisfaction as compared to the organization who do not bother about equity based pays. Promotion should be awarded to the employee on just basis to enhance their motivation level to perform even better and satisfaction level is increase through fair and equitable pay and promotion system. Job performance has no significance relationship with the pay and promotion.

Training is assumed as a useful tool for employees to perform their jobs according to the set required standards of the organization. If the training sessions are periodically arranged for employees for improving the skills required to perform the jobs it may help in better job performance and a feeling of satisfaction is derived out. So education about one's job that means providing training to the individual enhances its satisfaction level and performance as well.

Information sharing among relationship managers allows a large organization, to build long-term relationships with clients by reducing the costs of communicating the soft information collected. The platform used by KWS allows officers to store the relevant information about diverse clients and to effectively communicate this to their colleagues.

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