

## Effect Of Training Approaches On Employee Performance In The Public Sector (A Case Study Of Government Training Institute, Mombasa)

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**Abstract:** *Training of employees is an integral component in the work of Human Resource Managers. The dynamics of the ever changing working environment call for Human resource managers to invest in the development of employees so as to ensure that they perform better to achieve organizational objectives and empower them to make the best use of their natural abilities. The Government of Kenya has given prominence to training as a major vehicle to help in the attainment of the provisions of Vision 2030. As such it spends over 500 million Kenya Shillings to train Public Sector employees. The purpose of this study was to assess the effects of training on performance in the public sector. It specifically sought to find out the effects of orientation training, refresher training, skills development and career development training on performance. This study explored literature relevant to the specific objectives and provided a critical review of the same. The research design was a case study of Government Training Institute, Mombasa. A case study was preferred as it provided the opportunity for an in-depth analysis of the entity under study. The research targeted all 104 employees. Stratified random sampling was used. 50% of respondents were drawn from each category of employees namely Management, Lecturers and Support Services. Questionnaires, personal interviews and document analysis were used as instruments of data collection. Data was analyzed quantitatively and presented using tables. Qualitative data was presented using narratives. This study established that new employees were inducted into the organization even though the provided guidelines in the Civil Service Induction Handbook 2006 were not expressly adhered to. It also revealed that employees were provided with opportunities for refresher training even though such opportunities were not as regular as most employees expected. The research also established that employees of the institute were accorded chances to undertake skills development training programmes although this was not based on any Training needs assessment. Finally the study found that employees were sponsored for career development training programmes although such initiatives were hampered by inadequate allocation of funds. It is concluded that all this training initiatives positively improve employee performance. The study recommended that: new employees should be properly inducted into the organization in line with the provision of the Civil servants Induction Handbook, regular opportunities be availed to employees for refresher courses, a training needs assessment be undertaken to ensure that employees pursue relevant courses and additional sources of funding be explored to ensure more employees pursue career development training programmes.*

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### I. Introduction

Training of employees is an integral component in the work of Human Resource Managers. Armstrong (2006) defines training as the formal and systematic modification of behaviour through learning which occurs as a result of education, development and planned experience. For survival of the organization it is essential that employees develop and progress through training (Deb, 2006). It is therefore critical for human resource managers to invest in the development of employees so as to ensure that they perform better, achieve organizational objectives and empower them to make the best use of their natural abilities (Armstrong, 2006). Over the last decade, the work place has greatly transformed and this calls for employees to be trained so as to adapt to demands of the dynamic working environment.

The Government of Kenya which is a major employer has a policy requiring that employees must be trained at least five days in each financial year. As such Government Ministries spent a lot of money in an endeavour to train employees. However even though it is a costly venture, it is unavoidable since it sustains productivity and drives change (GOK, 2007). In fact Kenya's Vision 2030 places great emphasis on employee

training and capacity building as a vehicle to making the country an industrialized nation and be globally competitive.

However despite all these efforts members of the public regularly complain of delays in service delivery, poor customer service, wastage of resources, and misuse of public funds, work negligence and incomplete projects (Sunday Nation 15th March 2011). This could be a pointer that the training offered does not add much value and therefore does not translate to improved performance. This study will attempt to look into whether organizational investments in terms of time and money for training employees have effects on performance.

The Government Training Institute Mombasa is one of the training institutions under the Ministry of State for Public Service. It was established as Coast Secretarial College in 1964 as a pre service Secretarial College. It was upgraded to Government Secretarial College in 1972 to provide secretarial skills to clients nationally. It was renamed Government Training Institute in 1978 and mandated to provide management development training for Public Sector Organizations. Overtime the institute has diversified its objectives not only to offer in service training but also research and consultancy services. In an effort to deliver quality service to citizens the institute places great emphasis on training employees to enhance their skills and encourage attitude change.

## II. Literature Review

### 2.1 Theoretical Framework

A strong wind of change has been sweeping over the whole globe in the last decade. As a result, the work of a Human Resource manager has not been spared and as Deb (2006) observes, most managers have recognized that we are in the “information age” and therefore continuous training is essential for organizational survival. Organizations cannot in this era ignore the contribution of employee training to its success unless, at the risk of becoming dinosaurs. It therefore emerges that Human Resource managers must invest in people to enable them perform better and empower them to make the best use of their natural abilities (Armstrong, 2006). Also global technological changes require every employee to be trained in adoption of latest skills and methods. Traditionally training was the responsibility of schools; it is not so anymore; organizations have become involved in providing both specific and general training (Nzuve, 1997).

Armstrong (2006) defines training as the formal and systematic modification of behaviour through learning which occurs as a result of education, instruction, development and planned experiences. This definition emphasizes more on behaviour change even though there are other results from training as definitions from other authors reveal. A varied definition is provided by Aswathappa (2005), who suggests that training is any attempt to improve current or future employee performance by increasing an employee’s ability to perform through learning, usually by changing the employee’s attitude or increase his or her skills and knowledge. The need for employee training and development is determined by the employee’s performance deficiency. The same views are supported by Nzuve (1997), who defines training as the process that enables people to acquire new knowledge, learn new skills and perform tasks differently (better) than before.

**Equity theory:** The foundation of this theory is based on people who desire to be treated fairly (Adams, 1963). People want to be treated on one standard scale. Employees are motivated by fairness, and if they identify inequities in the input or output ratios of themselves and their referent group, they will seek to adjust their input to reach their perceived equity. The higher an individual's perception of equity, the more motivated they will be and vice versa. If an employee thinks there is an inequity between two social groups or individuals, the employee is likely to be distressed or dissatisfied because the input and the output are not equal (Huseman, Hatfield & Miles, 1987). The theory explains how much employees put in the job whether their time, effort, and commitment to the job is worth what the employer in general pays back such as a good salary and other benefits. The treatment by employer may affect their motivation to training and performance positively or negatively.

### 2.2 Training Approaches

**Orientation Training:** is the process of dissemination and providing direction to a new employee (Nzuve, 1997). These views are affirmed by Deb (2006) who observes that orientation training is designed to acquaint new employees with their new organization, their place in the organization and the part the organization plays in carrying out the mission. Orientation training therefore aims at getting new entrants familiarize with the organization’s goals, structure, culture, work standards and other conditions of employment. Since first impressions last long, a key input of training at this level is to ensure that employees start developing the right attitudes to work. Attitudes affect motivation, job satisfaction and job commitment (Aswathappa, 2005). It therefore follows that, a good orientation programme is important to new employees since they are open minded, attentive and eager to learn than the “old guards.” Orientation training is beneficial as it helps to develop a positive culture in the organization by encouraging positive attitude and technical aptitudes which

results in improved job satisfaction and job security of employees (Deb, 2006). It is expected that with proper orientation, new employees will “take off” smoothly and therefore perform as expected.

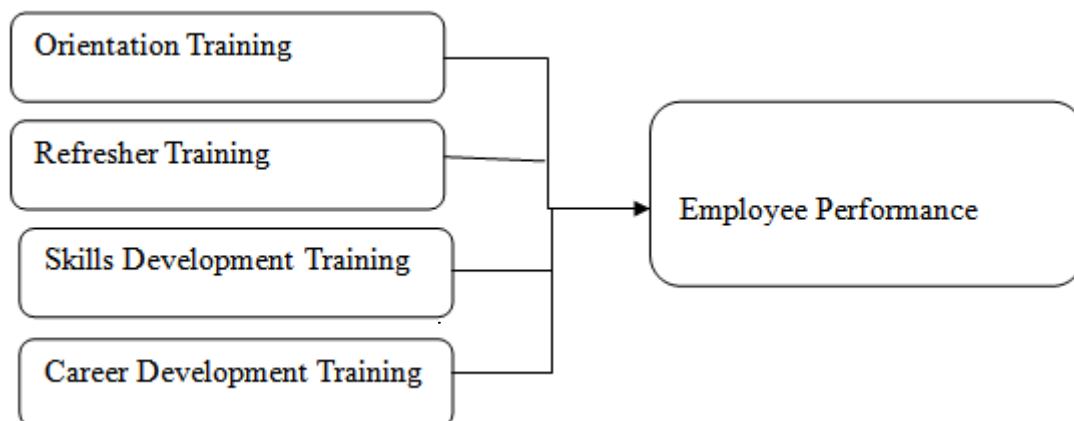
**Refresher Training;** Refresher training takes place after employees have completed job training. It enables employees keep “up to speed” by enabling them brush up on knowledge and skills they already have but do not use often(Deb, 2006).This training exposes the employee to modern trends in his or her field of business. It therefore involves updating skills to meet job requirements of employees. This kind of training is aimed at preventing both professional and technical obsolescence. Employees are retrained in order to update them of new developments in their areas of specialization (Nzuve, 1997). Refresher courses are also expected to contribute to attitude change. Attitude represents feelings and beliefs of individuals towards others. Refresher training is beneficial since it helps retain good employees through updated competencies, multi-skilling and prevention of redundancy and redeployment. Competent employees contribute in profitable operation of business resulting in creation of competitive advantage for the organization (Aswathappa, 2005).

**Skills Development Training;** An employee needs skills to operate a machine and use other equipment with least damage and scrap. This is a basic skill without which the employee will not be able to function. The adoption of some basic skills through training leads to reduced accidents and by implication reduced costs of operation. When job contents change, employees must acquire new skills to cope (Nzuve, 1997). Employees in supervisory and managerial levels need interpersonal skills popularly known as people skills. Examples of interpersonal skills include listening, persuading, communication, empathizing and human relations (Aswathappa, 2005).

**Career and Development Training;** This kind of training develops and improves the knowledge, skills and abilities of people to prepare them to fill positions of greater responsibility (Deb 2006).Knowledge about the business environment, management principles and techniques, human relations and specific industry analysis is useful for better management of an organization(Aswathappa:2005). In realization of the importance of such training, organizations are encouraging employees to attend part time courses to sharpen their theoretical knowledge. The purpose of such education is to teach theoretical concepts and develop a sense of reasoning and judgment (Aswathappa: 2005). Career and development training therefore helps to develop potentialities of employees resulting in faster career progression within the organization. In addition it helps in assessment of key talents for career advancement and succession planning thereby increasing availability of high talent pool for the organization at all times(Deb:2006). Obviously, opportunities for growth are a great motivator to employees in their work.

### 2.3 Conceptual Framework

The dependent variable is employee performance. It can be explained as the record of outcomes achieved and work accomplishments or results. The researcher attempts to assess how orientation training, refresher training, skills development training and career and development training influence performance.



**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework**

Source Authors (2018)

### III. Methodology

This study employed a descriptive research design. It is a case study of Government Training Institute Mombasa. A case study was preferred as it provides an in-depth analysis and description of single entity or phenomenon or a small group (Kothari: 2004).

The Government Training Institute had a total population of 104 employees who formed the target population. This is preferred because if a higher number responds then it makes the findings more reliable.

Since the target population was heterogeneous, the researcher used stratified random sampling. Consequently the population was categorized into three groups namely; Management, Lecturers and Support services. This ensured that the researcher obtained a representative sample. Then simple random sampling was used to select 50% respondents from each strata of employees. Stratified sampling ensures results in more reliable and detailed information (Kothari: 2004).

**Table 1: Sample Design**

Category	Target	Sample (50%)
Management	4	2
Lecturers	15	8
Support services	85	42
Total Target	104	52

The researcher used questionnaires, Personal interviews and document review as methods of collecting data. The instruments were piloted with top management and five members of staff and adjustments made to factor feedback provided.

The researcher developed questionnaires with structured and open ended questions. They were distributed to respondents and collected after five days. The researcher was available to clarify issues and self-administer the questionnaires whenever required. Questionnaires were preferred as they can be used to obtain data from a large number of respondents (Sharp et al: 2002).

Personal Interviews: This method requires the interviewer to ask questions in a face to face contact with the interviewee. The researcher developed an interview guide and book appointments to interview the Director of the institute and the Administrative Secretary so as to get the official position with respect to employee training. This method was preferred as it is flexible and allows restructuring of questions depending on circumstances. It also gives the researcher an opportunity to probe further on the subject and obtain more information (Kothari 2004).

Document Analysis: The researcher sought permission to review documents to obtain relevant information for the study. For this purpose a document analysis checklist was 16 prepared. This instrument is preferred as records are non-reactive, are accurate and provide an excellent baseline for comparison (Sharp et al: 2002).

Data Analysis: Data collected was coded, edited and analysed using Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) version 19. Qualitative information was presented in narratives while quantitative information was presented using tables, graphs and pie charts.

### IV. Results

#### 4.1 Orientation Training

The results of orientation training were presented as shown in table 4.1.

	Frequency	Percent
Agree	41	80.4
Disagree	7	13.8
Do not Know	3	5.9
Total	51	100.0

On whether employees of the Institute were provided with orientation training, 80.4% agreed, 13.8% disagreed while 5.9% did not know. This is a clear indication that the new employees undergo an orientation programme to induct them into the organization. Interviews with the institute management revealed that there were clear guidelines on how orientation of new members of staff should be done. Some respondents were not satisfied with the way induction was done since the practice was just taking the employee around the offices only.

The results of orientation/Induction on employee performance were presented in table 4.2.

	Frequency	Percent
Agree	43	84.5
Disagree	7	13.7
Do not Know	1	2.0
Total	51	100.0

From the findings, 84.5 % of the respondents were of the opinion that orientation training impacts on employee performance, 13.7% disagreed and 2% did not know. Respondents considered induction as essential to job performance since it enables employees know what to do and what's expected of them, it creates a sense of belonging/enhances commitment and facilitates understanding of systems and procedures.

**4.2 Refresher Training**

The results on whether the Institute sponsored employees for refresher training were shown in table 4.3.

	Frequency	Percent
Agree	43	84.3
Disagree	5	9.8
Do not Know	2	3.9
No response/missing	1	2.0
Total	51	100.0

Table 4.3 shows that, 84.3% of the respondents agreed that employees were given opportunities for refresher training, 9.8% disagreed, 3.9% did not know while 2% had no response. This shows that employees go for refresher courses to keep abreast with the changing work environment. However those who disagreed said that opportunities for refresher training were rare and they were not regularly provided with refresher training yet there were so many changes in their work.

The study results on whether refresher training affects employee performance were presented in table 4.4.

	Frequency	Percent
Agree	44	86.2
Disagree	4	7.9
Do not Know	2	3.9
No response/missing	1	2.0
Total	51	100.0

From the findings, 86.2% of the respondents felt that refresher training impacted on employee performance, 7.9% were of the contrary view, 3.9% did not know and 2% had no response. Most of the respondents felt that refresher training contributed to improved performance as it led to provision of new information/ current developments and hence improved response to changes

**4.3: Skills Development Training**

The study enquired whether the Institute ensures employees are provided with relevant skills. The results were presented in table 4.5

	Frequency	Percent
Agree	48	94.2
Disagree	1	2.0
No response/missing	2	3.9
Total	51	100.0

Regarding the provision of skills development training, 94.2% agreed, 2% disagreed and 3.9% gave no response. An overwhelming majority of the respondents affirmed that employees are sponsored for various skills based training programmes to enhance their performance. Interviews with management revealed that some of the courses employees attended include Performance management, Records management, Secretarial management and Supervisory management. An analysis of the training projections of the institute for the Financial Year 2011/2012 showed that employees had been earmarked for various short term skill development training programmes. However some employees said that they were sometimes sent for courses which did not provide any relevant skills to their work.

The results on skills development training on employee performance were presented in table 4.6.

	Frequency	Percent
Agree	40	78.4
Disagree	5	9.8
Do not Know	1	2.0
No response/missing	5	9.8
Total	51	100.0

Table 4.6 shows that, 78.4% of the respondents agreed that skills development training affect employee performance, 9.8% disagreed while 2% did not know and 9.8% had no response. The respondents said that skills

development training led to improved morale, career advancement, created expertise and encourages multiskilling.

#### 4.4 Career Development Training

The study presented results for employee's provision with career development training on table 4.7.

	Frequency	Percent
Agree	42	82.4
Disagree	7	13.7
Do not Know	2	3.9
Total	51	100.0

On whether employees were given opportunities to pursue career development training, 82.4% agreed, 13.7% disagreed while 3.9% did not know. This implies that employees of the Institute are sponsored for career development training to enable them advance in their careers. Management confirmed that some employees had been sponsored for Senior Management course, Strategic leadership development programme, Masters and Diploma Programmes. According to the training projections for the Financial Year 2011/2012, more employees had been earmarked for Masters and Doctorate programmes. However it was explained that sponsorship for such courses was subject to availability of funds.

The results of career development training on employee performance were presented in table 4.8.

	Frequency	Percent
Agree	42	82.4
Disagree	4	7.9
Do not Know	4	7.8
No response/missing	1	2.0
Total	51	100.0

From the findings, 82.4% of the respondents felt that career development training affects employee performance, 7.9% disagreed, 7.8% did not know and 2% had no response. Respondents were of the opinion that career development training positively contributed to performance through enhanced specialization, positive handling of clients, morale building and provision of career progression prospects.

### V. Conclusion

This study concluded that training opportunities availed to employees in terms of induction training, refresher training, skills development training and career development training positively impact on employee performance.

### VI. Recommendations

All new employees should be taken through an elaborate induction training programme as provided for in the civil service induction handbook 2006. This would enable employees settle faster in their jobs, acquaint themselves with the new work processes and develop a positive culture and hence enhance their performance.

Employees should attend refresher courses on a regular basis so as to keep them abreast with the dynamic work environment and adapt to the ever changing technology.

The institute should undertake a Training Needs Assessment so as to establish skill gaps among the employees and sponsor them for relevant skill based training programmes. This would ensure that employees get relevant skills from the training which would easily be transferred to their work for improved performance

The institute should explore opportunities for funding to sponsor employees for career development programme so as to enhance their career growth and therefore improve service delivery.

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