

EFFECTS OF DISCIPLINE SYSTEMS AND DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE IN AN ORGANIZATION: THE CASE OF COUNTY EDUCATION OFFICE HUMAN RESOURCE DEPARTMENT, TURKANA COUNTY

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to investigate the discipline systems and disciplinary actions on employee performance in County Education Office of Turkana County. Specifically the study aimed; to determine the effects of discipline systems on performance and to assess the effects of disciplinary actions on performance. The study was conducted using a case study design. The target population for this study was employees from the county education office in Lodwar which composed a total population of 171 employees. The study sample comprised 1 (one) District Education Officer, 4 (four) departmental managers and 166 (one hundred and sixteen) employees in the education office reflecting the ratio in the county office accessible sample staff size. The study employed purposive, stratified and simple random sampling techniques. Primary data was collected with the help of a questionnaire. Quantitative and qualitative data analytical techniques were used.

Quantitative data from questionnaires were coded and summarized using descriptive statistics, measures of variability, frequency distributions and percentages. They thereafter analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20. Data was tested for significance using regression. The study also concludes that the effective disciplinary policy County Education Office Human Resource Department in Turkana County are effective in that the organization has helped in controlling employee's behavior by ensuring there is teamwork and cohesion in the organization. The study also recommends that human resource management could utilize the recommended guidelines for more effective application of discipline actions in organizations.

Key Words: *discipline systems, disciplinary actions, employee performance, organization, county education office human resource department, Turkana County*

INTRODUCTION

In Africa, there are very rare circumstances where an employee will agree to a disciplinary sanction where the employer's reasons are considered acceptable by the employee. In these situations, an employer is well advised to have the employee provide written confirmation of the acceptance of the action so that it will not later be used against the employer if the employee thereafter is terminated or changes his mind as to the appropriateness of the disciplinary action taken against him or her. Without the employee's consent or a properly documented performance deficiency trail, an employer can still discipline employees as it considers appropriate by providing appropriate notice of the action (Jonas, 2005).

In Kenya especially, there are certain instances when an employee does not adhere to the norms, rules and workplace ethics of the firm for which he/she works. However, no employee is expected to be so unaware as to show serious issues of misconduct that are stretched over a long period of time, causing loss to the company. This is where the role of human resource management is crucial, as someone needs to warn the employee before he creates a problem

for his teammates and colleagues. A warning letter specifies the exact cause of warning and is indirectly a signal for the employee, that if he/she does not amend his/her ways, the company will be compelled to terminate his/her employment (Bewley, 2005).

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

A growing number of companies are moving away from using a criminal-justice mentality for employee performance improvement through corrective action. They are abandoning traditional approaches that focus exclusively on punishment. Instead, they are adopting an approach of accountability - employees with unfavourable performance, conduct or attendance issues are required to take personal responsibility for their choice of behaviour. Despite all these changes organizations in the County are still glued on traditional out dated approaches of discipline systems and disciplinary actions and it's in this light that the research seeks to dig out the relationship that exist between discipline systems and disciplinary actions and employee performance with specific reference with the County Education office

GENERAL OBJECTIVE

The study was to investigate the effects of discipline systems and disciplinary actions on employee performance in county education office of Turkana County.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

1. To determine the effects of discipline systems on performance
2. To assess the effects of disciplinary actions on performance

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This theoretical framework relates the discipline systems and disciplinary actions with employees' performance. It further suggests that there are critical linkages through a number of intermediate factors. Discipline should be imposed without generating resentment to develop employees to perform in an organization. An organization which manages discipline well and treats their employees as customers can achieve higher employee's performance. Enhancing employees' performance can retain good employees and improve organization's performance through taking full use of disciplinary strategies. Ultimately, the organization can achieve performance through their employees.

This study will engage the theory of McGregor, thus will apply humanistic approach. This is because the approaches take into consideration the organizations dimension of performance. There have been several approaches applied in analyzing discipline. Among the various approaches are trickle down to humanistic approach. The study seeks how the disciplines of employees through theory X where management's role is to coerce and control employees. And theory Y where management's role is to develop the potential in employees and help them to release that potential towards common goals they relate and impact on employee's performance given application of any theory at any particular time.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study was conducted using a case study design. This design aimed to collect data without manipulating the research variables or the respondents in an attempt to get the perception of the respondents.

Target Population

The target population for this study was employees from the county education office in Lodwar which composed a total population of 171 employees.

Sample Size

In this study the sample size of the accessible population is indicated below.

Table 1: Sample size

Population	Stratum	Sample size	Percentage %
DEO	1	1	2
Departmental managers	4	4	7
Employees	166	49	91
TOTAL	171	54	100

Sampling Design

The study employed purposive, stratified and simple random sampling techniques. First the researcher used the purposive technique to identify the District Education Officer and the departmental managers of the county education office in Lodwar. The population studied was then sub divided into stratum to get a more homogenous sub population. Thereafter Stratified sampling technique and simple random sampling was used to select the employees of the county education office in Lodwar. This method was used in order to avoid biasness whereby every member in the study category had an equal chance of participating in the study.

Data Collection Instruments

In this study the primary data was collected with the help of a questionnaire, which was administered to the target population in the county education office in Lodwar. The questionnaires were in line with the study objectives, and contained both open and closed ended questions.

Data Collection Procedure

The questionnaire was administered to sampled respondents either through self or researcher administered methods. In the self-administered method, questionnaires were hand-delivered

to respondents who were requested to complete the questionnaires themselves and sent them back to the researcher. For the respondents who indicated that they were committed or who had other assignments, the researcher used the questionnaire to interview the respondents.

Data Analysis

Quantitative and qualitative data analytical techniques were used. Quantitative data from questionnaires were coded and summarized using descriptive statistics, measures of variability, frequency distributions and percentages. They thereafter analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20. Qualitative data was analyzed in themes and categories identifying patterns and trends that will emerge. The analysis included presentation of quotes from different respondents and recording verbatim from what some respondents say. Themes emerging from secondary data were identified and secondary data augmented the primary data. Data was tested for significance using regression formula;

$$r = \frac{n\sum xy - \sum x \sum y}{\sqrt{n\sum x^2 - (\sum x)^2} \times \sqrt{n\sum y^2 - (\sum y)^2}}$$

Where: X was independent variables- discipline systems and disciplinary actions variables and Y was dependent variable-Employee performance

Instrument Validity and Reliability

Kothari (2000) states that validity indicates the degree to which an instrument measures what it is supposed to measure, that is the extent to which differences found with a measuring instrument reflect true differences among those being tested. Thus to enhance validity a pilot study was carried out. The pilot study helped the researcher to identify items in the research instrument which may be found to be ambiguous in eliciting required information.

Reliability refers to the consistence of the research instruments. For the questionnaire, the researcher carried out a Test-Retest method where a respondent who completed the questionnaire were asked to complete it again after two weeks and his/her choices compared for consistence. According to Amin (2005), test-retest or stability test provides evidence that scores obtained on a test at one time (test) are the same or close to the same when the test is re-administered some other time (re-test).

RESEARCH RESULTS

Disciplinary actions used the organization

On listing some of the disciplinary actions used in the organization. Respondents listed the following in ascending order; expulsion from the organization, compulsory training, three letters of discipline change and then expulsion, salary cut, transfer and demotion. The study aimed at establishing whether there was sound and effective disciplinary policy in the organization where 87% who were the majority agreed while 13% disagreed. In support of their answer those who were in agreement indicated this help in controlling employee's

behavior by ensuring there is teamwork and cohesion in the organization. This reduces time and resources wastage which reflect positively to the organization.

Prioritize employee performance

Respondents were requested to indicate their level of agreement on factors that affect employee performance 49% who were the majority rated remuneration first, 40% rated work environment first, 63% who were the majority rated tools, equipment and other resources second, 49% who were the majority rated management commitment first while 43% who were the majority rated motivation second.

Table 2: Prioritize employee performance

Factor	Levels of Priority					
	1 st		2 nd		3 rd	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Remuneration	17	49	11	31	7	20
Work environment	14	40	12	34	9	26
Tools, Equipment and other resources	5	14	22	63	8	23
Management commitment	17	49	11	31	7	20
Motivation	15	43	13	37	7	20

REGRESSION ANALYSIS

The researcher conducted a multiple linear regression analysis so as to determine the effects of discipline systems and disciplinary actions on employee performance in an organization and the two independent factors namely: discipline systems and disciplinary actions.

Table 3: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Standard Error of the Estimate
1	0.843	0.742	0.724	0.4216

a Predictors: (Constant), discipline systems and disciplinary actions.

b Dependent variable: Employee performance

The study used the R square. The R Square is called the coefficient of determination and tells us how the employee performance varied with discipline systems and disciplinary actions. The four independent variables that were studied explain 74.2% of the factors affecting employee performance as represented by R Squared (Coefficient of determinant). This therefore means that other factors not studied in this research contribute 25.8% of the factors affecting employee performance.

Table 4: ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	11.72	9	1.302	44.231	.000(a)
	Residual	3.432	35	0.066		
Total		15.152	26			

a Predictors: (Constant), discipline systems and disciplinary actions

b Dependent Variable: Employee performance

The study used ANOVA to establish the significance of the regression model from which an f-significance value of p less than 0.05 was established. The model is statistically significant in predicting how discipline systems and disciplinary actions affect employee performance. This shows that the regression model has a less than 0.05 likelihood (probability) of giving a wrong prediction. This therefore means that the regression model has a confidence level of above 95% hence high reliability of the results.

Table 5: Coefficients Results

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	0.116	.186		0.623	.535
Discipline systems	0.082	.042	.301	2.252	.020
Disciplinary actions	0.021	.002	.245	6.906	.001

The established regression equation was:

$$Y = 0.116 + 0.082X_3 + 0.021X_4 + \epsilon$$

The regression equation above has established that holding all factors (discipline systems and disciplinary actions) constant, factors affecting employee performance will be 0.116. On the other hand, a unit increase in discipline systems will lead to a 0.082 increase in the scores of the employee performance; and a unit increase in disciplinary actions will lead to a 0.021 increase in the scores of the employee performance. The study also established a significant relationship between employee performance and the independent variables; discipline systems ($p= 0.20 < 0.05$) and disciplinary actions ($p=0.001 < 0.05$) as shown by the p values. The researcher dropped the regression model because $p > 0.5$ and $t < 1.96$.

CONCLUSIONS

The study also concludes that the effective disciplinary policy County Education Office Human Resource Department in Turkana County are effective in that the organization has helped in controlling employee's behavior by ensuring there is teamwork and cohesion in the organization. This reduces time and resources wastage which reflect positively to the organization.

The study further concludes that, the current disciplinary actions have ensured that institution growth through effective procedures and good communication. According to the study unlike punitive discipline, an employee proposed discipline policy encourages workers to take responsibility for their actions by allowing them to propose their own discipline. According to the study the application of progressive discipline on employees is particularly concentrated around industry and occupational class workers. These workers are more susceptible to disciplining by employers. An unequal power balance exists between employee and employer in the progressive discipline system because progressive discipline follows the traditional 'power over' model.

The study finally concludes that, holding all factors (discipline systems and disciplinary actions) constant, factors affecting employee performance will be 0.116. On the other hand, a unit increase in discipline systems will lead to an increase in the scores of the employee performance; and a unit increase in disciplinary actions will lead to an increase in the scores of the employee performance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study also recommends that although disciplinary policy are important in bringing sanity to the organisation, the government should seek to address the pertinent issues like complex disciplinary regime that has impeded employee performance in the country. Other problems in licensing like the process being time consuming, cumbersome, costly which causes delays and sometimes the verdict given is never fair, hence a disciplinary committee should be ready and ever available and use the shortest and transparent ways possible .

The study finally concludes that three components are necessary for the effective maintenance of a disciplinary procedure in an organisation: consultation or negotiation, communication with everybody concerned regarding the exact way in which the system operates, and training of the individuals involved in a disciplinary process. The application of discipline should be immediate, with warning, consistent and impersonal.

The results of this exploratory study could be used as a basis to develop a theoretical model and measure of the fairness of disciplinary procedures. Sophisticated statistical techniques (e.g. structural equation modelling) could then be used to test the construct validity of the model in different organisations in both the private and public sectors in the South African economy. The measure of fairness of disciplinary procedures could be used as an important tool to manage discipline in organisations.

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