

EFFECTS OF DEVOLUTION ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE IN THE HEALTH CARE SECTOR IN KENYA: A CASE OF KAKAMEGA COUNTY

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ABSTRACT

Devolution of health care, as other types of decentralization, immensely changed governance structures and relations in the healthcare system. Devolution was seen by its proponent as a way to improve services delivery and performance of the health system by transferring responsibilities and authority to locally elected governments with an aim to creating a more intense community involvement in order to adjust service to communities' specific needs. However, there is no clear assurance of improved performance or gains brought about by this phenomenon in the health care sector as eluded by devolution literature. From other studies carried out on the devolution no researcher had carried specific study on how devolution had affected employee performance in healthcare sector in Kakamega County. The broad objective of the study was to determine the effect of devolution on employee performance in the healthcare sector in Kakamega county referral hospital in Kenya. The Study was conducted at the Kakamega county referral hospital. The target population was employees in Kakamega county referral hospital who were 400 in total as per the Ministry of healthy 2014-2015 annual report. Simple random sampling technique was used to select respondents who participated in the study. Each employee was given equal chance of inclusion and out of 400 employees the study worked with a sample size of 120 employees by use of (Yamane,

1967) formula. Questionnaires, interview and documentary study were used to collect both primary and secondary data. The pilot study was carried out in Mumias Sub County hospital whose results were not included in the final result. The data was collected and fed in statistical packages of social science (SPSS) version 20 and analyzed by use of descriptive data analysis technique, and presented in the form of frequency tables. The study found out that training practices conducted by the county government had positive impact on performance thus there was improved performance. The study would help the County Government to come up with better ways of motivating its employees in order to improve employee performance. The health sector especially in the rural county governments needs broad minds; this is as result of vast demographic and geographical distribution. Manpower in the health sector was always low with patients being on the receiving end. From that situation it required staff in the health sector to be equipped with skills, have balance and attractive terms of service and better working condition to ensure effective and efficiency operation at the county hospitals. Finally, the study serves as a data bank for researchers who wish to conduct further research on effects of devolution on employee.

Key Words: *devolution, employee performance, health care sector, Kenya, Kakamega County*

INTRODUCTION

In August 2010, Kenya adopted a new constitution that introduced a new governance framework with a national government and 47 counties. This was a radical departure from the highly centralized form of governance that had been in place since independence, but resulted in political and economic disempowerment and unequal distribution of resources (World Bank, 2012).

The highly centralized government system also led to the weak, unresponsive, inefficient, and inequitable distribution of health services in the country (Ndavi et al., 2009). It was expected that a devolved healthcare system would improve efficiency, stimulate innovation, improved access to and equity of services, and promote accountability and transparency in service delivery (Bossert, 1998).

There were various studies done in various countries globally on devolution of health sector but none focused on devolution of employee services in terms of training practices, terms of service and working conditions in relation to performance. In the Philippines, devolution relatively increased resource allocation, facilitated greater citizen participation in addressing unique health needs and bolstered decision making power at the local levels (Ansari, 2011). In the UK, devolution had allowed four divergent health systems (in Britain, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland) responsive to the uniqueness of their health demands to coexist (Woods, 2004). Elsewhere, in Pakistan, District Administrators failed to prioritize health hence limiting resource allocations. According to (Batley, 2004), health care performance had stagnated despite devolution hence this study examined specifically effected devolution on health sector performance, according to (Ochieng, 2015),

In Tanzania, devolution in terms of human resources, resulted in a more realistic distribution of staff compared to centralized recruitment, where the posting of staff earlier did not match specific needs of the districts this resulted into poor rendering of services since the work force did not match the patient's needs, although government of Tanzania later opted for a decentralization of recruitment procedures. Rwandan devolution reform in the health sector was a major success mainly because of its positive influence in efficiency in offering service and reduces in child and maternal mortality, (Nuguid2011). More so emphasis was put on training of skilled health workers in providing relevant services based on need.

Devolution was advocated as a response to most health care ills, and nations around the world increasingly adopted it as a strategy to improve governance and remedy institutional deficiencies in highly centralized governments (Bartley 2004). The World Health Organization saw devolution of health care services as a method of promoting greater responsiveness to consumer preferences (Conway & Monks, 2010). Devolution of health care improvement was a key pillar of health systems management. It was meant to affect performance of the health system by

transferring responsibilities and authority to locally elected governments. Kenya now joined countries like United Kingdom, Italy and Spain in establishing devolved health care system, whereby in Kenya, it was driven by the need to bring services closer to people, hopefully to be like South Africa and Rwanda which were success stories in Africa in health care devolution (Susan, 2017).

This was envisioned to improve public health by improving the efficiency of resource allocation and bringing services closer to people by narrowing down social diversity to local preferences.

(Khaunya, Wawire and Chepng'eno, 2015), pointed out that many democracies all over the world including Kenya had in recent years adopted devolution as a system of decentralization for development. In Kenya, this was after years of the post-independence approach of local governments which embraced a strong centralized governance structure which was meant to resolve the regional development challenges but apparently failed. This was evidenced by the challenges experienced in Kenya mainly associated with bureaucratic inefficiencies, lack of accountability and transparency, unequal distribution of national resources and minimal community participation in local development. The Author discussed challenges with a view of informing other world democracies in the process of adopting decentralization for development to be conscious and design appropriate structures.

According to (Khaunya, 2015), devolution of health care in Kenya was anchored on the Kenyan Constitution 2010 and it underscores the right to every person to receive the highest attainable standard of health. The underlying assumption of devolving the health care system was well stated by (Murkomen, 2012), a devolution expert, who said that the health system in Kenya was devolved in order to promote access to quality, efficient and equitable health services throughout the country and to address the problems of bureaucracy especially in procurement on the other hand (WawireKhaunya, and Chepng'eno, 2015), pointed out the challenges health sector was undergoing due to devolution hence not performing well in rendering service to the public.

According to (Oyugi, 2015), qualified, motivated and satisfied health care workers is a prerequisite for effective health care reform whose aim is to enhance the quality of care, user satisfaction, equity, and efficiency. A successful implementation of such reform relies heavily on how much support the health workers receive (Homedes&Ugalde ,2015). There was limited attention given to health sector human resource motivation and satisfaction (Luboga, Hagopian, Ndiku, Bancroft, &McQuide, 2011). There were more than two dozen strikes in Kenya by health care employees since the devolution of health services in 2013. Since the end of 2013 most health services were decentralized from the central government to county governments in keeping with Kenya's new constitution{2010} medical practitioners, Pharmacists and Dentists Union and the Kenya National Union of Nurses have on several occasions mobilized their members to down their tools as they demanded for better working conditions, salaries, and promotions. They were of the opinion that the process was done hurriedly and the newly

established county governments were faced with the responsibility of providing health services with no proper structures in place.

According to Government of Kenya (2013:7), the union, the health bill – which was supposed to guide the health sector under the new dispensation – was yet to be enacted into law. The union cited Poor human resource management in the counties as another major problem. As a result medics have been exposed to poor pay, salary delays, lack of a fair structure for career progression and training as well as discrimination and harassment (MOH, 2013). The Health sector had the overall goal of providing equitable and affordable health care to Kenyans at the highest affordable standards.

Performance measurement has considerable potential in health service performance in enabling national priorities for health reform to be translated into organizational and individual objectives, to provide a focus on results, and to enhance accountability, (Muchomba and Karanja, 2015). Devolution was proposed within a framework with a view to providing adequate and accurate information to inform decisions and enable decision-makers, managers, and staff to be held accountable. For effective devolution in the health sector, performance measurement systems were required to empower health boards and providers to demonstrate that they were fulfilling devolved functions and for the department to monitor the performance of the system against agreed objectives, (Bashaasha, Najjingo&Nkonya, 2011). Like most countries in Africa, the shortage of health care workers was noted in Kenya. Indeed, Kenya as one of the countries identified by the WHO as having a critical shortage of health care workers (WHO 2010). Kenya Health Policy 2012 – 2030 provided guidance for the achievement of the highest standard of health. It aimed to achieve this by supporting provision of equitable, affordable and quality health and related services at the highest attainable standards to all Kenyans by focusing on primary care. Devolution of health care to the counties provided an enabling environment for this approach as the county governments were responsible for the provision of primary care. Bringing primary care services closer to the people allowed for ownership and participation (MOH, 2014).

Ahwoi (2010) pointed out that Kenyans had witnessed poor performance in health sector by successive governments due to weak management of public institutions across the nation. A study by (Ntoiti, 2013), found out that for several decades, Kenyan Local authorities, decentralized units of the central government, failed to provide effective employee performance mainly due to weak governance practices which had been witnessed through strikes and affected performance. (Ntoiti, 2013), noted that other factors that also contributed to the poor employee performance in the country included weak; financial management practices, human resource management practices, information technology and government regulations. He concluded that all these factors had a negative and significant relationship with the weak employee performance of the local authorities.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The devolution of power, authority and resources to sub-national entities was intended to make governance more responsive to the needs of the people. Inputs in the healthcare sector by various counties had produced varying output level with some proving performance of staff than others(Health sector Analysis report 2013-2014).More calls have been made by local leaders to increase funding to the counties for improved services provision, others think the counties are not utilizing what they already have. Both the national and county government together with the various development stakeholders was unable to handle the situation despite the fact that if it remains unchecked it could jeopardize performance (Mwatsuma, Mwamuye, and Nyamu, 2014). Further, there have been numerous industrial actions by healthcare workers through their unions agitating for recentralization of the health sector. The year 2014, 800 doctors resigned from civil service according to the Kenya Medical Practitioners and Dentist Union (KMPDU). More so the Health service Assessment Report (GOK,2014) cited challenges in county health systems with financial resources being major concern and as most challenging in managing the devolved healthcare systems.. Poor treatment for emergencies as well as un-serviced equipment, vehicles and facilities pose a further challenge in the effective delivery of health services in the hospitals in Kenya. However, there is no clear assurance of improved performance or gains brought about by this phenomenon in the health care sector as eluded by devolution literature. From other studies carried out on the devolution no researcher had carried specific study on how devolution has affected employee performance. That's the reason the researcher so the need to study the effect of devolved healthcare system in Kenya a case of Kakamega county referral hospital.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To examine how training practices of the county government influenced employee performance in Kakamega county Referral hospital.
2. To analyze how terms of service of the county government affected employee performance in Kakamega county Referral hospital.
3. To assess how working conditions of the county government influence employee performance in Kakamega county Referral hospital.

EMPIRICAL REVIEW

Employee Performance in health sector

In August 2010, Kenya adopted a new constitution that introduced a new governance framework with a national government and 47 counties. This was a radical departure from the highly centralized form of government that was in place since independence, but resulted in political and economic dis-empowerment and unequal distribution of resources (World Bank, 2012). The highly centralized government system also led to the weak, unresponsive, inefficient, and

inequitable distribution of health services in the country (Ndavi, 2009). It is expected that a devolved health system will improve efficiency, stimulate innovation, improve access to and equity of services, and promote accountability and transparency in service delivery (Bossert, 1998). However, the complexity of Kenya's devolution framework has generated concern that services could be disrupted if the transition is managed poorly.

Employee performance is defined as the outcome or contribution of employees to make them attain goals (Herbert, John & Lee, 2000) while performance may be used to define what an organization has accomplished with respect to the process, results, relevance and success Uganda (National Development Program 1995). (Afshan, 2012) defines performance as the achievement of specific tasks measured against predetermined or identified standards of accuracy, completeness, cost and speed. Employee performance can be manifested in improvement in production, easiness in using the new technology, highly motivated workers.

According to (Krietner, 1995) states 'no matter how carefully job applicants are screened, typically a gap remains between what the employee does know and what they should know. This means, how employees are able to effectively administer their task and assignments and also how they present their assignment to reflect the quality and good service desired by their companies. There is need to establish a shared workforce understanding about what is to be achieved at an organizational level. It is about aligning the organizational objectives with the employee's agreed measures, skills competency requirements, development plans and the delivery of results. The emphasis is on improvement, learning and development in order to achieve the overall business strategy and to create a high performance workforce. Employee's performance means how well employees perform on the job and assignments assigned them measured against the generally accepted measure of performance standards set by their companies. Employees can be said to have performed when they have met the expectations and performed up to standard.

Training Practices and Employee performance in health sector

A study by (Papalexandris, Alas, Nigrasand Galanaki, 2011) observed that there is a significant impact of training and development on organizational performance. (Subramanian, 2011) postulates that training and development could influence organizational performance because employees' skills, knowledge and abilities can be improved. In addition, (Dimba,2010) and (Al-Qudah, Osman, Halimand Al-Shatanawi, 2014) found that, there are influences and a strong relationship between training and development on organizational performance.

According to (Tzafrir, 2006), training and development is considered to be the most common HR practice. (Thangand Buyens,2008) reiterate that, training and development leads to superior knowledge, skills, abilities, attitudes and behaviour of employees that eventually improve organizational performance. According to (Storey and Sisson,1993) training is seen to contribute

to an employer's commitment to their work force and not simply a means of arming employees with the skills they need to perform their jobs. In addition, it is perceived to reflect an overall organizational strategy that involves adding value to the organization, as opposed to reducing costs. (Bassi and Buren,1999) postulate that most of the world's successful organizations believe in the provisions of training and development activities which lie at the heart of their ability to attract and retain the best employees for their organization.

It is therefore imperative that employers provide an opportunity for their workforce to learn Van (Gennip, 2010). Proactive development schemes will not only improve the capabilities of their team but will also motivate staff and subsequently engender a more loyal and committed employee. Investment in training and the implementation of development schemes are becoming increasingly accepted as vital elements of HRM(Oakland and Oakland, 2001).Studies across a wide range of industries and sectors have all found a positive relationship between investment in training and employee commitment (Bassi& Buren, 1999).For example, a study completed by (Marching and Wilkinson,2008) focused on employee commitment among hospital management, nurses, service workers, and clerks, as well as scientists and engineers from a research laboratory; they confirm that employees were more committed to their jobs and the achievement of the objectives of the organization when they felt that the company cared about their training and development needs. In summary, appropriate training contributes positively to reduced employee turnover intentions because it makes employees feel recognized for their strengths, and it creates possibilities to develop their qualities (Kyndt, Dochy, Michielsen, & Moeyaert, 2009).

Adeniyi (2010) points out that training and development not only improves performance but also improves one's behavior. Individuals effectively mature regarding their capacities and thus Performance and effectiveness of medical experts is boosted more through applicable training and development which in turn complements long-term profitability and sustainability in overall performance of agencies. Retention of satisfactory personnel calls for investment inside the improvement of their skills, information and competencies. The cause of doing this is to comprehend character and ultimately organizational productivity. Worker training and development performs an important function in improving performance and growing productivity (Ryan, 2011). This leads to companies gaining superiority in standing out amidst environmental pressures. Whilst a business enterprise invests cash in developing employees they get excessive worth and also feel extra loyal to the employer.

This in turn offers personnel more willingness to working tougher and longer to make sure there is exemplary performance and that the agency becomes a fulfilment.(Armstrong,2012) states out that effectiveness in training and development minimizes on wastages, improves character, and enterprise's overall performance in output, quality, pace and productivity, improves operational flexibility as it adds to variety of skills that personnel have, attracts high satisfactory personnel through imparting them with knowledge of and increasing personnel competence which enables them have more task delight to gain higher rewards and progress inside the business enterprise.

(Dabale, et al, 2014), points out that training and development are an important contributor in enhancing the employees' overall performance.

A well designed and implemented education and development software can assist employees to build confidence and feel more empowered. Training and development for that reason, improves the talent level of the personnel which in turn improves the overall performance of the employees. Employees are not able to perform better in the event that they lack the essential know-how and talents required to perform a certain task. (Brown, 2011), indicates that training and development facilitates the personnel in gaining the proper set of capabilities and competencies to perform better and for that reason improve their performance. This implies that terrible performance of the employees takes place when workers are not sure of what, when and how they are expected to do a particular venture. Thus training and development will facilitate the remedy of these performance problems by means of explaining the information of the activity and equipping the employees with the essential competencies to perform appropriately.

Organizational analysis observed at organization and its objectives and the kind of problems that the organization may experience or is experiencing so as to plan for remedial action. Among the areas looked at include the strategic objectives of the organization, resource utilization within the organization, scanning of the organization environment to identify threats and opportunities and analyzed organization climate to identify whether the behavior, feelings, opinions, belief and attitudes of employees are positive or negative (Salemi, 1997). Task analysis looks at the duties and responsibilities of a job together with the skills, knowledge, abilities and expected behaviour to give a given standard of performance. It looks at tasks to be performed, contents of those tasks, knowledge, skills and attitude required standards of performance and methods of performing tasks. Individual analysis looks at how well employees are performing a given job by identifying their current level of knowledge, skills and attitudes in relation to their jobs and the organization's strategic plan. It looks at the duties and responsibilities performed by each employee, efficiency, skills to be developed or knowledge to be acquired by the employee (Salemi1997).

Induction is the process of receiving and welcoming employees when they first join an organization and giving them the basic information they need to settle down quickly and happily and start work. Induction aims to smooth the preliminary stages when everything is likely to be strange and unfamiliar to the starter, to establish quickly a favourable attitude to the organization in the mind of the new employee so that he or she is more likely to stay, to obtain effective output from the new employee in the shortest possible time and to reduce the likelihood of the employee leaving quickly (Fowler, 1996). Employees are far more likely to resign during their first months after joining the organization. Induction reduces the cost and inconveniences of early leavers, increases commitment, accelerate progress up the learning curve, increases socialization and clarify the psychological contract (Fowler, 1996).

New Starters were concern about who they were going to work for, who they were going to work with, what work they were going to do on their first day, and the geographical layout of their place of work including location of entrances, exits, lavatories, rest rooms and the canteen. The detailed induction is probably best carried out by the immediate team leader who should aim to put new employees at ease, to interest the employee in the job and the organization, provide basic information about working arrangements, and to tell the employee about training and how to progress in the organization. Formal content entails information about the organization which include the products, services, structure, mission and core values, learning arrangements and opportunities, performance management processes, health and safety, conditions of service, pay and benefits, policies, processes and working arrangements and trade unions and employee involvement.

Terms of service and employee performance in health sector

According to (Ayub and Peter, 2017) research on influence of devolution of government service delivery on Provision of health care: a case of level five hospitals in Meru County, Kenya. The study concluded that ICT was highly used in all departments which made service delivery faster and better. Further concerning the staffing aspect at the Level Five Hospital, the study concludes that that Meru Level Five Hospital was not well staffed therefore the doctor-patient ratio affected the provision of quality health care adversely. However, in addition, the study also revealed leadership of the hospital ensured that staff issues that could disrupt health care service provision were well addressed. The study also found out that the level of staffing influenced provision of health care services highly. It was also established that the county government encouraged employee's growth through systematic training and development programs. Also, Meru Level Five Hospital promoted team morale and built organizational commitment. The study further concludes that on average the Hospital performance had increased which led to improved health care services since the implementation of devolved governance. As a result, waiting time required to serve client had reduced at Meru Level Five Hospital since devolution of government service. In addition devolution of government service delivery had increased access to health care services in terms of availability, affordability, accessibility and acceptability.

According to (Jacinta, 2013),study on impact of motivation on employee performance at the National Social Security Fund, the terms of service present in the organization were found to include symbolic rewards such as praise and recognition; Material rewards e.g. money, and task rewards e.g. feeling of accomplishment It was also found out that terms of service affects performance, that supervisors had the ability to work with others at all levels ready to try out new ideas and methods; that had link between terms of service and performance in their organization.

(Bello and Adeola, 2014), a study of selected public secondary schools, Bello noted that employee's job allowance affect teacher's performance as part of the terms of service. This was justified with the introduction of meal allowance, motivation allowance and other allowances by

Ghanaian government in order to salvage the suffering of Ghanaian teachers. There was a significant relationship between allowances and employee performance. It means that non regular payment of teacher's allowances and denial of necessary allowances entitled to their profession affects their performance at work place.

Phyllis (2017) study on influence of devolution on motivation of human resources: focusing on nurses and public officers in Laikipia north sub county motivation components of Human resource for health work plan among nurses and public health officers of rural health facilities implemented in Laikipia North Sub-county. The findings were that HRH motivation factors have been affected by devolution; devolution faces challenges in improving motivation of; there were factors that influenced the implementation of the motivation components of the human resource health work; there were strategies that can be used at county level to improve human resource health motivation.

Work Conditions and Employee performance in health sector

According to (Danica & Tomislav, 2013), poor working conditions affect employees' performance. It is therefore necessary to take measures to reduce uncomfortable working conditions by taking appropriate safety measures. Safety at work is carried out to ensure working conditions are not hazardous life or health and for the purpose of avoiding accidents, injuries, occupational diseases and mitigate their consequences.

Buble (2012) asserted that safety at work relates to equipment that employees use in their daily work which include machinery, equipment, that employees use in their work and has to be functional and correctly fixed to avoid injuries at work or poor performance. It is vital for workers to be trained how to work with the equipment because inadequate equipment handling can result in accidents or under performance that may arise due lack of knowledge on how to use of the equipment. Training of employees should be focused on the proper use of protective equipment and personal protection. (Amir, 2013), in his study on the link between job motivation, work environment and job satisfaction found a considerable impact of the employee's perceptions for the nature of their work and the level of overall performance. (Davis, 2013), survey on the effect of nature of work on employee performance University of California found out a positive relationship between nature of work and performance.

Noah & Steve (2012) research on work environment observes that the physical aspects of a workplace environment that has a direct influence on productivity, health and safety, comfort, concentration, job satisfaction and morale of employees within an organization. They further stated that work environment is made up of a range of factors, including company culture, management styles, hierarchies and human resources policies. According to (Edward, 2014), work conditions are the surrounding of the working area such as place, lighting, appliances. (Leblebici, 2012), indicated that when employees are contented with the workplace the quality of

their performance will increase. (Parvin, 2011), conducted a research on the factors affecting employee performance of pharmaceutical sector. The result of his research was that working condition is one of the major contributors of employee performance.

Noah & Steve (2012), in their study on the relationship of work conditions the job attitude and organizational commitment of employees in Nigeria, found out that work conditions affect employee performance and that a good working conditions reduces sick leave, lowers turnover rates and increases efficiency. Important factors in the work conditions which should be put into consideration include building design and age, workplace layout, workstation set-up, furniture and equipment design and quality, space, temperature, ventilation, lighting, noise, vibration, radiation, air quality. On the other hand good working condition, refreshment & recreation facility, health & safety facility, fun at workplace can increase the degree of employee performance (Ganesh, 2015).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Several theories explain the relationship between devolution and employee performance. These theories include Equity theories of the firm (Jackie, 2010), Fulfillment Theory by (James and Hannah, 2013). As far as this study is concerned, the above are the umbrella theories that underpin this study.

Expectancy Theory of Motivation

According to (Shanks, 2007), Expectancy Theory of Motivation states that the performance of an employee is definitely affected by motivation, his capabilities, and the work environment. The management of an organization is constantly under the challenge of motivating the workforce for two purposes. The first reason is to motivate employees into actively and willingly participating in the achievement of organizational goals. Second is to motivate employees into to attaining personal goals. There are various behaviors that are exhibited by employees who feel they are being treated inequitably. These include putting less effort in the job, asking for rewards and better treatment, finding out how to portray their jobs as more important and better through comparison, and quitting jobs or obtaining transfers (Nicholson, 2003). This theory implies that people behave according to their perceptions and therefore what the management thinks or does may not influence performance.

The Expectancy Theory offers one of the most widely accepted views of motivation. According to this theory a worker is motivated to be more productive depending on their belief that, their effort will result in a good appraisal of performance, good appraisals were culminated in rewards from the organization, and the rewards that the organization will offer will satisfy their needs. The main value of this theory is in comprehending one's goals and how effort relates to performance, how performance relates to rewards, and finally how rewards translate in individual satisfaction. According to this theory motivation is high when expectancy levels are

high and rewards are lucrative and satisfying. In order for managers to motivate subordinates they have to strengthen the perceptions of workers with respect to their efforts as both worthwhile and possible, they also have to clarify workers' expectations

Equity Theory

According to (Jackie, 2010), Equity Theory states that a person's job performance depends upon his perceived equity as determined by his input-output balance in comparison with input- output balance of others. Every employee compares his rewards with those of others. If an employee feels his rewards are equitable as compared to others doing similar job, he will feel satisfied and vice versa. Equity theory suggests that individuals assign weight to various inputs and outcomes according to their own perception of relative importance. This theory therefore asserts that people compare the ratio of their outputs to inputs with the ratio of outputs to inputs of others. Equity Theory proposes that a person's satisfaction is based on what he or she considers being fair when compared to others (Redmond, 2010).

As noted by (Gogra, 2010), the application of equity theory at the work place , focuses on an employee's work-compensation relationship and exchange relationship as well employees' efforts to minimize any sense of unfairness that might arise. The theory is relevant to the study because it is a real life experience because employees in the public sector normally compare their terms and conditions relating their jobs as to their counterparts in the private sector.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study employed a descriptive survey research design. According to (Orodho, 2010), descriptive survey research design is used in preliminary and exploratory studies to allow researchers to gather information, summarize, present and interpret for the purpose of clarification. (Best & Kahn, 2013) postulates that descriptive survey research design is the most appropriate design in the behavioural sciences as it seeks to find out factors associated with occurrence of certain events and conditions of behaviour. Using this design the investigator does not control any variables but only describes the situation as it is at a particular point in time and gives the relationship of the variables. This design therefore enabled the researcher to explore the effects of devolution on employee performance in health care sector in Kakamega Referral Hospital.

Site of the Study

The study was conducted at Kakamega Referral Hospital in Kakamega county, Kenya Lurambi constituency which is located along Kisumu Webuye highway, 1KM from the highway on the right hand side from Kisumu to Kakamega next to Kakamega magistrate courts.

Target Population

Population refers to the set of all elements, units, objects or subjects in the universe of interest for a particular study and when the population is clearly defined it is often referred to as the target population (Mugenda 2012). The study targeted 400 permanent and contracted employees who are present in Kakamega referral hospital as indicated by the human resource data as per 2018 hospital statistics. Sampling for the survey adopted a combination of purposive and stratified random sampling techniques of probability sampling procedures. Stratified random sampling was used to select the hospitals staffs based on position were categorized into four groups as follows: managers, nurses, doctors and lab technician. After which purposive sampling was used to select the people who could best answer the research questions in this case the four groups as follows: managers, nurses, doctors and lab technician.

Sample Size

The study involved managers, doctors, nurses and lab technicians giving a total of 120 employees. The sample size for the study was 120 participants to whom questionnaires were administered.

Data Collection Procedure

The researcher obtained a letter of authorization from National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation, recommendation letter from Kenyatta University to facilitate administration of the questionnaire to the respondents. The questionnaire were dropped at the respondents' offices and picked up as agreed between the researcher and respondent. The completed questionnaires were collected after completion of the exercise for analysis.

Data Collection Instruments

Data collection was carried out using a semi-structured questionnaire and intended respondents were those who were in the Kakamega Referral Hospital. Questionnaire was used to collect primary data while secondary data was collected through literature review on the independent variables. The advantage of using this type of instrument is the ease that it accords the study during the analysis. Moreover, questionnaires are convenient to administer when handling a large group of respondents and economical to use in terms of time and money.

Data Analysis

Data collected was both quantitative and qualitative. (Franklin, 2012), defines data analysis as the process of systematically searching and arranging completed research results after field work, with the aim of increasing understanding and hence enabling one to present them to others. Statistical data analysis was used to organize, summarize and present the data in a meaningful way. The coding involved arranging the data to show occurrence of the different responses to

questions. Tallies were calculated against each question and their frequencies recorded. The frequencies and percentages were presented in terms of graphs, pie-charts and tables, in the course of discussing the findings. The Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics i.e. frequencies, percentages, mean and standard deviation.

RESEARCH RESULTS

The study revealed that majority of the respondents agreed that training practices provided at work place helped in improving their performance. The policies put in place greatly provided opportunity for growth, the policies and procedures were also definite, clear and easy to be understood. The selection and induction of new employees at the health sector provided opportunity for skills and abilities to be harnessed thus enabling the health sector to grow in disseminating its day to day operations. The continuous coordination of training by the management helped in improving the performance of the employees. The findings on terms of service at the health care facilities revealed that majority of respondents agreed terms of services offered improved their performance. The findings also revealed that most of the respondents agreed that training was of the things they appreciated, that improved their staff ability to provide good quality care of services. MoH,(2015) noted that human resource investments need to be designed to address the availability of appropriate and equitably distributed health workers, attraction and retention of required health workers, improved institutional and health worker performance, and finally training capacity building and development of the health workforce. The training provided expected responsive to the participant need and expectations of the employee and that the training activities are well coordinated with management (Wilbroda, 2015).

This was in line with the objectives stated in the staff training policy that opportunities will be given to employees as necessary for more training and development program to improve their role and performance to their duties.(Armstrong, 2003) stated that organizations were concerned with what was to be done to achieve sustainable high level of performance through people.

While (Price,2005) stated that managing employee performance every day was key to an effective performance improvement, the respondents agreed to a greater extent to all the aspects of training being conducted in a manner that could improve their performance, On the other hand also a greater percentage of them disagreed that the county government recognizes employees for their efficient and effective services thus demotivating them from performing better.

In general therefore the employees were dissatisfied with the pay structure, terms of contract, financial rewards offered by their county government. The benefit given by the county government example health insurance, sick leave, annual leave and maternity leave greatly improved their work life. However most of them did not agree with the pay structure offered by

the county government, therefore this made them to be dissatisfied thus lessening their performance

On the aspect of working conditions at the health facilities, most of the employees agreed that the working conditions offered by their county government improved their performance. They were contended with the facilities and hospital equipment's they used to do their job as it allowed them to be effective and efficient. The work space was also suitable for them as it provided safety standards thus being amiable. The workings hours were also flexible thus improving the performance as fatigue was avoided. The core values, culture of the organization they worked for made them to feel important thus improving their performance leading to higher production. Availability of good health facility infrastructure would undoubtedly change the public's perception of good quality care. Communication facilities was one of the most improved hospital infrastructure. The state of medical equipment was good and new equipment had been bought with devolution of health services. Also to note was the availability of labor wards, laboratories were in good condition, although placenta pits were the least available in the health facilities. This means that there was considerable improvement on health infrastructure with devolution. The available equipment falls far short of the required numbers, of those available, about 50% of the equipment is too old to pass required standards and that maintenance of equipment has been inadequate (MOH, 2015). A large proportion of the respondents suggested that to a great extent that state of the art facilities and equipment should be acquired to make them more efficient. Working conditions related to; tools, work space, physical working conditions, safety standards, working hours, organization culture, relationship with co-workers and recreation facilities required for effective delivery of services (Armstrong, 2014).

The findings revealed that most of the respondents agreed to a great extent that the tools they had to work with enabled them to deliver services effectively and efficiently. This was contrary to the Kenya Medical Practitioners union, Pharmacists and Dentists Union and the Kenya National Union of Nurses had in recent times cited poor working conditions as their main reason of unending strikes in Kenya but the findings revealed that most of the respondent agreed to a great extent to have enough allocated working space, good physical work conditions proper safety standards, the respondents also agreed to a greater extent of working hours being favorable

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the result from the data analysis and findings of the research, it was concluded that the majority of the health sector worker at the county referral hospital appreciated the trainings the county government was undertaking to enhance their knowledge, skills and effectiveness in the work area.

Further study concluded that Kakamega referral hospital's Training Practices had a positive impact on the skills of the employees. There were formal systems of induction and there were

opportunities to for growth through training which in turn affected their performance positively. The study also concluded that the performance appraisal system employed by the organization to identify the training needs of employees was faulty and the management needed to re-evaluate it to serve the purpose. The findings of this research indicated that county referral nature of work depends mainly sub county hospitals and, technology as well as new and varied cases of illness. This makes continuous training and development of its human resource crucial and vital, taking into consideration the rapid customer satisfaction.

It was observed that the organization had a proper pay structure in place which was not equitable enough to motivate employees. Good pay and recognition was viewed by the employees as factors that directly enhanced good performance by employees. It concluded that the Hospital did not have a competitive payment and benefits package when compared to other private sector hospitals and other employers across the country.

Remuneration is an important element because it is believed to enhance job satisfaction of employees in the health sector and was thought to be a fair process to reward people according to

The study concluded that the management had provided conducive working environment to the employees. State of the art tools and good physical working environment enhances employee performance. The employees needed good working space, proper safety standards and good organization culture to perform well. Based on the study, it was concluded that there was a relationship between working conditions as a factors that influenced health workers' job performance. This was revealed by a Pearson's correlation between working conditions and health workers' job performance which showed a significant and positive relationship between working conditions and health workers performance

RECOMMENDATIONS

Training Practices on Employee Performance

The study revealed that in as much as the employees were satisfied with the training practices employed by the Referral hospital, the performance appraisal system for identifying the needs for training was not properly and objectively constructed. The study recommends that the organization re-evaluate the system and makes it objective. Additionally, the study recommends that the organization conducts a proper recruitment procedure before offering the training in order to achieve the set goals.

Terms of Service on Employee Performance

The study revealed that the organization did not satisfy the financial/monetary needs of the employees. This study therefore recommends that the organization re-evaluates its salary and benefits package as the employees perceive the money they were paid as a direct indication of

the value the organization has placed on their services. This can help boost the morale and motivation of the employees and consequently, their performance. Additionally the hospital should proper mechanism in place to recognize employees who perform exemplary at work.

Working conditions on Employee Performance

The study showed that there was a strained relationship among employees at the Hospital. The management should work towards ensuring that all employees are in harmony regardless of their tribes. The management should create a mechanism of getting feedback and grievances relating to alienation and mistreatment on treatment of tribe and any other factors that may affect the performance of employees. Additionally, the study recommends that the organization should try and understand the personal needs, attitudes and aspirations of the employees for better performance.

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