

Effects of Working Environment on Employees Performance at Teachers Service Commission Trans Nzoia County

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Abstract: *Employee working conditions is essential to customer satisfaction and organization performance in competitive environment. Decent facilities make additional contributions to employees work. The study evaluated the effect of working environment on employee's performance in Teachers Service Commission in Kenya. The study was guided by the following objective- To examine the effect of leadership styles on employee performance in Teachers Service Commission. The descriptive research design was used as it was concerned with describing the characteristics of employees' performance with regards to working environment. The population of the study was all the fifty staffs of Teachers Service Commission at Trans Nzoia County branch in various levels of management and formed the study sample. Questionnaires were used in collecting data. Data analysis was done both quantitatively and qualitatively and was reported in the form of frequency distribution, tables, percentages and Analysis of variance. These tools ensured scientific validity and avoided subjectivity during analysis. The study also exposed the areas within the workplace environment of TSC that needed to be improved to ensure higher performance was maintained. The study provided an opportunity to participating employees to suggest ways they could maintain or improve their performance.*

Keywords: Working environment, Employee's performance, leadership styles, Teachers Service Commission

1. Introduction

Globally, increased competition between organizations has greatly increased due to major changes in the labor market. Organizations often face problems with costs these days as a result of accidents, employee turnover, lost productivity and absenteeism which could all be related to challenges in the work environment. The working environment plays an important role for the employees performance in an organization be it private or public entity. In the current world, employees have a large number of working alternatives; the environment in the workplace becomes a critical factor for accepting and keeping the jobs. According to Leblebici (2012), the workplace environment can determine the level of employee's motivation, subsequent performance and productivity. The organization workplace environment influence the employee's error rate, level of innovation and collaboration with other employees, absenteeism and ultimately time period to stay in the job. Pech and Slade (2006) argued that the employee disengagement is increasing and it becomes more important to make workplaces that positively influence workforce. According to Pech and Slade the focus is on symptoms of disengagement such as distraction, lack of interest, poor decisions and high absence, rather than the root causes. The working environment is perhaps a key root causing employee's engagement or disengagement.

The Teachers Service Commission (TSC) is one of State's Commissions charged with the management and administration of teachers in Kenya. Invariably, personnel management became its foremost responsibility. TSC

personnel functions include: recruitment, postings, transfers, promotion, dismissal and enforcing disciplinary control over secondary school teachers and other staff of the Commission, compilation and maintenance of teachers' records including registration of teachers, salary administration and payment of other allowances to teachers and officials of the Commission (Namutebi, 2006. For any organization to be able to retain its employees, it has to build a winning environment, one which would not only attract others to join the organization, but which would ensure that the employees within it would not want to leave and would instead be proud to be associated with the organization.

1.1 Statement of the problem

The work environment is a major determinant in employee performance in an organisation. From a broad perspective, a work environment can be defined as the specific location and in circumstances in which tasks and duties are performed by the employees of an organization. The environment dictates to the employees on how they are going to perform their tasks in an organization in Trans Nzoia County, the work environment has contributed to employee performance in various ways. According to teachers who are the clients, employees at TSC with good environment at county office do offer services efficiently and effectively compared to others at sub county levels that are in different environments.

T.S.C employees spend a lot of their time inside an office, where the working environment influence their well-being and directly influence their work performance and productivity. In the workplace, it is often assumed that employees who are more satisfied with the physical

environment are more likely to produce better work outcomes. Factors such as warm/cold, air flow, lighting, drinking water and noise conditions in the working environment affect the employee output in the organization. Several studies have uniformly demonstrated that characteristics of the work environment can have a significant effect on perceptions and productivity of employees. Most of the previous researchers in their studies are more focused on a single factor that could give an effect on employee's performance at work. Therefore the purpose of this study was to evaluate how working environment has impacted on the performance of employees in TSC office in Trans Nzoia County.

1.2 Research Objectives

1.2.1 General Objective

The general objective of the study was to evaluate the effects of working environment on employees' performance at Teachers Service Commission in Trans Nzoia County.

1.2.2 Specific Objectives

The study was guided by the following specific objectives:

To examine the effect of leadership styles on employee performance in Teachers Service Commission, Trans Nzoia County.

1.3 Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

What is the effect of leadership styles on employee performance in Teachers Service Commission, Trans Nzoia County?

1.4 Leadership Styles

According to Hersey (2001) "management of organizational behavior" focuses on what is known and accepted about leadership management and motivating people. Hersey tackles the management that permeate many discussions about improving employee performance and why it's important for management to make real change by understanding human behavior. Good leadership style enables time and material resources to be available to employees enabling them to perform to their best. Transformational leadership style instill optimism to employees hence making them perform well in their work place.. Situational leadership stresses objective in its style of leadership, with this model of leadership, employee soon learn the cause and effect of their environment. The possibilities and limitations of leaders must be understood so that the workers can intelligently strengthen and support good leadership

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1 Systems Theory

According to Skyttner (1996), a system is a set of two or more elements where: the behavior of each element has an effect on the behavior of the whole; the behavior of the elements and their effects on the whole are interdependent; and while subgroups of the elements all have an effect on the behavior of the whole, none has an independent effect on. In an organization, the employees interact with the workplace environment. In this case, the workplace environment and employees are two different sub systems that interact together to achieve the organization objectives. An organization is a system with several sub systems. In such a situation, the workplace environment can determine how the employees can perform their duties hence affecting their level of productivity in an organization.

2.2 Agency Theory

Theory is concerned with issues related to the ownership of the firm when that ownership is separated from the day-to-day running of the organisation. It assumes that in all but owner- managed organizations the owner or owners (known in agency theory as the "principal") of an organisation must vest authority to an "agent" corporate management to act on their behalf. The principal recognizes the risk here and acts on the assumption that any agent will look to serve its own as well as the principal interests as it fulfils its contract with that principal. However, this is not the situation in real life situation as all agents are perceived to be opportunistic (Seth and Thomas, 1994). These approaches to examining the problems of human exchange derived from the field of finance and economics but they are often applied to the study of shareholders Risk Management (SHRM) (Harrel-Cook and Ferris, 1997).

Agency theory is therefore used to analyse this conflict in interest between the principal (shareholders of organisations) and their agents (leaders of these organisations). Whereby the "Agents" in keeping with the interest of the shareholders and organisational goals turn to use financial motivational aspects like bonuses, higher payrolls, pensions, sick allowances, risk payments, perks to reward and retained their employees and enhance their performance.

2.3 Maslow's Hierarchy of Need Theory

Maslow Theory (1943) probably provided the field of organizational behavior and management with a new way of looking at employees' job attitudes or behaviors in understanding how humans are motivated. It states that human needs can be classified into five categories and that these categories can hierarchically rank in importance. These include physiological, security, belonging, esteem and self-actualization needs. According to him a person is motivated first and foremost to satisfy physiological needs. As long as the employees remain unsatisfied, they turn to be motivated only to fulfill them. When physiological needs are satisfied they cease to act as primary motivational factors and the individual moves "up" the hierarchy and seeks to satisfy security needs. This process continues until finally self-

actualization needs are satisfied. According to Maslow the rationale is quite simple because employees who are too hungry or too ill to work will hardly be able to make much contribution to productivity hence difficulties in meeting organizational objectives.

Maslow proposed that if people grew up in an environment in which their needs are not met, they would be unlikely to function healthy, well-adjusted individuals hence affecting their performance at the job.

3. Critique of Relevant Literature

Gerber, Nel and Van Dyk (1998) state that the working conditions are created by the interactions of the employees with their organizational climate. Working conditions according to him include psychological work conditions and the physical layouts of the job. However, Greenslade and Paddock (2007) believe that working conditions generally encompasses a range of issues from work load and scheduling to systems-wide issues like professional identity to scope of practice. For the purpose of this study, working conditions should be seen in the light of facilities that aid employees while at work for their convenience and comfort on their job performance. Extensive scientific research conducted by Roelofsen (2002) provides indications suggesting that improving working environment results in a reduction in a number of complaints and absenteeism and an increase in productivity. The indoor environment has the biggest effect on productivity in relation to job stress and job dissatisfaction. Employee participation in organization activities is also linked both with increased job satisfaction and decreased turnover. For example, a work environment that allows participation in decision making has been shown to increase job satisfaction and greater involvement in care planning for nurses' assistants has been linked with decreased turnover (Simons and Jankowski, 2008). Where broader workplace conditions have been considered there have been connections found between general appreciation of employees and concern for their wellbeing. The nature of the physical condition under which employees work is important to output, Offices and factories that are too hot and ill ventilated are debilitating to effort. There should be enough supply of good protective clothing, drinking water, rest rooms, toilets, first aids facilities etc. Both management and employees should be safety conscious at all times and minimum of requirement of the factories act must respect. This push for more productivity from public sector agencies is not a new phenomenon. These factors may be important; yet, believing that the attitudes and management styles of mid-level managers are what really influences employee productivity. In organizations where employees are exposed to stressful working conditions, productivity are negatively influenced and that there is a negative impact on the delivery of service. On the other hand if working conditions are good, productivity increase and there is a positive impact on the delivery of service. More attention should be paid in identifying and dealing with working condition because when employee has negative perception to their environment they sometimes suffer from chronic stress. Firms that derive their productivity advantage from firm-specific knowledge may wish to provide better working conditions in the hope that this would reduce worker turnover and minimize the risk

of their productivity advantage spilling over to competing firms. According to Roelofsen (2002), the working environment reduces complaints and absenteeism while increasing employee performance. Other researchers have linked workplace conditions to job satisfaction. The employee's satisfaction on the job, determined by workplace conditions and environment has been recognized as an important factor for measuring their performance. More attention should be paid in identifying and dealing with working condition because when employees have negative perception to their environment they sometimes suffer from chronic stress hence affecting their productivity.

4. Research Design

The research design used was descriptive as it is concerned with describing the characteristics of employees' performance with regards to working environment.

The targeted population for this study comprised of both senior and junior management of the Teachers Service commission Trans-Nzoia County which were all so staffs.

Table 1: Target population

| Section | Target Population |
|-------------------------|-------------------|
| Top Level Management | 4 |
| Middle Level Management | 9 |
| Low Level Employees | 37 |
| Total | 50 |

Sample size was the group from which the researcher gathered information concerning the problem being studied. All the staffs at Trans Nzoia County Branch formed the sample size. This was done to realize a sizeable size because the staffs were not many.

5. Data Analysis and Findings

Data analysis was done both quantitatively and qualitatively. Quantitative analysis involved use of frequency distribution tables and percentages. Qualitative approach and analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to analyze data in relation to themes and categories highlighted in the questionnaire.

The following regression equation was used in analysis of the study:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \epsilon$$

Where Y = Employees Performance

β_0 = Constant

X_1 = Communication

X_2 = Leadership

X_3 = Organizational Culture and

ϵ = error

Table 2: Leadership styles and Employee Performance

| Statement | S.A | | A | | N | | D | | S.D | |
|---|-----|-------|-----|-------|-----|-------|-----|-------|-----|-------|
| | Fq. | % | Fq. | % | Fq. | % | Fq. | % | Fq. | % |
| A good relationship between supervisors and employees promotes trust and loyalty among the employees | 5 | 10.86 | 20 | 43.47 | 10 | 21.73 | 8 | 17.31 | 3 | 6.52 |
| Open door policy can enable employees demands be met hence leading to improved performance | 10 | 21.73 | 24 | 52.17 | 5 | 10.86 | 4 | 8.69 | 3 | 6.52 |
| Conducting routine checkups of the workplace environment affects employee performance | 2 | 4.34 | 5 | 10.86 | 10 | 21.73 | 23 | 50 | 6 | 13.04 |
| Leadership determines the relationships between co-workers and management which affects employees performance | 16 | 34.78 | 16 | 34.78 | - | - | 7 | 15.21 | 7 | 15.21 |

S.D.= Strongly Disagreed, D= Disagreed, N=Neutral, A=Agreed, S.A. = Strongly Agreed

Table 2 demonstrates that less respondents strongly disagreed that a good relationship between supervisors and employees promotes trust and loyalty at 6.52%, 17.31% disagreed, 21.73% neutral, 43.47%agreed and 10.86% strongly agreed. This implied that most employees agreed and that good leadership style enhances a good relationship between supervisors and employees. From the findings it was evident that (43.47%) of the respondents agreed that of leadership style does affect employee performance. This implied that leadership style should be founded on the proposition that the ultimate source of value is people. This means that working environment must respond creatively to their needs as well as to those of the organization. Secondly on open door policy can enable employees demands to be met hence leading to improved performance, 21.73% strongly agreed, 52.17% agreed, 10.86% were neutral, 8.69%disagreed and 6.52% strongly disagreed .This implied that leaders and bosses embraced open door policy, this made the employees to be more freer with their supervisors hence discuss way forward for their improvement and that of the organization. It was also deduced that conducting routine checkups of the workplace environment does affect employee performance, 4.34% strongly agreed, 10.86%agreed, 21.73% were neutral, 50%dis agreed and 13.4% strongly agreed. This implied that routine checkups can be as a result of workplace norm but not aiming at improving performance of employees and leadership style as many employees disagreed at 50%. Finally, leadership determines the relationship between co-workers and management which affects employee performance, 34.78%strongly agreed, 34.78% disagreed, none were neutral, 15.21%disagreed, 15.21% strongly disagreed. This implied that most employees agreed on leadership determining the relationships between co-workers and management which affects employees' performance.

5.1 Regression Analysis

Table 3: Model Summary

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|-------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 | .787 ^a | .522 | .369 | .48301 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Organization Culture, Leadership, Communication

To determine the amount of variation on dependent variable (employee performance) explained by the independent variables (communication, leadership and organization culture) regression analysis was carried out Results in table 4.8 reveal that the independent variables (organization culture, leadership and communication) reported R value of 0.787 indicating that there is perfect relationship between dependent variable and independent variables. R² value of 0.522 means that 52.2% of the corresponding variation in employee performance can be explained or predicted by the independent variables (organization culture, leadership and communication) which indicated that the model fitted the study data. Adjusted R² in table 4.8 is called the coefficient of determination which indicates how employee performance varied with variation in the effect of working environment on employee performance in Teachers Service Commission. From the table, the value of Adjusted R² is 0.369. This implies that, there was a variation of 36.9% of the effect of working environment on Employee Performance in Teachers Service Commission at a confidence level of 95%. This clearly indicated that communication, leadership and organization culture positively affected employee performance.

5.2 Analysis of Variance

Table 4: Analysis of Variance

| Model | Sum of Squares | Df | Mean Square | F | Sig. | |
|-------|----------------|--------|-------------|------|-------|-------------------|
| 1 | Regression | .881 | 3 | .294 | 1.258 | .000 ^b |
| | Residual | 9.799 | 42 | .233 | | |
| | Total | 10.679 | 45 | | | |

a. Dependent Variable: Employees Performance
 b. Predictors: (Constant), Organization Culture, Leadership styles, Communication

Table 4 shows the total variance (10.679) was the differences into the variance which can be explained by the independent variable (model) and the variance and the F-test(F= 1.258, P=0.000<0.05) which indicated that the model formed between effect of working environment on employee Performance in Teachers Service Commission was a good fit for the data. The strength of variation of the predictor values on the effect of working environment on employee environment was significant at 0.000<0.05. This means this is a statistically significant test.

5.3 Regression Coefficients of determination

Table 5: Coefficients

| Coefficients | | | | | |
|--|----------------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|-------|
| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | Sig. |
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | |
| 1 | (Constant) | 3.197 | 0.748 | | 0 |
| | Communication | 0.037 | 0.126 | -0.044 | 0.009 |
| | Leadership | 0.224 | 0.119 | 0.279 | 0 |
| | Organization Culture | 0.023 | 0.125 | -0.028 | 0.006 |
| a. Dependent Variable: Employees Performance | | | | | |

$$Y = 3.197 + .037 X_1 + .224 X_2 + .023 X_3 + \varepsilon$$

The findings in table 5 indicate that employee environment in teachers service commission would be at 3.197 holding the effects of working environment at constant. The coefficient of the regression analysis, communication ($\beta = 0.037$, $p = 0.009 < 0.05$), leadership ($\beta = 0.224$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$) and organization culture ($\beta = 0.023$, $p = 0.006 < 0.05$) had positive effect on employee performance. Communication had high significant prediction among the three independent variables, however the findings shows that all independent variables had statistically significant predictive capacity as indicated by $p < 0.05$.

5.4 Effect of leadership Styles on employee performance

The objective of the study was to establish the effect of leadership style on employee performance. The study indicated that most respondents were neutral on good relationship between supervisors and employees promotes trust and loyalty among employees and conducting routine checkups of the workplace environment affecting performance. From the findings it was evident that most of the respondents agreed that leadership style does affect employee performance. This implied that leadership style should be founded on the proposition that the ultimate source of value is people. This means that working environment must respond creatively to their needs as well as to those of the organization.

6. Conclusion

The study concluded that communication, leadership styles and organization culture positively affects employee performance at the Teachers Service Commission Trans Nzoia County. The study findings have portrayed that the Teachers service commission has offered its employees satisfaction through communication, leadership styles and its organization culture hence good performance by its employees. Most of the employees have not exited the organization since they were employed, this implied that they catered well for its employees and therefore good performance. It was concluded too that the organization met the constitution third gender rule by having many female employees; the difference between the employees in terms of gender is 18%.

7. Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study the following recommendations are necessary to improve organizational performance and employee performance.

A job well done receives praise, yes. But also, from time to time employees need to be in a good working environment with good relationship for them to enhance performance and team work.

Since most workers spend a huge proportion of their lives at work, so naturally it is important that there is information sharing and feedback to be given so that employees are aware of their level and state of performance so that they work more on weaker points to increase performance.

The Teachers service commission should subscribe to a certain level of training that is equal to the expected duties and responsibilities that one should be performing. This will make the employees be self-reliant on terms of performance and not rely on communication within the organization.

Negativity is contagious, and it can have a detrimental effect on the workplace. Not only does a negative environment cause employees to be unhappy with their jobs, but it makes them less productive. The organization should conduct routine checkups at workplace to ensure that employees are comfortable and safe.

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