

# Examining the Relationship between Training and Employee Performance in Rwanda, Nyagatare District Local Government

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**Abstract:** - This study sought to establish the relationship between training and employee performance in Rwanda, Nyagatare District Local Government. The researcher adopted a cross-sectional design using a sample of 131 respondents. Quantitative data was analysed using descriptive statistics, correlation and regression analyses. It was established that training and performance positively significantly predicted employee performance. It was hence concluded that, receiving instructions on the job from their superiors, learning on the job under experts, further studies, mentoring, effective coaching sessions from superiors, refresher courses and receiving updated training significantly influenced employee performance. It was thus recommended that government agencies including local governments other organisations should prioritise giving of instructions on the job by superiors, having experts to train staff on the job and provide mentoring, effective coaching sessions, refresher courses and updated training for staff.

**Key words:** Training, employee performance

## I. INTRODUCTION

Organisations have apparently prospered based on their existing human resources. Human resources are probably the only resource that must be available for the organization to function, the size or quality of human resource notwithstanding (Obong'o, 2014). It is important that business owners and employers realise the essential role played by this resource and the success that is brought thereby in terms of skills and abilities that they exhibit (Price, 2007).

### *Theoretical Review*

The theory that underpinned this study was the Herzberg's Two Factor Theory which the hygiene and motivation factors theory. This theory which according to Chandan (2010) unveils certain factors in that cause job satisfaction leading to job performance, and a separate set of factors that cause dissatisfaction will be the basis of this study. Akrani (2010) states that Herzberg's theory of motivation is also called 'Two Factor Theory', 'Dual Factor Theory' and 'Hygiene/Maintenance Theory of Motivation'. Akrani (2010) points out that according to Herzberg, the Hygiene Factors do little contribution to provide job satisfaction. Herzberg called these factors "dissatisfiers" as their absence cause dissatisfaction but their presence is not motivating but only prevent dissatisfaction. The hygiene factors meet man's needs to avoid unpleasantness but do not motivate them to take more interest

in the work. Hygiene factors when provided create a favourable environment for motivation and prevent job dissatisfaction. They are related to the conditions under which a job is performed. When employer is unable to provide enough of these factors to his employees, there will be job dissatisfaction. However, if they are provided, they will not necessarily act as motivators. They will just lead employees to experience no job dissatisfaction. Such hygiene factors are; company's policies and administration, supervision, working conditions, interpersonal relations with superiors and other subordinates, salary, job security, status, personal life, and employee benefits.

Regarding the motivating factors, these act as forces of job satisfaction. They create positive and a longer lasting effect on employee's performance and are related to work itself. Accordingly, adequate provision of such factors, the 'Satisfiers' makes people happy with their jobs because they serve man's basic needs for psychological growth. In addition, they also motivate employees in their work. These factors are achievement, recognition for accomplishment, increased responsibility, opportunity for growth and development, and creative and challenging work. Motivating factors motivate subordinates to take more interest in the work. They raise efficiency and productivity of employees. According to Herzberg (1959) motivating factors are essential in order to provide job satisfaction and in order to maintain a high level of job performance. Employees will not have job satisfaction if the motivating factors are not provided in sufficient quality by the employer. This theory identified HRD as part of motivating factors that enhanced employee job performance. This theory thus helped in relating HRD to employee performance.

## II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

### *Training and Employee Performance*

Several scholars have analysed the relationship between training and employee performance. Alipour, Salehi and Shahnava (2009) analysed on the job training effectiveness with top managers in Tehran province, Iran as units of analysis. On the job training was operationalised in terms of job instruction technique, job rotation, coaching and apprenticeship training. The study results revealed that on the job training strongly positively affected creativity, achieving

organizational objectives and improves work quality. Bakanye (2013) studied the impact of employee training and employee performance with staff of Mityana District local government, Uganda as a unit of analysis. Employee training was conceptualised as off job and job training. On job training also was studied in terms of job rotation, coaching and mentoring. Off job training was studied in terms of training employees received when off from work to pursue training and included classes, demonstrations, lectures, simulations, and many other resources aiming at developing new skills to make an employee more useful and more flexible. The findings of the study revealed that a significant positive correlation between employees training programmes namely on-job training and off-job training with employee performance. The qualitative results of the study revealed that training increased the employees' capacity to perform hence improved employee performance. Cheng and Ho (2001) carried out a study on the influence of job and career attitudes on learning motivation and transfer using MBA graduates in Hong Kong not more than one year before. Structural equation modelling (SEM) results indicated that learning transfer significantly positively related to career commitment. The study indicated that that adequate training produced marked improvements in employee communication and proficiency of performances as well as extending retention time. They reported that when programs targeted communication skills with co-workers, there were significant increases in profit as well as a greater number of reported positive working relationships that were formed. Employees with good communication skills gathered more information concerning procedures and technologies related to job performances, thus assuming greater accountability and subsequent responsibility, both of which effect improve proficiency. Further the study established that some employees looked for improving their job performance as well as enhancing their future career prospects. Thus when these employees transferred their positive learning content to their job, a win-win solution for the organizations and employees was accomplished. They concluded that when employees are provided better and more intensive training, the result is an increase itself-worth and greater job performance proficiency.

Jagero et al. (2012) investigated the relationship between on the job training and employee's performance of staff in courier companies in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. The descriptive findings showed that different programs of on-the-job training were conducted such as mentoring, coaching and job rotation among others mainly according to the general need of the company or due to the normal changes took place in the company. The study results indicated that there was a big relationship between on-the-job training and employee performance. Truitt (2011) studied the effect of training and development on employee attitude as it relates to training and work proficiency with full-time salaried/exempt and hourly/non-exempt employees from an academic institution and three businesses in the states of Maryland, Delaware, and Arizona in the USA. The gamma calculations found strong significant

associations between those employees who fully agreed that they had updated training and subsequent positive training attitudes, as well a feeling of increased job proficiency. The results also showed that those employees who fully agreed that they received effective coaching and those who fully agreed they received meaningful coaching felt they demonstrated an increase in job proficiency.

The studies above have made attempt to relate training and employee performance. However, contextual gaps arise. For instance all the studies such as the study by Alipour, Salehi and Shahnava (2009), Cheng and Ho (2001), Jagero, Komba and Mlingi (2012) and Truitt (2011) were carried out outside Uganda with only one side by Bakanye (2013) carried out in Uganda. Besides, all the sides except the study by Bakanye (2013) were carried outside the local government contexts. These contextual gaps thus called for this study to be carried out in the Uganda context and on a local government.

### III. METHODOLOGY

The study adopted both quantitative and qualitative research approaches for the study involved both statistical data and oral statements from interviews for in-depth analysis. The quantitative approach was used for descriptive statistics and statistical inferences. The qualitative approach provided data for in-depth analysis (Fassinger & Morrow, 2013). This study adopted a cross-sectional design by which either the entire population or a subset thereof is selected. Cross-sectional information gathered represented what is going on at a particular point in time (Bordens & Abbott, 2011). This design was chosen because it enabled the researcher collect data at the same time hence helping to reduce data collection costs and save time. This design also enabled the researcher to analyse data both quantitatively and qualitatively as it allowed collection of data using a questionnaire survey and an interview guide.

#### *Sample size determination and sampling method*

A study sample of 131 respondents were purposively and systematically selected. This sample was arrived at using Krejcie & Morgan (1970). Using Simple random sampling and purposive sampling methods were used for the study because simple random sampling ensured that each individual is chosen randomly and entirely by chance, thus giving each individual in the population the same probability of being chosen for the study (Onen, 2005) and Purposive sampling was used to select particular people to provide in-depth views since the study was both quantitative and qualitative (Patton, 2003).

#### *Data Analysis*

Data were collected using self-administered structured questionnaire, interview guide and through documentary review. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics in SPSS (21.0) while qualitative data was thematically integrated into quantitative results after content analysis.

#### IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To examine the relationship between relationship between training and employee performance, a number of items investigating training were put to the respondents. The items studied included whether staff had received instructions on the job from their superiors, had the opportunity to act on different assignments, had the opportunity to learn on the job under experts and to go for further studies in institutions of learning. The items also included staff receiving training on how to communicate on the job, mentoring from my senior colleagues, effective coaching sessions, and refresher courses

and had received updated training required their positions. The above items were scaled using the five-point Likert scale where code 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Undecided, 4 = Agree and 5 = Strongly Agree. Basing on the five-point Likert scale that was used, the median score of three was considered undecided ( $1+2+3+4+5=15/5=3$ ) while the mean above the median score indicated that the respondents agreed and the mean below median score indicated that the respondents disagreed. For each of the above items measuring risk assessment, descriptive statistics that include frequencies, percentages and means are presented. The results on the items are given in Table 1

Table 1: Frequencies, Percentages and Means of Employee Training

Employee Training	SD	D	U	A	SA	Mean
I have received instructions on the job from my superiors	11* 8.9**	22 17.7	7 5.6	50 40.3	34 27.4	3.60
I have the opportunity to act on different assignments	17* 13.7**	19 15.3	6 4.8	52 41.9	29 23.4	3.46
I have the opportunity to learn on the job under experts	3* 2.4**	2 1.6	5 4.0	23 18.5	91 73.4	4.59
I have had the opportunity to go for further studies in institutions of learning	6* 4.8**	38 30.6	-	49 39.5	31 25.0	3.49
I have received mentoring from my senior colleagues	4* 3.2**	11 8.9	7 5.6	45 36.3	57 46.0	4.13
My supervisor conducts effective coaching sessions with me	4* 3.2**	20 16.1	12 9.7	44 35.5	44 35.5	3.84
I have been able to attend refresher courses	15* 12.1**	13 10.5	-	63 50.8	33 26.6	3.69
I receive updated training which is required for my position	6* 4.8**	23 18.5	-	65 52.4	30 24.2	3.73

The results in Table 1 regarding whether employees received instructions on the job from their superiors, cumulatively the majority percentage (67.7%) of the respondents agreed with 26.6% disagreeing and 5.6% were undecided. The mean = 3.60 which on the five-point Likert scale (from a minimum of 1 for the worst case scenario strongly disagree to a maximum of 5, which is the best case scenario strongly agree) that was used to measure responses was close to 4 which corresponded to agree. This suggested that employees received instructions on the job from my superiors. In open responses of the questionnaire survey, in their open responses all the respondents who provided responses indicated that they received instructions on the job from my superiors. The respondents indicated that the instructions were very regular in case their superiors wanted them to do something for them or don it on their behalf. Accordingly receiving instructions from superiors on the job was part of the routines of the job.

In relation to staff having the opportunity to act on different assignments, cumulatively the majority percentage (65.3%) of the respondents agreed, 29.0% disagreeing and 4.8% being undecided. The mean = 3.46 was close to median score, three, meaning that the respondents were undecided. The mean close to median that is the average suggested that there were fair opportunities for staff to act on different assignments. In the interviews, it was revealed that in some cases, staff had the

opportunity to act in different assignments. For instance, it was revealed that because of limited manpower in the district, some staff held more than one assignment that is in acting capacity for the additional assignment. It was also revealed that several staff on a number of occasions worked in acting capacity whenever their superiors were away. Accordingly, this was one way of equipping junior staff with top management skills.

As to whether staff had the opportunity to learn on the job under experts, the majority percentage (91.9%) of the respondents agreed with 4.0% disagreeing and 4.0% being undecided. The mean = 4.59 was close to 5 which indicated strongly agreed. This suggested that staff had very high opportunities of learning on the job under experts. In the interviews, it was revealed junior staff learned on the job under their superiors who had expert knowledge of the job. It was also revealed that sometimes the district brought in facilitators to guide staff with expert knowledge. For instance, it was pointed out that facilitators had taught different employees of the district about Community Based Planning (CBP). The people trained under this project facilitated by the Prime Minister's Office were sub-county chiefs, community development officers, agricultural extension officers and local council leaders on matters affecting the communities. Accordingly, this was crucial because the plans made at those

lower levels were included in the budget of district and this brought in the budget the immediate needs of the people suggested by them. This means that that the staff of the district had the opportunity to learn on the job under experts.

With respect to staff having the opportunity to go for further studies in institutions of learning, cumulatively the majority percentage (64.5%) of the respondents agreed with 35.4% disagreeing and 4.8% being undecided. The mean = 3.49 was close to median score, three, meaning that the respondents were undecided. The mean close to median that is the average suggested that there were fair opportunities for to go for further studies in institutions. During the interviews, it was revealed that staff went for further studies for different courses. For instance, staff attended short courses sponsored the district while others sponsored themselves but the district permitted the paid study leaves. The respondents revealed those going for further studies were allowed 2½ years of study leave under a bond that they had to come back and serve the district at least for more than two years. However, in the open responses of the questionnaire, those indicating that there were no opportunities complained that there was lack of sponsorship yet the courses and institutions of higher learning were expensive. It was revealed that the available opportunities were few to cover the larger number of staff. Apparently, the little money coming from the central government for training at times got diverted to other activities because they were more urgent than training staff according to the priorities of the district.

With respect to staff receiving mentoring from senior colleagues, cumulatively the majority percentage (82.3%) of the respondents agreed with 12.1% disagreeing and 5.6% being undecided. The mean = 4.13 was close to four meaning that the respondents agreed. This implied that the respondents agreed that they received mentoring from senior colleagues. In the interviews, it was found out that mentoring took place in different ways. For instance, there were always meetings by heads of departments to guide subordinates that were monthly and staff supervision by senior colleagues. The respondents revealed that planning was done together by both senior and junior staff and staff also learnt from being coached by senior staff. One respondent said, “Mentoring from senior colleagues helps staff providing specific services to obtain the right skills and knowledge improving their performance”. The views presented here show that mentoring of junior staff by senior staff enabled them to obtain the rights skills and knowledge improving their performance. Thus mentoring existed in the district.

As to whether supervisors conducted effective coaching sessions with staff, cumulatively the majority percentage (71.0%) of the respondents agreed with 19.4% agreeing and 9.7% being undecided. The mean = 3.84 was close to four meaning that the respondents agreed. This suggested that the respondents agreed that supervisors conducted effective coaching sessions with staff. Further, regarding whether staff had been able to attend refresher courses, the majority

percentage (77.4%) of the respondents agreed with 22.6% disagreeing. The mean = 3.69 was close to four meaning that the respondents agreed. This implied that the respondents agreed that staff had been able to attend refresher courses.

With respect to whether staff had been able to receive updated training which was required for their positions, the majority percentage (76.6%) of the respondents agreed with 23.3% disagreeing. The mean = 3.73 was close to four meaning that the respondents agreed. This implied that the respondents agreed that they received updated training which was required for their positions. During the interviews, the respondents revealed various training programmes they were involved in. These included regular workshops of the Ministry of Local governments, various NGOs such as STRIDES, AMREF, CHARITAS, Save the Children, AMREF and development partners like UNICEF and USAID. It was indicated that staff had acquired training skills in various areas such as computer soft-wares and use of Local Government Budgeting Tool (LGBT) software. Accordingly, these increased speed at which budgeting is carried out and follow up from the development partners and government to ensure that the obtained knowledge was being applied made staff perform.

To find out the overall picture of how the respondents rated how training for the district staff was carried out, an average index of employee training was computed for the eight items measuring employee training. The summary of the statistics on the same were the mean = 3.81 and a standard deviation = 0.675. The results show that the overall mean was good that is close four indicating that the respondents were agreed that there was employee training. This meant that the respondents rated employee training to be good. The low standard deviation suggested low dispersion in the responses which suggested normal distribution of the results. Figure 1 presents a histogram indicating normal distribution of the average index for training.

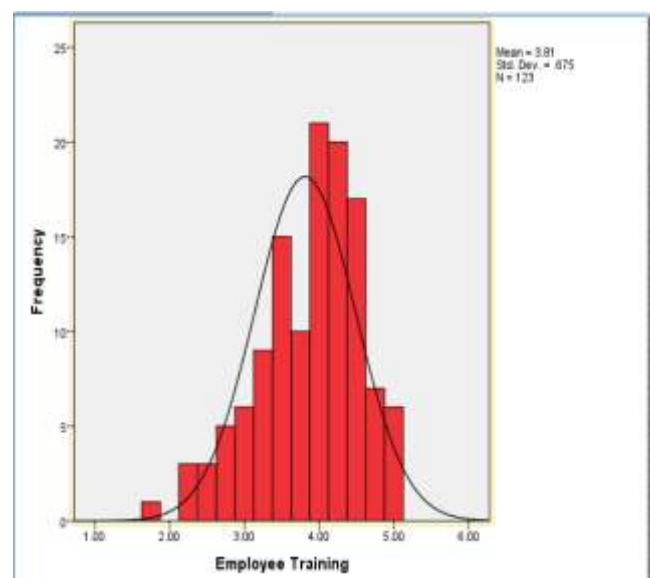


Figure 1: Histogram Indicating Distribution of Employee Training



## V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Conclusion

It was concluded that, receiving instructions on the job from their superiors, learning on the job under experts, further studies, mentoring, effective coaching sessions from superiors, refresher courses and receiving updated training significantly influenced employee performance.

### Recommendation

It was recommended that, government agencies including local governments other organisations should prioritise giving of instructions on the job by superiors, having experts to train staff on the job and provide mentoring, effective coaching sessions, refresher courses and updated training for staff.

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