

# Relationship between Seminars and Employee Performance in Level Four Hospitals in South-Rift Region, Kenya

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## ABSTRACT

Health sector is an area of priority for efficient delivery of services. Health policies have been developed and adopted to enhance accessible and quality health care. Poor service delivery has been attributed to employee performance. Unmatched skills set to job requirements are assumed to have a significant impact on the performance of employees. The effectiveness of employee training and development programs such as seminars can bridge the gap between job requirements an employee's ability to perform. However, it is not yet clear to what extent seminar activities influence employee performance. Therefore, the study sought to assess the relationship between seminars and employee performance in Level Four Hospitals operating within the South-Rift Region in Kenya. Specifically, it established the relationship between structured seminars, work environment-based seminars and performance feedback-based seminars and employee performance in Level Four Hospitals in South-Rift Region in Kenya. Human capital theory, knowledge-based theory of the firm and social learning theory was used. Correlational and survey research designs were employed with a target population of 663 and a sample of 249. Stratified simple random sampling was used to pick the respondents. Data was collected using structured questionnaire and reliability Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.7625 obtained. Descriptive statistics mean and standard deviation were used in data analysis while the study hypothesis was tested using correlation coefficient. The findings were presented in tables. The findings indicated that seminars had a positive and significant relationship with employee performance at Level Four Hospital in the South-Rift region where ( $R = 0.570$ ,  $\beta_1 = 0.483$ ,  $R^2 = 0.325$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) was established. The study recommended that Level Four Hospitals in the South-Rift region adopt seminar activities that will help improve the efficiency of the training techniques. The findings may be useful to hospital management, human resource departments, scholars, and researchers in human resources management.

**Key words;** Employee performance, performance feedback, work environment-based seminars, structured seminars

## INTRODUCTION

A seminar is a commercial program where attendees are given training or information about a particular topic. The most common seminar types in business focus on business strategies and individual development (Alasadi & Sabbagh, 2015). Seminars are one of the most effective ways for employee training on new business aspects. Whether new employees' education or bringing together modern material for already established employees, seminars offer interactive ways and fun for learning topics by employees. A seminar group enables comprehensive learning from individuals who attend the seminar since each person will participate and present their ideas and opinions regarding a specific topic being taught. This is substantial where individuals learn ways of retaining information in such an environment (Oberst, Gallifa, Farriols, & Vilaregut, 2009).

Seminar attendance enhances staff professionalism by providing valuable opportunities to be up-to-date on current trends and techniques necessary to perform daily job responsibilities, enhance knowledge about industry ideals, learn modern tips and methods, and create a conducive work environment. Conference attendance enables the medical personnel to learn professionalism matters and brainstorm with workmates on the most recent trends (Doyle, 2015). Dahiya and Dahiya (2015) stressed the paybacks of seminar participation to high networking value, building team strength, enhancing future and current challenges in the field. Seminar

attendance can improve the job performance of medical personnel, particularly those in level four hospitals.

Performance is considered the outcome or results of a given activity performed by an individual. This can be determined by the use of financial and non-financial indicators. Financial indicators that can measure performance include; return on asset (ROA), return on equity (ROE), and profitability. The non-financial indicator includes; quality service delivery, employee motivation, customer satisfaction, and job satisfaction (Karatepe, 2013).

Employee performance is an individual output in relation to duties and responsibilities accorded to them over a given period. It can be determined by increasing productivity, ability to adapt to changes such as new technology in the organization, and advancement in interpersonal skills. Athar and Shah (2015) consider employee performance as the ability of a worker to perform all the duties assigned to him according to the job description effectively and efficiently. Organizations evaluate employee performance periodically through performance appraisal to establish shortcomings and improvements for further human resource initiatives such as training development programs.

It is an aspiration of every management that employees improve their performance over time to enhance the organization's performance. This, in return, could improve the organization's performance in terms of profitability, quality output, increase in market share, and quantity output. High performance can indicate cooperation, ability to work well in workgroups, meet set targets in time, and work under low supervision (Omolo, 2015). Employee performance is all about providing solutions to the organizations' issues. It is an individual's capacity and ability to accomplish assigned duties and responsibilities efficiently and effectively using available resources.

Research by Ahmadi (2019) indicated that performance is just a fulfillment of a particular job or responsibility which is determined by measuring it against some pre-determined measurements such as completeness, accuracy, and cost incurred while performing the assignment. From the perspective of employee service delivery performance, employees can be measured in the form of quality of output, consistency of output, timeliness of output, and effectiveness of the finished work (Mathis & Jackson 2011).

A study by Obisi (2011) on employee training and development focusing on the observation and setting an agenda for research establishes that employee performance is motivated by elements such as salaries, profits, motivation, training, and development employed by the employer and working conditions. When measuring performance, several measures are taken into consideration, including using productivity, efficiency, effectiveness, quality, and profitability.

Ahuja (2012) and Osunde (2015) assert that different studies indicate that employee performance can be determined by numerous ways like productivity, employee satisfaction, and absenteeism. Like in any other organization, the employee's performance in the health sector is equally important. The performance of Employees is a critical ingredient that drives an organizations' success. In the health sector, if the labor force could be executed well, there could be the customers' satisfaction, and the more satisfied they are could lead to the general improvement of hospitals making.

Organizational development and growth are influenced by numerous factors, including training and development, which plays a considerable role. Professional development and training play an important role in enhancing employee service delivery and, ultimately, the organization's overall performance. Existing empirical literature offers evidence of the influence of training and development techniques on employee performance. Some studies have examined organizational performance resulting from employee performance (Alasadi & Al Sabbagh, 2015), while some have looked at it broadly as organizational performance (Adongo, 2013). The former is at the individual employee level, while the latter is at the organizational level. However, the focus of the present study is on employee performance.

Makhamara, Waiganjo and Kwasira, (2016) suggest that the competencies of workers change through development techniques and effective training. These techniques improve the general performance of workers in executing their duties and promote their skills, knowledge, and attitude towards meeting the future demands

in the job, thus promoting the sustainable performance of the firm. If the training techniques are implemented performance of the organization appropriately will also improve (Garner, 2012). However, Hage (2017) argued that training might not be the only technique that can be used to improve employee performance, but it has a significant influence as compared to other techniques. Therefore, it is recommended that the organization constantly adopt new methods and techniques to improve the performance of the employees.

According to Al-Ahmadi (2009), training and development can positively impact medical personnel job performances. However, the author argues that for training and development to impact medical personnel's job performance positively, it ought to address the personnel needs and the changing circumstances in the medical profession. Training and development may positively impact medical personnel's job performances, but it has a profound positive influence only in conjunction with other factors.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Provision of universal health care is among the government's main agenda and a key pillar for achievement of Vision 2030. It is government's priority area in ensuring that it is efficient in delivering services. Health sector policy was developed in 2012 detailing the guidelines on achieving accessible and quality health care for the citizens. This was aligned to the constitutional requirements and global health commitments in the form of sustainable development goals. Since the adoption of the policy document, there has been very little change in the health sector in terms of service delivery, with WHO indicating that employee performance in the health sector was below 50%. This is largely attributed to the shrinking workforce in the sector coupled with poor job satisfaction and low employee motivation, among others which directly affect service delivery. Some of these issues have been linked with a lack of proper training and development techniques aimed at imparting the medical personnel with relevant skills to enable them to perform their duties well. Several studies have examined the relationship between training techniques and employees' performance. However, the findings were found to be inconsistent and have not exhaustively evaluated all the training techniques. Therefore, this study examined the relationship between seminars and employee performance of level four hospitals in the South Rift-Region.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The study was supported by human capital theory; Knowledge-based theory of the firm, and social learning theory. The human capital theory was developed by Becker (1993) emphasizes that training and development are necessary and a worthwhile investment. The theory addresses how training influences employee efficiency and productivity by constantly developing and improving the cognitive abilities that can make them work better (Schwab, 2018). Thus, the importance of this theory to the research involves the recognition of employees as important assets to the organization who should be given the right set of skills through various techniques for them to perform efficiently and effectively for optimum organizational output. Therefore, the study's dependent variable (employee performance) was supported by this theory.

Knowledge-based theory of the firm as advanced by Winters (1987) explored on explicit knowledge claiming that it replicates fasters, is less costly, and most importantly easiest in comparison to tacit knowledge. He also added that the transfers of this knowledge could only be successfully achieved through an interaction involving face-to-face relations such as apprentices. This theory explores the firm's existence, arguing that it is because of its unique abilities such as effective management of knowledge at its tacit form and in an effective, efficient and cheapest manner than other governance methodologies.

The theory further talks about the efficient exploitation of knowledge in an organization and the creation of modern knowledge through training operations. Organizations are potentially powerful in transmitting tacit knowledge to different epistemic societies, which are occupational or functional clusters whose group members have similar experiences regarding professionalism and training. Inadequate expertise has the disadvantage of making the distribution of knowledge among people difficult. An organization's Knowledge-based theory has a substantial consideration that is strategic for knowledge is potentially a substantial resource. Its advocates claim that since knowledge-based resources are hard to emulate and intricate socially, diverse knowledge bases and potential abilities of different organizations are the main elements of continual

superior corporate governance and competitive advantage (Nonaka and Toyama 2015).

Knowledge in organizations is implanted and passed through multiple entities such identity of a firm and its culture, policies, documents, routines, employees, and systems, despite the fact that the recognition of these concepts by a firm because of its substantial role in building knowledge in a competitive organization compared to that which does not treat this concept of knowledge as an essential element in its development. In addition, this theory claims that coordination is a mechanism which organizations develop expertise knowledge regarding its labor force to promote the firm's performance. The study on the relationship between seminars and employee performance of level Four Hospitals in South Rift Region was therefore supported by this theory.

Social Learning theory was developed by Bandura (1977). It encourages the development of a good learning environment for employees to build their skills and knowledge. It emphasizes that individuals learn through imitation, observation, and modeling from people they perceive to be knowledgeable or influence others. The theory is based on the assumption that learning can occur by observing other people's actions, emotional reactions, and attitudes. Observation enables persons to gain knowledge from the behaviour of others where they acquire new ideas about what could happen if they act differently or in similarity to them. (Adenyo, 2016).

The self-efficacy of a person also influenced this theory. This term refers to the ability of a person to identify new knowledge, skills, or information about a specific job. It is significant to identify the self-efficacy of persons, especially when it comes to the training process throughout the assessment stage. Any trainee who has high self-efficacy is required to add more effort towards learning during training. On the other hand, in distinction, persons in training who have low effectiveness are known to have discomforts related to mastering the general content of the program. Therefore, they are expected to gain more physically and psychologically from the training program. This theory therefore contribute to the study of the relationship between seminars and employee performance of level Four Hospitals in South Rift Region.

### **Seminars and Employee Performance**

The empirical literature on seminars has established a statistical relationship between seminars' effectiveness and enhanced workers' motivation and performance. Dahiya and Dahiya (2015) studied the effectiveness of classroom seminars and journal clubs (CRSJC) as a learning tool for postgraduate pharmacy students. The study was controlled and quasi-experimental in nature. Data for the study was obtained by use of structured questionnaires. The feedback from participants was highly responsive and positive, and students showed extraordinary performance in their seminars and discussions. The study, therefore, concluded that there is a statistical relationship between seminars and performance.

Halawi and Haydar (2018) carried out a study on the influence of seminars as a training technique on the performance of employees between two Lebanese companies- Alami Company and Bonjus Company. The study used questionnaires to collect information from a sample size of 303 respondents. The study's findings established that the two companies in Lebanon have different training programs for their employees. The study discovered that these companies preferred seminars over other training techniques. It was established that training programs integrate long-term ability development of employees as well as the development of the short term.

Doane and Boyd (2016) explored the effectiveness of a symposium-based self-directed learning approach to teaching medical Cell Biology to medical students. The study targeted a class of 65 students who were put in different groups for participation. The findings established that the actual value of the Cell Biology Symposium contributes more to enhancing students' communication skills, leadership, problem-solving and interpersonal skills that will enable them to work well as a team. The skills are essential in improving the students' performance and future success of the medical student. Both face-to-face and virtual modes of seminars can be successful, yielding positive effects in enriching knowledge and skills if implemented well.

A study by Al'Adawi (2017) on evaluating the effectiveness of implementing seminars as a teaching and

assessment method by students established a significant relationship between seminars and teaching effectiveness. However, this study indicated that the relationship could only be significant if the learners and the teachers are well prepared and limitations toward implementation such as social environment are taken care of. Further, the findings revealed that seminars could reach a large audience compared to other on-the-job training techniques such as coaching and mentorship.

Engetou (2017) carried a study on the effect of employee training on organizational development. The study sought to determine whether the National Financial Credit had development and training programs held for every worker. It also sought to identify the impact of these programs on employee work performance. The study involved 30 respondents who were administered questionnaires. The research data was also collected using direct observations and interviews. It was found that these programs are fundamental to every company, especially for those employees who lack enough skills and those with less experience. The study also found that training seminars are very important towards improved employee performance. It was concluded that these programs have a positive and potential influence on the performance of employees, job efficiency and skills improvement by employees.

Samwel (2018) conducted a study on the influence of employee training on the performance of an organization. This study was conducted in drilling companies in Tanzania's Shinyanga, Mara, and Geita areas. The study employed 219 respondents using a simple random and purposive sampling method. Data was collected using administered questionnaires. The data collected from the study were then analyzed using descriptive statistics, and all the findings were presented in tables. The results of this study discovered that these companies had inadequate training programs and also it lacked effective development policies. The study recommended that these drilling companies adopt effective training seminars for their employees. There was also a great need for these companies to adopt effective policies for development and guiding the training procedures to help improve employee performance.

From the Kenyan perspective, a study was conducted by Onyango and Wanyoike (2014) to find out how training influenced employee performance by surveying health workers in Siaya county. This study targeted all the medical officers, clinical officers, nurses and other workers offering services in the hospital across the county. Primary data for this study was collected using questionnaires from a sample size of 20% of the target population arrived at through stratified sampling technique. The results after regression analysis indicated that seminars were the most preferred training technique used in health care, and it positively influenced the respondents' performance to a large extent.

### Conceptual Framework

The interplay between seminar and employee performance is shown in Fig 1

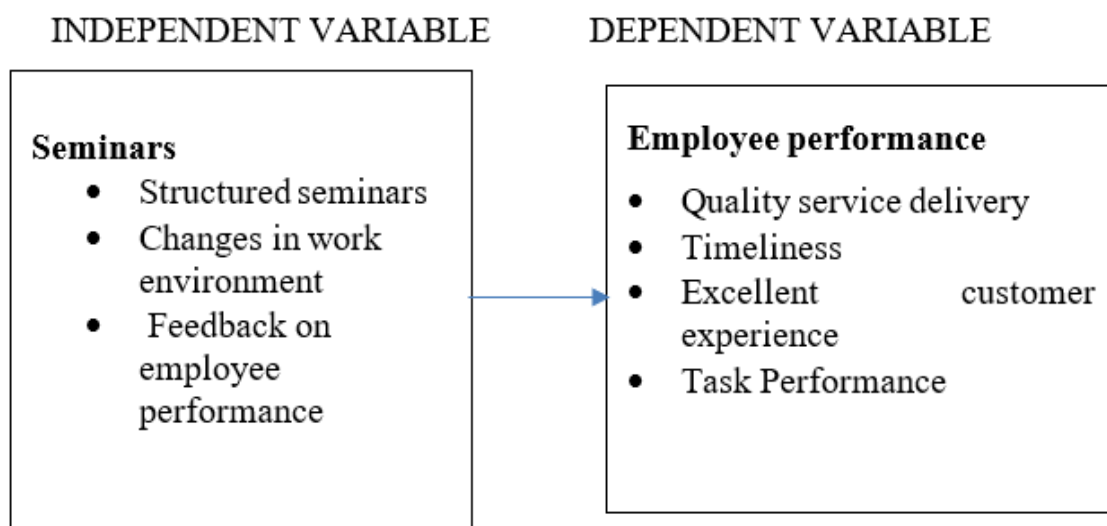


Fig 1: Conceptual Framework

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Correlational and survey study research designs adopted was appropriate for the study in examining the relationship between variables under study.

Table 1 Sample size

County	Hospitals	Population N	Sample n
<b>Kericho</b>	Kericho District Hospital	92	34
	Sigowet Hospital	26	10
	Kapkatet Hospital	49	18
	London Hospital	34	13
<b>Bomet</b>	Longisa District Hospital	89	33
	Cheptalal Hospital	45	17
	Koiwa District Hospital	34	13
	Kapkoros District Hospital	49	18
	Sigor District Hospital	60	23
<b>Narok</b>	Kilgoris District Hospital	60	23
	Narok District Hospital	75	28
	Ololulung'a District Hospital	50	19
	<b>Total</b>	<b>663</b>	<b>249</b>

The target population comprised of 663 health workers. A sample size of 249 was selected with Proportionate stratified sampling technique being employed to determine the sub-samples in each county. Simple random sampling was then applied to select the respondents. This is shown in Table 1.

Primary data on seminars and employee performance was obtained using a structured five-point Likert scale questionnaire. Mean and standard deviation were used to summarize data while regression and correlation analysis employed to test the relationship between seminars and employee performance. Lastly before data was collected the respondents were informed about the procedures to be used in conducting the research and were requested for their consent. Respondents' opinions and ideas were respected and treated with utmost confidentiality. Generally, a highest degree of sincerity and openness regarding the aim and nature of the study was observed. The study was carried out in the South Rift region in Kenya in three counties; Kericho, Narok and Bomet. The area was selected for the study because of the large numbers (13) of level four hospitals where performance of majority of them is below average.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Seminars and Employee Performance of Level Four Hospitals

The study sought to assess the extent to which seminars influenced employee performance in level four hospitals within the South Rift region in Kenya.

Table 2 Frequency Table for Mean and Standard Deviation for Seminars Technique

Statement on Seminars and Employee Performance	N	SA 5	A 4	N 3	D 2	SD 1	Mean	SD
Structured seminars for the medical personnel is the most preferred training technique in the hospital	228	87(38.2)	80(35.1)	46(20.2)	-	15(6.6)	3.9825	1.0864
The need for seminars is determined by changes in the work environment in the organization.	228	49(21.5)	80(35.1)	89(39)	-	10(4.4)	3.692982	0.9538
The hospital encourages frequent feedback on employee performance to efficiently plan for seminars	228	94(41.2)	96(42.1)	38(16.7)	-	-	4.245614	0.7217
Seminars enhance employees' service delivery at the hospital	228	124(54.4)	67(29.4)	37(16.2)	-	-	4.381579	0.7503
Well-conducted seminars enhance employees' task performance at the hospital.	228	105(46.1)	81(35.5)	37(16.2)	5(2.2)	-	4.254386	0.8053

Source: Research Data (2021)

The findings from Table 4.1 indicate that majority of the respondents agreed (Mean=3.9825; standard deviation=1.0864) that structured seminars for the medical personnel are the most preferred training technique in the hospital. On whether the need for seminars was determined by changes in the work environment in the organization, the majority of the respondents were neutral (mean=3.69298; standard deviation=0.9538). The majority of the respondents agreed (mean=4.245614; standard deviation=0.7217) that the hospital encourages frequent feedback on employee performance to efficiently plan for seminars. In addition, the majority of the respondents strongly agreed (mean=4.381579; standard deviation=0.7503) that seminars enhance employees' service delivery at the hospitals and finally, the respondents also agreed (mean=4.254386; standard deviation=0.8053) that well-conducted seminars enhance employees' task performance at the hospital.

The objective was to assess the relationship between seminars and employee performance in level four hospitals within South-Rift Region.

Hypothesis **H0<sub>1</sub>** stated; There is no significant relationship between seminars and employee performance in level four hospitals within the South-Rift region.

**Model** was presented as; -

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

**Where Y** = Performance of Employee

**β<sub>0</sub>** = Constant

$\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3$  = Beta coefficient

$X_1$  = Seminar plans;  $X_2$  = Working Environment and  $X_3$  = Feedback on employee performance

$\epsilon$  = Error Term

Table 3: Model Summary for Regression Analysis for Seminars and Performance

Variable	No. of Observations	Beta	Standard Error	t-Statistic	p-value
Constant	227	5.097	0.108	47.740	
Seminars	227	0.483	0.026	18.577	.000 <sup>b</sup>
R =0.570					
R <sup>2</sup> =0.325					
F = 12.657					
Durbin Watson =2.407					

\* $p < 0.05$

Source: Research Data, (2021)

The results in Table 3 indicates the analysis by regression model on the relationship between seminars and performance of employees in level Four Hospitals operating within the South-Rift region in Kenya; the value for Durbin-Watson (D=2.407) is within the established range of 1-3, indicating the absence of autocorrelation in the sample taken.

The relationship between seminars and employee performance was established to be positive and significant (R = 0.570,  $p < 0.05$ ) denoting a significant relationship between seminars and employee performance, whenever Level Four Hospitals in the South-Rift region in Kenya carried out seminars, there was a significant improvement in employee performance.

The results of the regression further showed that seminars significantly predicted performance ( $\beta_1 = 0.483$ ,  $t = 18.577$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ), which means a unit increase in seminars produced a 0.483 variation in employee performance. The R squared value showed that seminars accounted for 32.5% of variation in employee performance ( $R^2 = 0.325$ ,  $F = 12.657$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ). This validates another disparity in that (67.5%) of employee performance is explained by other factors not captured in the model. Therefore, the hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between seminars and employee performance of Level Four Hospital in the South-Rift region in Kenya is supported.

The findings were supported by those of Halawi and Haydar (2018), who established a positive relationship between seminars and the performance of two Lebanese companies. Doane and Boyd (2016) also found that both face-to-face and virtual modes of seminars can be successful, yielding positive effects in enriching knowledge and skills if implemented well. Al'Adawi (2017) and Engetou (2017) also supported the findings of this study, while Samwel (2018) indicated that there was no direct relationship between seminars and employee performance, arguing that most firms have not adopted feedback, structured seminar plans and conducive working environment techniques.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From the findings on seminars and performance, the study concluded that well-conducted seminars enhance employees' ability to perform their duties. The study also concluded that the need for seminars at the hospitals



was determined by the changes in the work environment and from constant feedback from performance appraisal exercises carried out by the hospitals on a regular basis. The study recommended that Level Four Hospitals in the South-Rift region adopt seminar activities that will help improve the efficiency of the training techniques.

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