

TRAINING AS AN ENABLER OF SERVICE DELIVERY AT THE NAIROBI CITY COUNTY

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ABSTRACT

The Kenyan public sector has reported dismal and deteriorating services that at times are ineffective, inefficient and unresponsive to the needs of the general public. The poor service delivery informed part of the decision to form county governments, but complaints are still there on delayed and poor service quality. To enhance the service delivery quality, effectiveness and efficiency, focus has to shift to human capital management especially on training of employees. The paper was anchored on SERVQUAL model and supported by human capital theory. There was use of descriptive research design approach in targeted the human resource department staffs and members of the public service board and 30% formed the final sample size. Piloting confirmed the fitness, idealness of the questionnaire through validity and reliability testing. The respondents filled the questionnaires, later the data was entered into Ms. Excel and SPSS for descriptive, correlation and regression analysis. The study established that trainings positively and significantly affect service delivery at Nairobi City County. Drawn conclusions shared that training as a component of human resource management practices resulted in improved service delivery quality, timeliness and responsiveness at the Nairobi City County. The study recommends that county government and the public sector employees should be trained on the values and ethics of public service. This training should help employees to understand their role as public servants and to make ethical decisions in their work.

Key words: Training, Service delivery, Nairobi City County

INTRODUCTION

The service delivery aspect is mostly done by human touch, showing the value of employees in an organization and the need for proper management (Armstrong & Taylor, 2023). Management of human resources covers aspects such as the systems, policies, structures and practices that affect employees' conduct, attitude, perceptions and impact on service delivery (Njoroge, Muathe and Bula, 2015). Anwar and Abdullah (2021) confirm that managing human resource is reflective in quality-of-service delivery to the customers. In addition, Nderitu, Gakobo and Ochieng (2019) noted that successful organizations align employee needs to goals of the firm. Thus, it is important to consider practices that empower and enhance competencies of employees for improved quality of services delivery. Armstrong and Taylor (2023) observed that some of the human resource management practices entail equipping and building competencies of staff through training programs and career management. Onuko and Onyango (2020) observed that firms and enterprises that implemented HRM practices gain returns in terms of improvement in quality of its services and products. The firm also gain retained its customer and market bases and satisfied the consumers of the products and services.

Kinyanjui and Wambua 2020) observed that service delivery was influenced by performance management practices inclusive of trainings designed for employees. But service delivery in public institutions and government ministries and departments is reported as poor, ineffective and unsatisfactory. The public complain of long queues, lack of competent public officials, poor treatment and poor-quality services. Kiambati (2020) shared that several measures and initiatives have been undertaken to improve quality of service delivery, including training of the employees. Training as a measure has been seen to contribute to three C's namely commitment, competencies and culture leading to cost-effective operations; enhance effectiveness and appropriateness in the functioning of the organization (Jashari & Kutllovci, 2020). The institutions are also able to attain positive reputation.

Training works to enhance competencies and capabilities that can improve organizational performance (Omeke & Njoroge, 2020) . Dos Santos, (2019) noted that organizations that invest in training and development programs; reap gains in terms of improved output, efficient and effective functioning and quality products and service delivery. Training and development include induction training at the point of entry into the organization for new workers; on-the-job training where workers gain hands-on experience through coaching, mentorship, internship, apprenticeship, job enlargement, expansion, rotation; and off-the-job training where information is disseminated in a controlled classroom setting like seminars, workshops and lectures. Trainings improve skills, experiences, know-how and abilities of employees that reflect on their execution of work tasks that result in improved productivity and performance (Karam, 2019).

Thus, Opoku and Nyarku (2022) alleged that attaining good service delivery relies on organizational employees. Some of employee characteristics that impact on quality of the service delivery include know-how, skilled staffs, high commitment levels, experience and competent. These characteristics can be enhanced by implementing HRM practices like training, performance reviews and appraisal and career management. Thus, Opoku and Barfi (2022) shared that effective human resource management practices improve service delivery, in terms of efficiency, effectiveness and quality. Service delivery also covers elements of satisfaction rates for employees, customers and the public, quality of services and efficiency and effectiveness of services and responsiveness (Nderitu, *et al.*, 2019). For this survey, service delivery was measured in terms of quality services delivered to the public, satisfaction rates of employees and the general public, responsiveness of the services to the needs of the public and efficient and effective services offered to the public by the county.

The public sector plays a central function in socio-economic advancement of any nation. But the poor and declining quality of service delivery, as shared by Jashari and Kutllovci (2020) negatively contribute to development. The reforms in terms of regulatory and statutory, push for international partnerships, use of advanced technologies and globalization of operations, has not yielded the expected returns. Furthermore, the increasingly changes in the environment and demand for adjustments in the mandate, structure and operations

of the public sector, is needed to enhance service delivery. Public service delivery in Kenya is reported as dismal with complaints of unresponsiveness, ineffective and inefficient service. In past service delivery points were far, and this is one of the reasons for devolvement of government to formation of county governments (Atalya & Genga, 2019). But even with devolution, there are still complaints on quality, timeliness, ineffective and unresponsive services to the needs of the general but. This forms the basis for conducting the research to assess if service delivery was improved through adoption and implementation of HRM practices.

The identified challenges in service delivery in terms of delays, poor quality, ineffective and unresponsive to general public needs, and the research gaps; create a need for further research in the subject area. To fill the gaps and expand literature, this investigation sought to establish how training of county employees affects service delivery at the Nairobi City County.

Study Objective

To examine the effect of training on service delivery at Nairobi City County

Literature Review

Empirical Literature Review

Training and Service Delivery

Tanui and Kwasira (2019) conducted a study on staff training and its influence of service delivery at the Moi Teaching and Referral Hospital (MTRH). It was noted that service delivery is essential for wellbeing, development and satisfaction of the citizens. To attain high service delivery, the study proposes staff training as a prerequisite element. The study collected data from employees at the hospital using structured questionnaires. Descriptively and inferentially was the data analysis and findings revealed that staff training positively and significantly influenced service delivery. There was improvement in service quality at the MTRH for service efficiency and effectiveness given to the public. It was drawn that staff training led to better service quality at the hospital and the same can be achieved in other organizations.

Amegayibor (2021) focus was placed on investigating the impact of training and development methods on performance within local government organizations located in the central region of Ghana. The researcher used a quantitative approach and collected data from 215 local government employees using a structured questionnaire. Correlation and regression were applied to test the study theses on job rotation, job orientation, classroom lectures and workshop and conferences. The findings indicate that all the four types of training formats improved performance across the local government. Furthermore, the outcome noted that job orientation, workshops and conferences, and classroom lectures have a significant positive impact on the quality of services delivered. However, no significant relationship was recorded concerning job rotation and quality service delivery. The conclusions aligned with the findings and recommendations were that the local governments should train its employees when there are changes in political power to improve policy adherence and performance outcomes.

Twesige (2020) conducted a study on how training and development affected performance of Rwandan public institutions. Decentralized entities were adopted by the research exercise adopting the descriptive approach. There was purposive selection of 250 employees working at the district headquarters. The study was collecting primary data using questionnaires from the employees who had undergone training and development programs at the district level. Regression and correlation were applied on the data. Employee training and development improved performance of decentralized entities in Rwanda. The training and development improved employee attitudes, perceptions and conduct and through increased knowledge and skills; the employees increased performance of the decentralized entities. Conclusions were that training and developing employees improve firm performance. It was recommended that organizations use employee training and development policies to guide the needs assessment, regular assessment of employees' weaknesses, preparing training materials and conducting the training processes which contribute to high

employee and organizational performance. Training and development improve efficiency and effectiveness of the organization.

Mutegi, Nzioki, and King'oriah (2021) focused on exploring the relationship between employee training and public service delivery specifically within Huduma centers in Kenya. The Huduma centers are a government initiative to centralize service delivery and focus was if the centers can eliminate corruption, red-tapes and inefficient service delivery. The study targeted the branch managers of the centers, the supervisors and the public who are seeking government services. Questionnaires helped in collecting raw data and secondary data by reviewing past government statistics and literature. The findings unveiled significantly positive nexus linking employee training and service delivery as mediated by government policies. To improve public service delivery, the study recommended employee training and the training programs do not duplicate and overlap roles. The training program identify needs, select ideal method, dispense information, monitor and evaluate outcomes and impact on career growth and quality of public service delivery.

Theoretical Literature Review

Human Capital Theory

This theory was developed by Schultz (1961) and later it was advanced by Becker (1964). The theory's main concept is that training as an investment of the organization is a worthy cause as it leads to improved organizational performance. The theory views employees as a valuable asset and to improve their productivity and performance, then the organization and its management should invest in training programs. According to Tan (2014) human capital focuses on the employees, their skills, expertise, intelligence and knowledge that is unique and can be used to enhance organizational performance. This is an intangible asset that can be used to enhance organizational productivity. The human capital is advantageous to the organization despite the lack of formal ownership structure, it creates value for the organization from knowledge, skills and experiences gained in the training and development programs.

The theory explains how service delivery can be improved in organizations since the training given to employees enhance their competencies and act as a motivating factor. The training equipped newly recruited employees with knowledge and skills on how to handle their tasks and outcome is viewed in terms of high quality of services, effective, efficient and satisfactory services offered to the people (Tan, 2014). Thus, to improve the contribution of human capital to the organization, Marginson (2019) shares that there is need to invest in educational, training courses and programs and job training. The theory is relatable to this study, by discussing the value that the Nairobi City County Government leadership stands to gain by investing in training programs for its employees. The county should conduct induction trainings for newly recruited staffs, on-the-job and off-the-job training for improvement of skills and experiences that contribute to better quality services offered the residents of Nairobi City County.

SERVQUAL Model

The Service Quality Model or SERVQUAL model was developed by marketing experts in America, namely Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1985). The focus was on evaluating the perception of consumers on level of service quality that they received from retail enterprises and other organizations. The model shows the association between expectations and perception of service quality. As such, the services delivered to the customers should align to their needs and expectations and their perceptions of what is considered good quality services. The use of perception of the services and not actual received service measures attitudes related to the service and not satisfaction. The model seeks to capture link of consumer expectation and perceptions of the services delivered (Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Berry, 1988).

The Servqual model has five constructs namely reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy and tangibility of the services (Parasuraman, Berry & Zeithaml, 1991). Reliability of the service is a measure of dependability of provided services, such that the consumers can rely on the organization to deliver without

fail. Responsiveness is the capacity to promptly attend to the needs of the consumers. The Nairobi City County can respond to needs of the residents by employing experienced and competent staff and offer them training programs. Knowledgeable county staff can promptly respond to needs of the public and offer reliable services. On assurance, the county staff should be competent and experienced to stimulate trust and confidence in the services offered. This can only be attained by the county service board recruiting experienced and skilled staffs, training and remunerating them well. Empathy entails offering individualized services that conform to the specifications and tangibility takes into account the physical facilities, appearance and machines and equipment needed to offer quality services.

METHODOLOGY

This study used descriptive research, which Bloomfield and Fisher (2019) stated was design for real life situations, observations and description of subject matter in guiding all research activities. The population included all employees of Nairobi City County, but the researcher targeted only 268 employees in human resources (HR) department and members of the public service board (PSB) and from which 30% of 80 of them comprised on the final sample size list. These respondents filled the closed-ended questionnaires and facilitated the acquisition of information from the source.

A pilot study was undertaken to assess the reliability and suitability of the questionnaire. this was done using 8 county employees and content validity testing confirmed the instrument was good. The internal consistency technique and obtained aggregate Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient index of 0.774 implying the questionnaire is fit and ideal for use in collecting valuable data that can answer the research questions in the final research. The researcher gave the respondents' the questionnaire and waited while it was being filled. Thereafter, the data was entered into SPSS where descriptive, correlation and regression analysis were conducted to assess the strength and direction of the relationship between the two variables.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The response rate was 90%, with female respondents accounting for 54% compared to male respondents at 46%. The distribution of respondents as per role was such that 5.6% were HR directors, 16.7% are HR managers, most of them at 69.4% were HR officers and 8.3% work as public service board members. Most of them at 43% had held the same position for 3-6 years and only 11% had been in the same position for longer than 10 years. The results also showed that 15.3% who had worked for the county for 0-3 years, 27.8% had worked in the county for 3 -6 years, most of the respondents at 37.5% had worked for the county for 7-10 years and 19.4% of the respondents had worked for more than 10 years in the Nairobi City County.

Descriptive Analysis Results

Table 1: Training

Statement	Mean	S. D
The county has induction/orientation training for all new employees	4.03	0.94
The older/experienced county staff handle coaching of newer/inexperienced employees	4.50	0.95
Workshops and seminars are organized for different cluster of employees by the Nairobi City County government	4.21	0.61
There is mentoring of inexperienced county employees	4.33	0.87
The county offers internship programs for college and university students to gain skills	4.24	0.73
There is expansion, enrichment and enlargement of jobs to keep employees motivated for delivery of quality services	4.40	0.84
The county has invested in frequent training programs for improving skills that improve quality of service delivery	4.09	0.94
Aggregate	4.29	0.84

Source: Research Data (2023)

The aggregate mean of 4.29 and standard deviation 0.84 imply that majority of the respondents agreed to a great extent that most statements on trainings influenced service delivery in Nairobi City County. This demonstrates that training played a significant role in the delivery of service in the county.

Table 2: Service Delivery

Statement	Mean	S. D
The county has recorded improve quality of its services	4.66	0.81
The county employees are satisfied with their work and services they offer	4.78	0.42
County services are efficient to carter to needs of the public	3.44	1.26
The public are satisfied with the services delivered by the Nairobi City County Government	4.20	1.06
The services are responsive to the needs of the public	4.28	0.59
The Nairobi City County offers effective services to the masses	3.86	1.17
Aggregate	4.20	0.885

Source: Research Data (2023)

On average, at scores of mean of 4.20 and Standard Deviation of 0.885, highlighting that the respondents agreed to a very great extent on improved service delivery at the Nairobi City County. This implies that these human resource management practices focusing on training led to improvements in quality of services offered by Nairobi City County. The results

Correlation Analysis Results

Table 3: Correlation Analysis Results

		Service Delivery	Training
Service Delivery	Pearson	1	
	Correlation sig (2-tailed)		
	N	72	
Training	Pearson	.773*	1
	Correlation sig (2-tailed)	.029	
	N	72	72

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Source: Research Data (2023)

The results from the conducted correlation analysis on evaluation of training effect on service delivery at the Nairobi City County. The outcome showed the correlation is significant and positive effects between trainings and service delivery ($r = .772$, $p < 0.05$). This high and significant correlation signifies that the county government deliver better, efficient and responsive service due to better trained staff. These findings agree with Mutegi *et al.* (2021) who found that employee training had a significant relationship to public service delivery. The study adds that training programs helps to avoid duplication and overlap of roles, and also works by dispensing information, monitors and evaluate outcomes and have good impact on career growth.

Multiple Regression Analysis Results

Table 4: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.807 ^a	.651	.636	.32214

Source: Research Data (2023)

The model correlation coefficient (r) of 0.807, surpassing the zero-order value. Additionally, the adjusted R-squared value, which represents the coefficient of determination, stands at 0.636. These results signify that 63.6% of the variation in service delivery within Nairobi City County can be traced back to the training as a component of human resource management practices.

Table 5: Analysis of Variance

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	6.712	1	6.712	33.864	.000 ^b
Residual	13.875	70	0.1982		
Total	20.587	71			

Source: Research Data (2023)

The significance is at 0.000 which is below 0.05, the generated F value of F =33.864 is greater than the F critical at value of F =2.74. This shows that training was a good predictor of service delivery at Nairobi City County.

Table 6: Regression Results

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.079	.539		2.003	.019
Training	.850	.113	.682	7.522	.034

Source: Research Data (2023)

The resultant equation is: $Y = 1.079 + 0.850x_1$

The findings show that training had a significantly positive effect on service delivery at Nairobi City County as indicated by the values of beta =0.850, t = 7.522 and p-value of 0.034 < 0.5. These findings suggest that an incremental improvement in training initiatives corresponds to an increase in service delivery within the county. These findings agree with Tanui and Kwasira (2019) who examined the effect of staff training and service delivery and found a significant and positive effect of staff training on service delivery. Also, Twesige (2020) that explained the effect of training and development on performance and indicated a positive and significant effect of training on performance. That's to say for an organization to grow or deliver the best services training of employees has to be well founded which the Nairobi City County is involved with which makes the study indicate a positive and significant effect.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, the study concluded that training increases service delivery at Nairobi City County. The county has an induction and orientation training for all new staff, also workshops and seminars are organized for different clusters of employees by the county government, these trainings have been captured as the quality of services delivered by these well-trained employees has been beneficial to the public. Mentoring of

inexperienced employees and internship programs organized by the county government for college and university students has improved services of the public. The county government investment on training programs has enriched, equipped and enriched employees and this has helped the services delivered to the public improve better and make it more efficient.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommended that county government and public sector employers should set a budget for different training programs including values and ethics in public service. There is need for frequent trainings as a means of upskilling and increasing technical skills and knowledge for efficient execution of assignments and delivering quality services. The suggestion is that the training programs be customized to address the individual needs of employees in the county and accommodate the changing landscape of technology and policy. The study also recommends that county employees be provided with opportunities for professional development including tuition reimbursement, paid time off for conferences, and access to online training resources. Professional development can help employees to stay up-to-date on the latest skills and knowledge, which can benefit both the employee and the employer

The study recommends that further studies should be taken on other factors of human resources management practices that affect service delivery at Nairobi City County. In addition, studies can be carried out on other important areas like in schools, police department, hospitals etc. Future researches can also be done on the role of human resource management in implementing public policy reforms. It can also cover different concepts that contribute to improved service delivery in the county and expanded to cover other counties, public entities and private organizations.

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