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# THE INFLUENCE OF MANAGEMENT TRAINING ON CIVIL SERVANTS' POST-TRAINING WORK BEHAVIOUR

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#### **Abstract**

With the increasing cost of employee training and the desire by organizations for top notch customer service, evaluating the influence of training on post training employee work behaviour is increasingly becoming vital issue for organizations. This research paper utilizes public service field supervisors post training feedback on 197 trainees who had attended senior management course offered at Kenya School of Government in Kenya three months prior to assessment. Variations in the supervisor feedback is analyzed through test of significance to assess post training work behaviour as a proxy for the influence of training intervention on employees behaviour change. The study concludes that there is significant difference between trainees' pre-training and post-training work behaviour. Further, management training intervention improves employee performance particularly influencing workers ability to manage resources, handle client requests on their own, advise peers and subordinates, handle clients better, improve service quality and reduce service related errors. However, there was no evidence to support the influence of management training



intervention on trainees' increased compliance to the procedures, regulations, systems and policies, employees' ability to complete tasks in time and employees' ability to make better decisions.

Keywords: Post training, behaviour, performance, civil servant

#### INTRODUCTION

With the increasing cost of employee training and the desire by organizations for top notch customer service, evaluation of employee training is increasingly becoming vital issue not only for organizations but also for management training institutions, human resource practitioners, consultants and researchers (Salas &Janis, 2001). Despite training being a costly engagement, many firms do not emphasize on training evaluation; situation in countries like Australia is not any different, until recently, there was little evidence from Australian organizations on returns on investment from training, as a results of failure to conduct systematic assessments of training programs and even lesser effort to analyze the returns on training investments' such as improved levels of employee skills, reduced overhead costs among others (Dawe, 2003).

Governments invest in their human capitals' knowledge, skills as well as the right attitudes so that civil servants can deliver their mandate, obligations and responsibilities. This has led to governments placing emphasis on human resource development initiatives owing to assumptions across different countries, organizations and cultures that a correlation exists between employee performance and training and development (Dysvik&Kuvaas, 2008) as well as the ability of training to systematically enhance workers skills for better service delivery (Kraiger& Ford, 2007).

United Kingdom (UK), United States of America (USA), Malaysia and Singapore have particularly placed strong emphasis and leveraged on training their public servants as a means of enhancing sustained economic growth and public service delivery. Singapore which was at position two in the Global Economic Report of 2014, prides herself with a strong public service division and a Civil Service College which is a training institution for public servants (Singapore Public Service Division, 2008).

Training as a means of enhancing employees' performance enjoys recognition and support in many countries, for instance in September 2009 in USA in the city of Pittsburgh, the G20 leaders insisted on quality workas a means of economic recovery, they acknowledged the role and place of skills development. International Labour Organization (ILO) developed a training strategy which was adopted in June 2010 during a summit in Toronto. Similarly in November 2010, managers vowed to continue supporting national strategies for capacity building and development of skills on the G20 Training Strategy in Seoul (ILO, 2011). To this end, job training, development of skills and lifelong learning strategies for enhancing development strategies have and enjoy international recognition.

Saad& Mat (2013) indicate over \$40 billion is used on training in universities as well as graduate colleges in USA; while in UK, the National Skills Survey of 2007 established that £38.6 billion was spent annually in training of its workforce (Griffin, 2010). Elsewhere, Omani Government in their 8<sup>th</sup>Five Year Plan for the year 2011 to 2015 reserved hundred million Omani riyals (roughly US\$ 260 million) for Omanis' human resource training and development programs (Rajasekar& Khan, 2013). In Kenya the total cost of training including assets at Kenya School of Government by 2014 was Ksh 11,164,900,436 (KSG, 2014).

Knowledge and skills in the civil service play a major role in the efficiency as well as effectiveness of rendering public services. It is this knowledge that defines the speed, accuracy and consistency of individual's ability to render services. Similarly, right attitudes shapes employees behaviour and conviction to offer quality services. It may decide how civil servants interact with their clients and determine the quality of service offering (Isa, 2013).

It is imperative that organizations have an idea of how well training objectives reflect in knowledge, skills and work attitudes of their employees. This necessitates knowing whether training attended by their workers are attaining their goals and whether such training yields preferred effects on delivery of services in the civil service. It further necessitates knowing whether civil servants who attend courses yearly gain from the training, learn and use the skills as well as knowledge gained in enhancing their performance; consequently organizations needs to know whether their training programmes meet the industry's expectations. However, conclusions regarding transfer of learning from management training institutions and subsequent influence on employee work behaviour remains succinctly unknown. This study seeks to fill this gap by assessing the influence of management training on civil servants posttraining work behaviour through investigating whether training intervention provided to civil servants through Kenya School of Government subsequently influences employees job roles.

#### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

#### **Theoretical Literature**

The main reason for knowledge transfer to civil servants is to improve service delivery to citizens of a country; it is an avenue for ensuring employees acquire more knowledge and skills to be able to deliver government obligations to its citizenry (Agbaet al., 2013). This is aimed at exposing the civil servant to understand government operations and procedures so as to

enhance efficiency. Training of civil servants is particularly widely accepted and used model of transferring targeted knowledge that seeks to address or upscale skills; or address pre identified training needs in the civil service, it is preferred to other variety of capacity building methods due to its ability to handle large number of trainees easily and more effectively (Collis, 2005).

In addition, it has been disputed that training transfer observed through individual performance in their job roles is utilized to determine whether whatever has been learnt from the training is indeed shifted to the trainees place of work, this therefore signifies individual performance in their job roles is utilized to establish the training uses to advance job performance of trainees (Chiaburu, Dam & Hutchins, 2010). Additionally, organizational performance is utilized to measure the impact of the entire organization and workgroup because of training, implying organizational performance is utilized to find out the loss or benefit or return on investment (ROI) from the training program on organizational effectiveness (Bersin, 2008). Indeed Horgan &Muhlau (2006) in their research to establish the HR system impact on performance of employee in Ireland and Netherlands utilized the mixture of job performance (individual performance) and acquired skills (learning performance) as a training effectiveness measurement within system of human resource.

Knowledge transfer can also be seen in the organization in terms of behaviour of employees, which influences the way employees make decisions, improvement in products or services, enhancement of organizational processes, improvement in organizational relationships between and among superiors, juniors, suppliers, and customers (Kirkpatrick's, 2008). Knowledge therefore presumably if well transferred could lead to enhancement of organizational performance, this is what this study sought to investigate.

Training is important for career growth of workers, it is a means of developing employee's abilities as well as skills to reduce costs of operation, limit liabilities of an organization and change objectives and goals (Nickels, 2009). Ahmad &Sirajud (2009) established that training and development increased organizational performance of health sector and has potential of increasing employee performance. Luger, (2011) posits that skills, attitudes as well as knowledge towards cultural diversity may be gotten from training and this cultural diversity awareness will reflect better in public service (Jackson & Samuels, 2011).

Importance of training organizational staff at all cadres and its relevance to organizational effectiveness cannot be underestimated. Quesada et al. (2011) points that training leaders on emotional intelligence is imperative for making sound and timely decisions which is key to success of the companies they lead.

Similarly, Kalemci (2005) holds that, training is central to effective management and maintenance of organizational workforce. Tai (2006) indicates that, there is convergence by researchers concerning the need by corporate to increase their budget on training so as to better their competitiveness and keep skilled, competent, flexible and adaptable workforce. It is further argued that training increases employee's knowledge, skills and attitudes (Mat et al., 2011).

# **Empirical Literature**

Training has been found to enable employees minimize their anxiety or frustrations and better still develop mechanisms to cope with work demands (Chen, et al., 2004). Attia& Honeycutt (2012) in their study established that there were uniform behavioural improvements of sales persons after training intervention. When such training is effective, it leads to enhanced employee job satisfaction, commitment and motivation (Sahinidis&Bouris, 2008). To maximize benefits of employee training, there is need for a greater attention on evaluation of training effectiveness. Tsaur& Lin (2004) argues that, design of training plays an extremely essential role in the worker and performance of an organization and a poorly designed training may lead to lose of organizational time and money.

Wright, Knight & Speed (2001) in their study established that companies that raised budgetary allocation on training were able to grow their profits by 11.4% compared to 6.3% for those who didn't. Those who were able to learn the business had their turnover increase by 66% alongside 15% annual growth versus 9% for those who didn't. Three in four (75%) of organizations who have invested in training have had growth in their profits. In their study, 95% of companies favoured training as a necessity for success.

Anike&Ekwe (2014), in their study on training and development impact on effectiveness of an organization within Nigeria using a survey approach established a positive association between organizational effectiveness and development/training. This study focused on the role of training on organizational effectiveness which differs from the current study that focuses on effectiveness of the training itself.

Ponnam (2004) while examining impact of training on first generation entrepreneurs established that programs of training have a positive impact on production increase and brings positive change in staff. Kraiger& Ford (2007), in their study reported that a 10 percent increase in the educational attainment of an organization's staff brought about 8.6 percent increase in efficiency. Lwiki (2007) studying employees training and development effects on performance and the training programs relevance given to the employees established that that 90 percent of the programs were pertinent to the employees plus had positive influence on staff performance.

Kiiru (2011) studying the training and development impact on employees performance established a positive association between training and development and the staff performance.

Perhaps the closest study is that by Nzomo (2011) on workers training and development effectiveness in Kenya by studying Teachers Service Commission (TSC) through a case study approach, on a sample of 140 employees, which sought to establish the training and development impact on effective performance of TSC workers. It established that, training and development positively impacts on efficiency, productivity as well as enhanced work quality, team work and morale.

However, Syaifar (2015) in his study on education effectiveness and management of training of Malaysian public servants using quantitative survey methods on a sample of 290 public servants at the education and training center, found that training did not provide important effect on official government performance increase. The aim of the study focused on establishing the relationships between trainee/participant characteristics, and facilitator/trainers' competence and the resultant post training effect.

#### **METHODOLOGY**

The exploratory research study is based on data obtained from 197 civil servant field supervisors of trainees from the Kenyan civil service sampled through purposive sampling technique. The supervisors were asked to assess the post training work behaviour of their trainees who had in the last three months attended the Senior Management Course (SMC) at the Kenya School of Government (KSG) in Kenya between 1st July 2017 and 30th September 2017, based on the common civil service practice where employees supervisors are expected to evaluate their juniors on quarterly (after every three months) basis in accordance to civil service regulation on staff performance appraisal system (HR policy, 2016). Primary data was collected in January 2018 using a self-administered instrument on 5 point Likert scale which required respondents to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement. Data analysis involved the use of arithmetic means, standard deviations, test of significance through t-test and F-tests.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

## Post-Training Employee Work Behaviour Change

Sample means and standard deviations were used to indicate the possible difference on post training employee work behaviour change. Table 1 shows the mean scores obtained by each of the areas under study.

Table 1: Post Training Employee Work Behaviour Change in Mean Scores

	x	s
n	197	
Resource wastage has reduced	4.6162	.66389
Trainees able to handle client requests on their own	4.3838	.70828
Trainees better at advising peers and subordinates	4.3485	.51846
Trainees performance appraisal scores have improved	4.3939	.56673
Number of client complaints have reduced	4.5101	.62714
Compliance to procedures, regulations, systems, policies has improved	4.3586	.59414
Service quality ratings have improved	4.5101	.61073
Trained employees are timely in completing tasks	4.4646	.50001
Trainees are able to make better decisions	4.4596	.49963
Errors have reduced after training of staff	4.6768	.51037

The results from Table 1 suggest that the mean scores in the tool greater than the mean of 4 (the mean for 'agreed') implying that the trainees' supervisors concur that behaviour of employees after training has changed, the fact that they respond on the affirmative indicates their level of agreement, this change can therefore be attributed to the fact that such employees have just been trained and furthermore, such training intervention had positive influence on the personnel post training behaviour.

Trainees post training behaviour change was characterized by their observed work behaviour as made by the trainees supervisors, this result suggest that employees' errors reduced more after the training intervention ( $\overline{x} = 4.6768$ ), followed by the ability of employees to reduce on wastage and or scrap due to production ( $\overline{x} = 4.6162$ ). Similarly, training intervention enabled employees to reduce the number of client complaint hence better service rating  $(\overline{x} =$ 4.5101). Employees ability to complete tasks in time had improved ( $\overline{x} = 4.4646$ ). Trainees ability to handle client requests on their own, ability to better advise their peers and subordinates, improvement of trainees performance appraisal scores and compliance to procedures, regulations, systems generally improved ( $\overline{x} = >4.3$ ). This result therefore suggests that supervisors of the trainees observed some difference in employee's performance behaviour after the training intervention. To determine significance of difference on post training employee work behaviour change attributes, t-test statistic was obtained for each of the 10 attributes measuring post training work behaviour change as observed by the trainee's supervisors at trainees' work places. Table 2 shows the summary of differences on post training employee work behaviour change scores.

Table 2: Significance of Post Training Employee Work Behaviour Change Scores

	Test Value for 'agreed'					ANOVA		
	t	df	Sig. (2-	Mean	95% CI		df1 = 2	
			tailed)	Diff.			df2 = 194	
					Lower	Upper	F	Sig. F
Resource wastage has	13.060	196	.000	.61616	.5231	.7092	3.529	.031
reduced								
Trainees able to handle client	7.626	196	.000	.38384	.2846	.4831	4.964	.001
requests on their own								
Trainees better at advising	9.458	196	.000	.34848	.2758	.4211	5.516	.005
peers and subordinates								
Trainees performance	9.781	196	.000	.39394	.3145	.4734	30.634	.000
appraisal scores have								
improved								
Number of client complaints	11.445	196	.000	.51010	.4222	.5980	32.043	.000
have reduced								
Compliance to procedures,	8.493	196	.000	.35859	.2753	.4419	0.384	.682
regulations, systems, policies								
has improved								
Service quality ratings have	11.753	196	.000	.51010	.4245	.5957	8.162	.000
improved								
Trained employees are timely	13.076	196	.000	.46465	.3946	.5347	0.531	.589
in completing tasks								
Trainees are able to make	12.944	196	.000	.45960	.3896	.5296	0.057	.945
better decisions								
Errors have reduced after	18.659	196	.000	.67677	.6052	.7483	9.213	.000
training of staff								

It is observed that all responses yielded a t-value >0, suggesting the differences in the means of the items. It is further observed that all the ten responses yielded a p-value<.000 indicating that the difference in means is significant. It was established that majority of the supervisors (66.5%) strongly agreed that training intervention had led to reduced resource wastage. Results in Table 2 suggests there is significant difference between the sample means and the mean for the label 'agreed', t (197) = 13.060, p-value .000<0.05, 95% CI [.52, .71]. Similarly, ANOVA results suggest that the mean difference is statistically significant F(2, 194) = 3.529, p-value .031 <0.05, 95% CI. This results suggest that there is significant influence by the training intervention on the workers ability to reduced resource wastage/scrape while on their jobs. This



result agrees with Dawe (2003) who points out that returns on training investments includes reduced overhead costs due to improved levels of employee skills, similar sentiments comes from Bersin (2008) who points out that organizational performance is used to measure the total organization and workgroup impact due to training, implying that organizational performance is used to find out the benefit or loss or return on investment (ROI) from the training program on organizational effectiveness.

On trainees ability to handle client requests on their own, results in Table 2 suggests there is significant difference between the sample means and the mean for the label 'agreed' t (197) = 7.626, p-value .000<0.05, 95% CI [.28, .49]. Similarly, ANOVA results suggest that the mean difference is statistically significant F(2, 194) = 4.964, p-value .001 <0.05, 95% CI. This results suggest that there is significant influence by the training intervention on trainees' ability to handle client requests on their own.

Similarly majority of the supervisors (60.5%) agreed that trainees were better at advising their peers and subordinates on their areas of operation. Results in Table 2 suggests there is significant difference between the sample means and the mean for the label 'agreed', t (197) = 9.458, p-value .000<0.05, 95% CI [.28, .42]. Similarly, ANOVA results suggest that the mean difference is statistically significant F(2, 194) = 5.516, p-value .005 <0.05, 95% CI. This results suggest there is significant influence of the training intervention on trainees' ability to advise their peers and subordinates on their areas of operation; supporting the results of Ponnam (2004) who while examining impact of training on first generation entrepreneurs established that training programs have a positive effect on increasing the production and brings positive change in staff.

Majority of the supervisors (52%) agreed that Trainees Performance Appraisal Scores have improved. Further, results in Table 2 suggests there is significant difference between the sample means and the mean for the label 'agreed', t (197) = 9.781, p-value .000<0.05, 95% CI [.31, .47]. Similarly, ANOVA results suggest that the mean difference is statistically significant F(2, 194) = 30.634, p-value .000 < 0.05, 95% CI. This results suggest there is significant influence of the training intervention on enhancement Trainees Performance Appraisal Scores. This was a key predictor of the relative worth of training and probably one of the main reasons for investment in civil service personnel training. Indeed, this result is similar to those of authors like Lwiki (2007) who while studying effects of staff training and development on performance and the relevance of training programs offered to the staff established that 90% of the programs were relevant to the staff and had positive influence on staff performance. Similarly Kiiru (2011) while studying the impact of training and development on performance of staff established a positive relationship between training and development and the staff performance. Ahmad & Sirajud (2009) posits that training and development has a potential of increasing employee performance.

Majority of the supervisors (57.5%) strongly agreed that the number of client complaints have reduced. Results in Table 2 suggests there is significant difference between the sample means and the mean for the label 'agreed', t (197) = 11.445, p-value .000<0.05, 95% CI [.42, .60]. Similarly, ANOVA results suggest that the mean difference is statistically significant F(2, 194) = 32.043, p-value .000 <0.05, 95% CI. This results suggest there is significant influence of the training intervention on ability of trainees to handle client complaints. Implying that acquisition of knowledge had enabled officers to sort clients issues effectively; perhaps the closest study to support this is Nzomo (2011) whose study on effectiveness of employee training and development in Kenya studying Teachers Service Commission (TSC) to determine the impact of training and development on effective performance of TSC employees established that training and development impacts positively on productivity, increased efficiency and improved quality of work, morale and team work.

On matters of staff errors, the study established that majority of the supervisors (69%) strongly agreed that errors had reduced since employees took training. Results in Table 2 suggests there is significant difference between the sample means and the mean for the label 'agreed', t (197) = t = 18.659, p-value .000<0.05, 95% CI [.61, .75]. Similarly, ANOVA results suggest the mean difference is statistically significant F(2, 194) = 9.213, p-value .000 <0.05, 95% CI. This results suggest that there is significant influence of the training intervention on ability of staff to reduce work related errors; inferring that that trainees had indeed acquired more knowledge an argument supported by Chiaburu, Dam & Hutchins (2010) who points out that transfer of training observed through individual performance in their job roles is used to measure whether what is learned from training is indeed transferred to the trainees workplace, this therefore implies that individual performance in their job roles is used to determine the use of training to improve trainees' job performance.

On service quality ratings, 56.5% of the field supervisors strongly agreed that service quality ratings from feedback by customer from satisfaction surveys have improved. Results in Table 2 suggests there is significant difference between the sample means and the mean for the label 'agreed', t (197) = 11.753, p-value .000<0.05, 95% CI [.42, .60]. Similarly, ANOVA results suggest that the mean difference is statistically significant F(2, 194) = 8.162, p-value .000 <0.05, 95% CI. This results suggest there is significant influence of the training intervention on trainees' ability to offer quality services; an argument supported by Anike&Ekwe (2014), whom in their study on impact of training and development on organizational effectiveness in

Nigeria established a positive relationship between training/development and organizational effectiveness.

ANOVA results in Table 2 however suggest that the mean difference on compliance to procedures, regulations, systems, policies, employees ability to complete tasks in time, and employees ability to make better decisions is not statistically significant F(2, 194) = .384, .531, .057, p-values .682, .589, .945>0.05, 95% CI respectively. Inferring that training intervention had little if any impact on these domains. A result inconsistent with Quesada et al. (2011) who established that training labour force on emotional intelligence is imperative for making sound and timely decisions which is key to success of the companies they lead. Training has also been found to enable employees minimize their anxiety or frustrations and better still develop mechanisms to cope with work demands (Chen et al., 2004).

Results from regression analysis used to determine the direction of the influence suggests that there is significant difference between trainees' pre-training and post-training work behaviour. Table 3 shows analysis of variance on work behaviour change.

Sum of Squares df Mean Square Sig. 7.536 16.799 1.867 .000 46.317 187 .248

Table 3: Analyses of Variance on Work Behaviour Change

The result of the regression model in Table 3 suggests that there is significant difference between trainees' pre-training and post-training work behaviour; F(9,187) = 7.536>3.84, a pvalue 0.000<0.05.

196

63.117

## CONCLUSION

Model

Regression

Residual

Total

The study concludes that there is significant difference between trainees' pre-training and posttraining work behaviour. It further concludes that management training intervention improves employee performance and particularly influences workers' ability to reduce resource wastage, handle client requests on their own, advise peers and subordinates, handle clients better, improve service quality and reduce service related errors. The study however concludes that there was no evidence to support the influence of management training intervention on trainee increased compliance to procedures, regulations, systems, policies, employees' ability to complete tasks in time and employees' ability to make better decisions.

#### LIMITATIONS OF THE CURRENT STUDY

One of this study's limitations was its focus on Kenya School of Government; one of Government training institutions leaving out other public sector training institutions in Kenya like; Kenya Utalii College, Kenya Water Institute, Institute of Energy Studies and Research among others since they have different mandates and objectives not specific to civil servants in Kenya. The study was also limited to Senior Management Course since it is the only course that is examined by the school. Finally parameters under study are limited to those that have been identified by different authors through various studies only.

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