



THE INFLUENCE OF DELEGATION ON EMPLOYEES' PERFORMANCE: A CASE STUDY AT KOFORIDUA MUNICIPAL ASSEMBLY - GHANA

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Abstract

Many researchers have considered delegation as an approach that improves job performance and as an important component and predictor of job performance. In recent decades, the level of awareness towards delegation has increased drastically and has gone to its climax to become a well-established field of study. This is due to the need to improve the speed and quality of decisions, reduce manager overload, enrich the subordinate's job, increase the subordinate's intrinsic motivation, and provide opportunities for subordinate development of leadership skills, all of which have a bearing on job performance. Many organizations are undertaking delegation as a requirement to facilitate the attainment of job performance by way of improving service delivery, higher productivity and reduced labor turn over. This paper there tries to identify the impact of delegation on employee's performance using Koforidua Municipal Assembly-Ghana as a case study. Microsoft Excel and SPSS were adopted to analyze the responses and outcomes. In conclusion, the study established that the factors that hinder delegation in Koforidua Municipal Assembly were the lack of confidence in a subordinate's capacity, the lack of motivation or knowledge to delegate effectively, and the fear of revealing managerial shortcomings.

Keywords: Delegation, Employee, Performance, Influence, Koforidua, Ghana



INTRODUCTION

The impact of delegation on both business and employee performance in recent corporate institutions cannot be overemphasized. Delegation is therefore a process that involves assigning important tasks to subordinates, giving subordinates responsibility for decisions formally made by the manager, and increasing the amount of work-related discretion allowed to subordinates, including the authority to make decisions without seeking prior approval from the manager (Yukl & Fu, 1999). It occurs when the manager gives an individual the authority and responsibility for making a decision of certain activities, where prior approval may not be required before the decision can be implemented (Jha, 2004). Associated with delegation are key dimension such as authority, responsibility and accountability (Mullins, 1993). Delegation is one of the practices of managers in the contemporary world of business (Al-Jammal, Al-Khasawneh & Hamadat, 2015). It is a function that stands out to contribute and increase the level of motivation of stakeholders and achieving positive returns for an organization, manager and employee (Bozkurt & Ergeneli, 2012).

For an organization, delegation achieves competitive advantage, knowledge inventory, increases the level of productivity and speed in finalizing tasks effectively (Al-Jammal et al., 2015). With the manager, it alleviates functional burdens, gains employees' satisfaction and builds cooperation and trust between manager and employees giving a chance for manager to have fulltime for realization more important work. On these bases, delegation reduces physical and intellectual efforts exerted by manager and other employees (Al-Jammal et al., 2015). For an employee, delegation works on achieving functional empowerment, constructing alternative and administrative leadership, making employees feel self-confidence and motivation for Excellency in performance (Al-Jammal et al., 2015).

Statement of the Problem

Some intellectuals have claimed that companies improve their performance in engaging in delegation (Al-Jammal et al., 2015), while others were of the view that delegation has no positive correlation with employee job performance, and does not have any major effect on business performance (Senyuta, 2013). Aside this controversy, management in several organizations has recognized delegation as a means to improve the effectiveness, efficiency and empowerment of its staff (Valjakka, 2013). But little is known about the effect of delegation on employees' performance particularly within the context of Ghana's local government system for that matter the Koforidua Municipal Assembly (KMA).

Further indications established that there is still paucity of research on how delegation acts as a criterion in influencing job performance. However, the few existing studies on Ghana

scene gravitate on banks and few public officials and not those working in the local government institutions. The local government system in Ghana is therefore considered to be one of the vital and integral components of the economy. It is for this reason that the Central government has passed the responsibility of development in the local authorities to the Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies to mobilize resources, both financial and otherwise for developmental projects. Thus, studying the impact of delegation on job performance is necessary as it provides a theoretical as well as a practical platform to the assemblies' efforts to improve employees' performance of the sector.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Delegation is a process that involves assigning important tasks to subordinates, giving subordinates responsibility for decisions formally made by the manager, and increasing the amount of work-related discretion allowed to subordinates, including the authority to make decisions without seeking prior approval from the manager (Hernandez, 2012; Yukl & Fu, 1999). Delegation occurs when the manager gives an individual the authority and responsibility for making a decision of certain activities, where prior approval may not be required before the decision can be implemented (Yukl, 1998; Bass, 1990; Jha, 2004).

Delegation is widely recognized as an essential element of effective management. Four main benefits of delegation can be identified from the literature: (1) delegation satisfies managers' need for achievement and autonomy, thereby providing a stimulus for motivation and more entrepreneurial behavior (Mintzberg, 1979); (2) delegation reduces work overload of upper managers (Yukl & Fu, 1999); (3) delegation provides a training ground for the more complex strategic decisions that managers are likely to encounter in senior managerial positions (Yukl & Fu, 1999); and (4) delegation places decisions at levels where there may be greater expertise about particular issues than possessed by the supervisor, providing additional information processing benefits to the organization which may result in more efficient and better quality decisions (Galbraith, 1973, Ito & Person, 1986). Thus, organization theory literatures have long acknowledged the positive relationship between delegation and job-related outcomes, such as subordinate performance and job satisfaction (e.g., Argyris, 1964; Leanna, 1986, Schriesheim, Neider & Scandura, 1998; Yukl & Fu, 1999; Johnstone, 2000).

Factors that influence delegation in an organization

The element of delegation is linked to the availability of subordinate managers. If sufficient persons are available who can take responsibility, then delegation can easily be done (Noorliza & Hasni, 2006). Generally, managers complain that sufficient subordinate managers

are not available who can be assigned important duties (Cipriano, 2010). Unless subordinates are delegated the powers, they will not learn the art of management (Humborstad & Perry, 2011). With additional experience and training their judgment would be improved and they will become more capable subordinates (Kaplan, 1991; Chapman, 2012).

Another factor that greatly influences the degree of delegation is the importance and costliness of decisions. Usually, the higher the cost and the importance of the decision, the greater the probability of its being made at the upper level of the managerial hierarchy (Senyuta, 2013). Invariably, the importance and costliness of decisions greatly influences the degree of delegation (Cipriano, 2010). Decision-making also requires various facts and figures about the issue. A manager will ensure that he gets all required information for deciding the issue. This type of information is easily available at higher levels of management (Kyarimpa, 2010). A manager knows that he can delegate authority and not responsibility (Schriesheim, 2008). Some decisions can influence the whole organization. Any wrong decision on such important matters can damage the enterprise beyond control. Such decisions are taken at higher level because these persons have the past experience of deciding such things (Langbeing, 2009). In a manager's career he should first be given authority to take decisions which are not too costly so that he is able to learn from his experience (Langbeing, 2009).

Factors that Hinder Delegation in an Organization

In an organization, there may be many factors which militate against proper delegation. As identified by Kaplan (1991), one of the factors is organizational culture. If the organizational culture is premised on authoritarianism, it works as an impediment for effective employee empowerment. In such a culture, often, authority tends to be centralized at the top, and consequently, there is lack of meaningful delegation of authority. The other factors identified are the need by managers to maintain tight control of developments in the business.

A manager may not delegate adequate authority because of fear of subordinates. The fear of a subordinate may be real, which can take two forms (Langbeing, 2009). Firstly, the subordinate might show that he can perform the superior's work so well that he becomes entitled to his position, status, title, or prestige. Secondly, the subordinate's increasing ability might earn him a promotion to some other part of the organization, and the superior may lose the best subordinate. In this case, the superior may thus adopt defensive behavior (Negwaya et al., 2014). A superior manager, especially a weak one, may not like to delegate, simply because adequate delegation may reveal managerial shortcomings being practiced. This may happen when the superior has poor operating procedures, methods, and practices (Noorliza & Hasni., 2006).

Other reasons for a lack of motivation to delegate are lack of trust in subordinates, fear of being seen as lazy, reluctance to take risks, and fear of competition from subordinates (Schriesheim, 2008).

The Impact of Delegation on Employees' Performance

Managers that delegate are likely to foster the formation of high-quality relationship with their subordinates characterised by mutual trust, respect and loyalty; in turn subordinates experiencing trust and respect are likely to reciprocate by strengthening and encouraging the superior (Deluga, 1994; Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). As such, delegation can be viewed as a mechanism that builds and nourishes superior-subordinate relationships. Delegated responsibility sends signals of trust and competence (Leanna, 1986) to the subordinate contributing to the social bonding within the dyad.

Wadi (2009) conducted study on the impact of authority delegation on managerial performance. The study aimed at identifying the impact of authority delegation on workers performance of Sudan University of Science & Technology (SUST). Sample of the study was consisted of (60) workers and they were randomly selected. The study has reached for following results: delegation of authority strengthens human relations among members of the organization, enhance self-confidence among workers and increase the level of achievement in tasks and work assigned for workers and speed of implementation.

AL-Matouh (2003) studied the role of delegation of authority in achieving the objectives of an organization. The study ensured that delegation of authority has played a basic role in achieving business objective very fast and also raising the morale among workers. It allows the chance for building employees capacity and enables them to experience alternative leadership and ability to manage organizations.

The Processes to Enhance Delegation

The process to enhance delegation is as critical as planning, because a poor process can reduce the effectiveness of the delegation in several ways (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2004) which can lower the worker's motivation to perform the task or may lead to less than desirable outcomes.

Employees should be allowed to participate in the delegation process: Employees who accept their assignments are much more likely to be committed to their success (Malone, 1997). This acceptance is enhanced when employees have some say in the process. Thus, subordinates should be allowed to participate in determining when and how the delegated task will be accomplished and, when possible, what the assignment will be. At the most basic level, a

manager can ask an employee if he or she is available to do a task, rather than telling him/her to do it. Participation can also increase supervisor/subordinate communication, which may minimize problems due to misunderstandings (Malone, 1997).

Delegate Consistently: Some managers delegate only when they are overworked or in a crisis (Humborstad & Perry, 2011). This can send a message to subordinates that they are being used since they only receive assignments when it benefits the manager. Ideally, delegation should benefit both the subordinate and the manager. Managers can send this message by delegating assignments that develop or stretch subordinates' talents and skills (Humborstad & Perry, 2011).

Delegating to develop workers builds up a pool of talent for those inevitable crisis situations (Shekari et al., 2011). It also enhances worker motivation and confidence since they acquire experience and benefit from the new or improved skills. Care should be taken to assure that the employee has the capability to succeed in the assignment.

Focus on Results: Once the task has been delegated, managers need to allow subordinates the freedom to make the choices needed to accomplish the task (Kreitner & Kinicki, 2004). Managers should not supervise too closely for this may create frustration and make workers feel that the manager lacks confidence in their ability. Managers should review and evaluate the results of the assignment, not the means used to accomplish the task (Schriesheim, 2008). However, managers are responsible for making sure that both the process and the outcome of the delegated task are consistent with the goals.

METHODOLOGY

Research design

In this study, a survey method was used to carry out the study. The survey approach refers to a group of methods which emphasize quantitative analysis, where data for the study are collected through methods such as questionnaires, face-to-face and telephone interviews. The survey approach seeks to discover relationships that are common across organizations and hence to provide generalizable statements about the subject of the study. Survey can also be a relatively inexpensive way to get information about people's attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors. With a survey, you can collect a lot of information on a large sample in a short time (Mitchell & Jolley, 2007).

Study population

The target population for this study comprises the head office officials of KMA, and eight municipalities namely, Two Streams, Atekyem, Adweso, Old Estate, Betom, Anlo Town,

Nsukwao and Srodae. Meanwhile, the study population was limited to officials of the head office and four sub-municipals; Two Streams, Adweso, Old Estate and Nsukwao of the Koforidua Municipal Assembly.

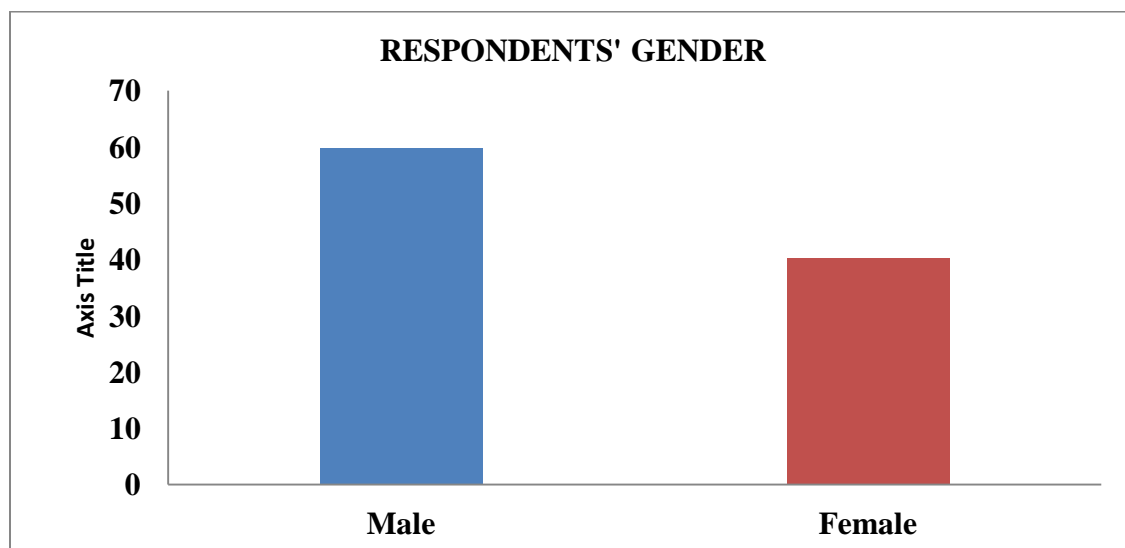
Data Collection and Analysis Technique

The data for the analysis was obtained from the field survey. Hence, descriptive analysis was primarily employed for the analysis. Again, the researcher used Microsoft Excel Program and SPSS to produce the outcomes. Because this research is exploratory, no inferential statistical technique was employed in evaluating the data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The demographic characteristics of respondents analyzed in this study were gender, age, level of education, rank, staff categorization and staff length of service. A total number of sixty-two (62) staff of KMA, representing 88.6% was used for this study.

Figure 1: Respondents' Gender



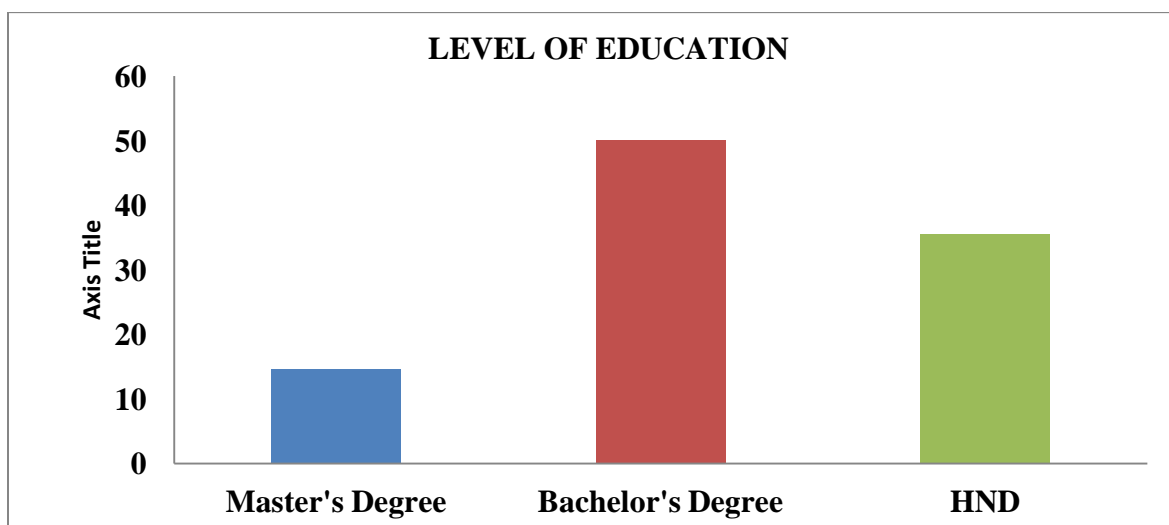
The gender distribution of respondents revealed that out of the 62 respondents 59.7% were male with 40.3% being female. The domination of men in this study could probably be due to the technical nature of work environment, which is mainly of male oriented. Nevertheless, the answers provided by both genders were given same consideration since there is no distinct relationship between their gender and perception of the subject of the study.

Table 1: Respondents' Age

Age Group	Frequency	%
18 - 25 years	-	-
26 - 33 years	13	21.0
34 - 41 years	34	54.8
42 - 49 years	15	24.2
Total	62	100.0

The respondents' ages ranged from 25–49 years: most of them 54.8% were within the age group of 34–41 years while 24.2% were within the age group of 42 – 49. Further indications revealed that 21% of the respondents were between the ages of 26 – 33 while there were no records of respondents between the ages of 18 – 25 years as illustrated in Table 1. This presumably suggests that the company might not have recruited young graduates from school in current times.

Figure 2: Respondents Level of Education



Data gathered on the level of education of respondents revealed that out of the 62 respondents, 50% had Bachelor's degree, 35.5% were Higher National Diploma (HND) holders, while 14.5% were Master's degree holders as indicated in Figure 2. The analysis of the data is an indicative of the fact that most members of staff had a considerable high level of education which suggests that the staffs are well abreast with issues concerning delegation and performance.

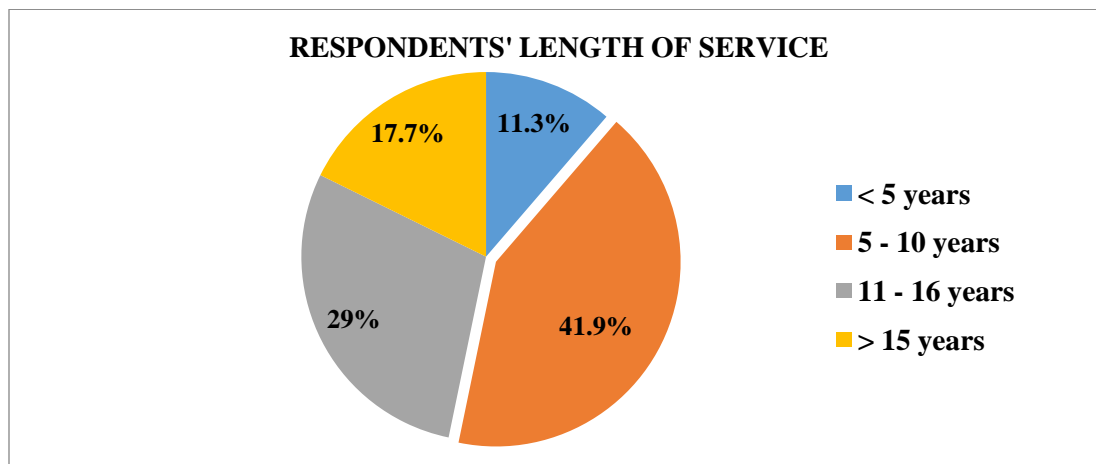
Respondents' Category of Staff

Table 2: Respondents' Category of Staff

Staff	Frequency	%
Management staff	3	4.8
Senior staff	38	61.3
Junior staff	21	33.9
Total	62	100.0

The data gathered on respondent's category of staff revealed that 38 respondents representing 61.3% were senior staff, 33.9% respondents were junior staff, while only 4.8% were management staff as indicated in Table 2. The caliber of staff from which data was gathered was made up of more senior members than juniors which imply that their sources of information regarding the objectives of the study are probably of high authenticity.

Figure 3: Respondents' Length of Service



Regarding the length of service of respondents as established in Figure 3, the majority of 41.9% worked with the Assembly from 5–10 years. Nonetheless, 29% have been working with the Assembly between 11–15 years, while 17.7% did work for more than fifteen (15) years. Furthermore, 11.3% respondents worked for less than 5 years with the Assembly. Figure 3 above implies that most of the employees have worked above 10 years which gives the Assembly an opportunity because the employees have acquired experience over the years which can help enhance the activities of the institution.

With respondents' views on the form of delegation they were involved in, 43.9% were involved in both individual and group delegations, while 42.1% were involved in individual delegation (i.e., delegation from superior to subordinate). On the other hand, 14% engaged in group delegation (i.e., delegation from superior(s) to subordinates) as illustrated in Table 3.

Table 3: Respondents views on the form of delegation they were involved in

Respondents' views	Frequency	%
Individual delegation (i.e., delegation from superior to subordinate)	24	42.1
Group delegation (i.e., delegation from superior(s) to subordinates)	8	14.0
Both individual and group delegations	25	43.9
Total	57	100.0

In response to the reasons respondents did not receive enough delegated assignments, 33.3% of the respondents indicated the lack of confidence in their capacities to handle the position, while, 25% did not receive enough delegated assignments because of their supervisor's fear of losing their positions to them. Again, 16.7% respondents felt not to have received enough delegated assignments because they have not yet received enough training to be trusted with a delegated position. Another 16.7% felt the same because their boss's thought they were the only one that could do it right, while only 8.3% did not receive enough delegated assignments because the position was too sensitive as stated in Table 4.

Table 4: Reasons respondents did not receive enough delegated assignments

Respondents' views	Frequency	%
Because I have not yet received enough training to be trusted with a delegated position.	2	16.7
Because the position is too sensitive.	1	8.3
Because of my supervisor's fear of losing the position to me.	3	25.0
Because of lack of confidence in my capacity to handle the position.	4	33.3
Because my boss thought he is the only one who could do it right.	2	16.7
Total	12	100.0

In response to respondents' views on factors that hinder delegation in an organization, 50% indicated the lack of confidence in a subordinate's capacity, 31% stated the lack of motivation or knowledge to delegate effectively, while 19% noted the fear of revealing managerial shortcomings as illustrated in Table 5.

Table 5: Respondents views on factors that hinder delegation in an organization

Respondents' views	Frequency	%
Lack of confidence in a subordinate's capacity	21	50.0
The fear of revealing managerial shortcomings	8	19.0
Lack of motivation or knowledge to delegate effectively	13	31.0
Total	42	100.0

The impact of delegation on performance through teamwork in KMA

Regarding the analysis of the impact of delegation on performance through teamwork in AMA, the mean and standard deviation for each response was computed. This provided a single value or score for each response or observation as proposed by Bryman and Bell (2003). The mean score matrix defined per observation was developed to give a summarized view showing responses per respondent. The complete mean score matrix showing responses for all the 62 observations was fed into SPSS software for further computation and analysis.

Table 6: Respondents Views on the impact of delegation on performance through teamwork in KMA

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Delegation through teamwork increases my performance in my organization	62	3.87	0.661
Delegation due to teamwork increases my participation in my organization.	62	3.30	1.208
Delegation due to teamwork increases my initiative in my organization.	62	3.90	0.803

Delegation through teamwork increases my job satisfaction as an employee.	62	4.13	0.860
Delegation through teamwork empowers me to achieve higher performance in my organization.	62	4.38	0.765
Delegation through teamwork leads me to accomplish more work in my organization.	62	4.17	1.020
Delegation through teamwork gives me the feeling of owning the work as well as its outcomes.	62	2.37	0.758
Valid N (list wise)	62	3.47	0.868

It is important to indicate in this study that the variables are measured based on a 5-point Likert scale. Based on the results as established in Table 6, the mean of the variables ranges from (M = 2.67 to M = 4.38) and with the standard deviation also ranging from (SD = 0.661 to SD = 1.208).

The highest mean score of (M = 4.38) with (SD = 1.208) is an indication that delegation through teamwork empowers employees to achieve higher performance in organizations. The next highest mean score of (M = 4.17) with (SD = 1.020) denoting 'agree' in the Likert scale, suggest that delegation through teamwork can lead to accomplishment of more work in an organization. However, the least mean score of (M = 2.37) with (SD = 0.758) denoting 'disagree' in the Likert scale, suggest that delegation through teamwork does not give employees the feeling of owning the work as well as its outcomes.

Nevertheless, aggregating the mean and standard deviation scores of the seven items of the impact construct revealed that the total mean score is (M = 3.47) with (SD = 0.868). Comparing the mean scores of these seven items illustrated in Table 6, and assuming the responses were provided by same set of respondents, it can be concluded that delegation through teamwork can impact positively on employee performance in an organization as suggested by aggregated scores above.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The findings established that employees of Accra Metropolitan Assembly have ever been involved in delegated assignments with the majority involving in both individual and group delegated assignments.

It further revealed that the factors that hinder delegation in Koforidua Municipal Assembly were the lack of confidence in a subordinate's capacity, the lack of motivation or knowledge to delegate effectively, and the fear of revealing managerial shortcomings.

Findings on the impact of delegation revealed that delegation through teamwork empowers employees to achieve higher performance in organizations. Comparatively, it has been established that delegation through teamwork can impact positively on employee performance in an organization.

Further indications revealed that delegation can be enhanced by allowing employees to participate in delegation processes. Other ways of enhancing delegation is to allow delegation to be done consistently, by specifying performance standards of assignments, and also by giving out a balanced responsibility and authority.

Further means to enhance delegation is to ensure that assignments are balanced across workers, and also subordinates should be given the freedom to accomplish assigned tasks.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it has been established that the factors that hinder delegation in Koforidua Municipal Assembly were the lack of confidence in a subordinate's capacity, the lack of motivation or knowledge to delegate effectively, and the fear of revealing managerial shortcomings. It can again be concluded that delegation through teamwork can impact positively on employee performance in an organization. In the final analysis, delegation can be enhanced through employees' participation in delegation processes. It can also be enhanced through consistent delegation and through specifying performance standards of assignments.

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